



QUEENSLAND
TOURISM INDUSTRY
COUNCIL

The Voice of Tourism

**SUBMISSION TO THE GREAT BARRIER REEF MARINE
PARK AUTHORITY**

ON

**THE DRAFT ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER
HERITAGE STRATEGY FOR THE GREAT BARRIER REEF
MARINE PARK**

26 April 2018



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OVERVIEW

The Queensland Tourism Industry Council (QTIC) welcomes the opportunity to respond to the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority 's (GBRMPA's) *Draft Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Strategy*.

QTIC would like to commend GBRMPA for the collaborative approach to the development of a strategy that reflects complex stakeholder requirements and creates significant opportunity across the Great Barrier Reef.

QUEENSLAND TOURISM INDUSTRY COUNCIL

QTIC is the state peak body for tourism in Queensland. QTIC is an independent private sector, membership-based tourism industry organisation.

All of Queensland's 13 Regional Tourism Organisations (RTOs) are members of QTIC, as are 20 industry sector associations and in excess of 3,000 regional members, operating in all sectors of the tourism industry.

QTIC works in partnership with government agencies and industry bodies at a local, state and national level and is a member of the Australian Tourism Industry Council (ATIC).

QTIC'S TOURISM INDIGENOUS CHAMPIONS NETWORK, SUPPORTED BY THE STAR ENTERTAINMENT GROUP

In 2007, QTIC facilitated an Employment Mapping Project to identify employment barriers among Indigenous Australians and to seek opportunities to enhance employment and reconciliation processes. An outcome was the establishment of the Tourism Indigenous Employment Champions Network in 2008. The **QTIC Tourism Indigenous Employment Champions Network (The Network)** aims to support tourism employers to engage and retain Indigenous employees. The project is the first of its kind in Queensland and aims to increase operators' awareness of how to encourage and increase participation of Indigenous Australians within the mainstream tourism industry.

The Network is comprised of volunteer members from across the state and all aspects of the tourism industry that are committed to the goals of 2,020 'new faces' (employees) (having achieved the previous goal of 1,000 new faces in 2017) and 20 new Indigenous businesses by 2020. The Network is actively developing strategies to assist in recruitment and retention of Indigenous staff.



TOURISM IN QUEENSLAND

The tourism industry in Queensland contributed \$25.0 billion to Queensland's Gross State Product (GSP), representing 7.9% of total GSP¹ and generated \$7.1 billion in exports in the year ending June 2016², making it the state's third largest export industry accounting for 14.8% of total Queensland exports.

In recent years, government and business communities have recognised tourism is contributing significantly to economic growth in Queensland and generating significant numbers of new jobs. Due to a slowdown in the resource industry, tourism has experienced resurgence and is flourishing against a relatively soft economic backdrop. In Deloitte's *Tourism and Hotel Market Outlook*³, it is reported that international arrivals to Australia grew at twice the rate of global outbound travel and international visitation "continues to outshine broader economic performance". Forecasts to 2020 indicate tourism will continue to grow faster than the wider economy.

The World Travel and Tourism Council⁴ (WTTC) project travel and tourism employment will grow 5.8% (compound annual growth) over the next decade in the Asia Pacific region. In contrast, total economic growth is projected at 4.1% per annum and other industries such as mining and agriculture are forecast to grow at 1.8% and 2.2% per annum respectively.

Strong international visitor growth is forecast to continue for the next five years, with international visitation to Australia anticipated to grow at 6% per annum reaching over 11.4million arrivals by 2012-2022⁵. Domestic visitor growth over the next five years is predicted at a slower rate of 2.2% per annum reaching over 104.3million trips by 2012-22. Expenditure is expected to grow at the same rate, with average trip spend tipped to decrease slightly⁵.

One in ten businesses in tourism is a small or medium sized enterprise. Tourism employs over 225,300 Queenslanders across almost 54,000 businesses¹. These organisations are reliant on strong connectivity to ensure that visitors can reach regional Queensland.

INDIGENOUS TOURISM

Indigenous tourism experiences are a point of differentiation for Australia in a highly competitive global market and have been identified as an important value-add alongside Australia's core strengths of aquatic and coastal, food and wine and nature and wildlife activities. Approximately 2.1 million visitors (domestic, international and day-trip) undertook some form of Indigenous activity (including arts, craft, culture, performance or Aboriginal site or community) during their holiday in Queensland (IVS & NVS Dec 2017).

¹ Tourism Research Australia, *State Tourism Satellite Accounts 2015-2016*

² Tourism Research Australia - *State Tourism Satellite Accounts 2015-16*, Queensland Government Office of Economic and Statistical Research - Overseas exports of goods by industry.

³ Deloitte, *Tourism and Hotel Market Outlook*, Edition 1, 2017

⁴ World Travel and Tourism Council. 2017. *Travel & Tourism Economic Impact 2017 Asia Pacific*

⁵ Tourism Research Australian. *State of the Industry Report 2016-17*.



Tourism Australia's Consumer Demand Project (CDP) showed a 30% increase from 2014-2015 in consumer interest in Australia's Indigenous tourism experiences. The research also highlights that willingness to participate in Australian Aboriginal cultural experiences receives positive shift following exposure to marketing stimulus, highlighting strong demand with respect to this sector.

The CDP revealed a number of individual Indigenous experiences are highly appealing compared with non-Indigenous equivalents, with several among the most preferred in their regions. International visitors from the United Kingdom, North America and Europe are the most likely to participate in Indigenous tourism experiences when travelling to Australia.

