

Outback Queensland

Regional Gems:

On Accommodation

- Low availability of affordable housing is a concern. While some operators offer their own accommodation, there is a shortage of rentals

On Employees

- While operators survived on backpackers for the season, there is still a shortage of skilled workers such as qualified chefs

On Services

- Geographically dispersed populations create challenges for the regular and personalised delivery of auxiliary services supporting tourism

On The Future

- “Even though you think you're doing really well we're going to fall off a cliff, so we need to prepare government [by regular reporting] for that”

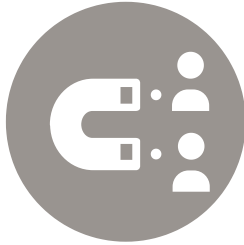


Localised Actions:

- Accommodation availability
- Smooth boom/bust cycles
- Seasonality strategies
- Recognise manager distress
- Tyranny of distance
- Policy support gaps
- Youth drain to cities

Destination Workforce Resource

Workforce attraction & retention:



Workers are key to the industry. COVID-19 demonstrated the need to improve conditions to retain & attract workers. All actor groups play a role in making work more secure, safe, exciting, & to offer incentives to reduce region to city drain. Further, housing issues need to be resolved. Focus on culture & vibe of industry, not pay – & target key influencers (e.g., parents, career advisors).

Communication, leadership, & collaboration:



Consistent messaging, leadership & supports from policymakers are critical in times of crisis. Leaders should work with employees & operators (in-region) to capitalise on local knowledge & experiences - to seek solutions before, during, & after crises.

Training, development, & empowerment:



All stakeholders need ongoing training to prepare them for crises. Employees, managers, & volunteers alike crave career development & promotional opportunities which enhance resilience & organisational/industry loyalty.

A community approach:



To endure crises, businesses, industry & not-for-profit groups, & local government can build a united 'destination approach' - with input from and engagement with the needs of the broader community. All actors can help revitalise tourism regions' employer/employee brand.

Wellbeing & social support:



Non-work factors are key to workforce resilience. Factors such as work-life balance, secure accommodation, and family and wellbeing supports are critical to improving circumstances. Accessible (in-person) wellbeing programs need to be offered in regional areas.