FEDERAL TOURISM INITIATIVES

Tourism 2020

In December 2011, the Federal Government announced its national strategy, *Tourism 2020*, with a goal of doubling the value of tourism to \$140 billion by 2020. The 2020 plan identifies the following Indigenous priority:

5. Increase supply of labour, skills and Indigenous participation

The tourism industry has a labour shortage of 36,000 and an employee vacancy rate over four times the national average that is preventing parts of the industry from effectively servicing global customers. By 2015, an additional 56,000 people will be needed to fill vacancies (including 26,000 skilled positions). Government will work with industry to support industry recruitment, retention, labour mobility, education and training to fill these gaps, and explore ways to increase the supply of skilled tourism labour and Indigenous participation.

Indigenous culture and heritage is a competitive advantage for Australia. It is integral that delivery of all facets of the Indigenous experience are authentic and provide visitors with an enjoyable and memorable experience.

STATE TOURISM INITIATIVES

The Queensland Government and the Queensland tourism industry share an ambition to restore Queensland's leadership position as Australia's premier tourism state. The former government supported a **goal of doubling visitor expenditure, to \$30 billion by 2020**, in line with Commonwealth ambitions. The current Queensland Government has committed to maintaining these goals and to continue working with industry leaders to develop a prosperous and sustainable tourism industry. QTIC remains committed to working with government and industry to achieve training and employment outcomes through the following strategies:



Advancing Tourism

Advancing Tourism 2016–20 is the Queensland government’s plan to capitalise on the significant tourism growth in Queensland. It targets key areas, identified by industry, to increase market share and boost tourism jobs by targeting four priority areas:

1. grow quality products, events and experiences;
2. invest in infrastructure and access;
3. build a skilled workforce and business capabilities; and
4. seize the opportunity in Asia⁶.

Goal 1: Grow quality products, events and experiences.

Develop new and refreshed ecotourism, nature-based and cultural heritage products and experiences.

- Encourage the development of Indigenous, cultural and heritage tourism products, events and experiences across the state.

Goal 3: Build a skilled workforce and business capabilities

Develop the Indigenous workforce for the tourism industry

- Work with QTIC to support the continued development of skilled Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with tourism career pathways and Indigenous tourism businesses.
- Support industry to grow Indigenous tourism workforce representation in all parts of the industry.

RESPONSE TO DRAFT STRATEGY

2.6 Threats to Indigenous heritage

Outlined threats including increased sea temperature, ocean acidification are both direct results of climate change. The impact of climate change should be acknowledged explicitly within this document. Whilst several climate related risks are outlined, others such as inundation and the shift of species have been ignored.

Outcome 1 – keep heritage strong

The objective to “maintain and strengthen Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples; effective representation on governance and advisory boards” is important. This needs to be achieved with careful consideration to ensure that representatives are not set up for failure. The roles should ensure

⁶ Queensland Government, *Advancing Tourism 2016-20*.



the right people are being selected for the right role and that this action is not just pursued to reach targets or numbers. The opportunity for training programs, or mentoring systems to strengthen potential future candidates should also be considered to create a strong 'pipeline' of candidates.

An important part of keeping heritage strong is storytelling. A QTIC member emphasises the importance of the inclusion of strengthening story-telling across the strategy stating, "One of the most powerful tools that is recognised globally is story telling. Where Indigenous people are supported and trained in storytelling to retain knowledge and communicate to a wide audience about culture and lore it can have a profound effect and done correctly can nurture a healthy and vibrant tourism product and maintain connections with land and sea for indigenous people. This isn't a focus of this document and in our Region and supporting Palm Islanders and others to develop their tourism capacity through storytelling to tourists is a skill that should be fostered and will be important for the future of our Region. Many Indigenous people find it very difficult to communicate confidently when faced with an audience particularly when it is people from other cultures, countries or even just locals".

Outcome 2 – keep heritage safe

It is recommended that within action A2.4.3, referring to the guidance templates for applicants on expectations for Traditional Owners (TO) consultation, there is a wider communication element embedded. It is important that expectations for TOs' consultation, provision of information and the identification of avoidance and mitigation measures are understood. This should be widely communicated and shared with a broader range of relevant stakeholders to ensure these templates are utilised broadly across the industry.

Outcome 3 – keep heritage healthy

QTIC supports the expansion of partnerships to promote compliance and education and stewardship programs to increase heritage management, ensuring that capacity is built to ensure environmental protection.

A key consideration across this section should be about the engagement with and use of technology to assist operators in building and facilitating strong partnerships and management mechanisms. The small grants and sponsorship program should include technology as a capacity building area alongside climate resilience.

Other comments

There is an opportunity to clearly link this strategy to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that it contributes to, specifically 14 – life below water- and 11 – sustainable cities and communities. Research indicates that commitment to the SDGs requires equal commitment from businesses, government and the community. Reaching the goals requires the active engagement from businesses



and industry, in partnership with government⁷. Acknowledgement of the goals is an important part of stimulating buy-in and driving commitment.

FURTHER ENQUIRIES

QTIC welcomes the opportunity for further discussion regarding the points raised in this submission. For all enquiries, please contact QTIC Policy Team on (07) 3236 1445 or email policy@qtic.com.au.

⁷ Scheyvens, R, Banks, G & Hughes, E. The private sector and the SDGs: The need to move beyond business as usual. (2016). Sustainable Development. 24. (6). 371-382.