

Tuesday, 5 March 2019

**Beyond Tourism 2020 Strategy**  
**Response to the Steering Committee Report to Government**

**Introduction**

The Canberra Convention Bureau is the peak business events group in Canberra and region offering knowledge and expertise in securing national and international conferences for the destination. The Bureau has close ties with the major venues, attractions and the academic institutions of the nation's capital which greatly benefit convention organisers. The Bureau works with the assistance of Canberra's Research and Learning Institutes Group (RALIG) showcase the knowledge economy of Canberra and communicate the long-tail legacies of business events that extend beyond the immediate and significant tourism economic benefits.

**Comments on issues**

**Future trends:** What do you see as the future trends which will shape and change the industry over the next 10 years?

Over tourism is a risk if not managed. Protecting tourism assets (which in Australia means nature) is compatible with citizen's and traveler expectations.

Also, as seen in the US, political waywardness effects business travel desirability e.g. boon for Canada. Australia as a safe, globally responsible nation should be taken seriously.

Driverless vehicles and developing associated infrastructure in other countries will affect how tourists expect to navigate and explore our country. Australia's issues of scale mean the country is lagging behind in planning for and adopting best solutions (note high-speed rail example).

**Regional dispersal:** Given that growth in tourism beyond 2020 will mainly come from inbound visitors, particularly those from the Asian region, how can we achieve greater dispersal into our regions for longer periods of time? Should there be specific targets set for international visitation to regional Australia?

Without a framework for getting tourists into the various regions, you can't have meaningful targets. The disconnect here is glaring and a coordinated across government approach with Federal, state and territories is required. Transportation is an issue per above.

**Data:** What role do you see data analytics and segmentation playing now and into the future?

Segmentation is a state-of-play minimum expectation. Adopting machine learning to consider predictive segment trends would be the next level. Examples of this exist with global refugee movement etc. A think tank similar to Centre for International Governance Innovation (Waterloo Canada) is desirable for Australia.

**Technology:** What technological advances do you think will shape the sector over the next 10 years? What legislative and regulatory amendments are needed to better facilitate the adoption of new technology to meet the diverse needs of the future traveller?

A 10-year target in this space without the ability to be fluid to changes we can not predict would be limiting.

**Indigenous tourism:** How can industry and Australian and state and territory governments better coordinate and support the development and continuation of Indigenous tourism businesses, experiences and offerings on a national basis?

We have an opportunity to have a broader government approach to our first Australians and communicate why we should all be proud of the oldest civilization on earth. International interest in the culture is coupled by their interest in righting wrongs and fostering respect and inclusiveness. The NZ example of adopting Maori customs into health care is an example of how Australia could look at this. Indigenous Australians should have a parliamentary platform and sovereignty and tourism growth in this area would be exponential driven from within.

**Infrastructure/seasonality:** What kind of tourism infrastructure investment should be prioritised to encourage all-year-round visitation to Australian tourism icons affected by seasonality?

Business events infrastructure. Encourage debate around economic priorities with Federal grants. Football stadiums and the net benefit (e.g. 12 home games a year vs. year-round BE opportunities). Actively have govt. departments debate and comment on the merits of funding projects more recently attributed to political expediency.

**Employment:** How can the tourism industry improve career perceptions and create career pathways to attract new workers into the industry?

Tourism jobs are the precursor training for customer service that has application for life in any sector from government, trades, business etc.

Tourism as a portfolio being given to junior ministers or tacked on to multiple portfolios at state and territory level is symptomatic of the regard that it is held and reflects in the focus given.

Tourism also lacks one voice to government and other more powerful lobbyists (primary industry) receive disproportionate returns in terms of support and training.

**Australian expertise:** Looking beyond tourism demand and supply, how can the next long-term strategy seek to leverage the export capability of Australian tourism businesses?

This is a business event outcome directly. There is no better platform than in-country exposure to our best and brightest minds, their research and selling Australia to the world.

<https://www.austrade.gov.au/international/invest/opportunities>

Targets should be aligned directly to these aspirations. This should trickle down to state and territory targets. Lack of reference to BE was a serious omission to the original T2020 targets.

**Aviation:** What are the missing links in Australia's aviation network, including 'secondary' international hubs and domestic regional locations?

Treasuries approach to visas as a revenue target is not competitive international. Countries such as Canada apply a cost recovery model, and NZ has been agile on occasions to waive visas to make targeting groups more competitive.

**Social licence:** How do we better message the social and economic benefits of the tourism industry to the Australian community to ensure ongoing social licence to operate?

The important legacies of conferences that deliver long-tail benefits to communities as a platform for our knowledge sectors and with applications to our local communities. These real benefits can provide examples of the value of business tourism beyond those of jobs and restaurant and hotel room sales.

**Resilience:** How can the Australian tourism industry ensure it is resilient to the impact of global shocks beyond 2020 (economic, political and environmental)?

Structural changes 'at home' are required for us to show leadership or enjoy credibility on all 3 counts. Business (e.g. banking), political (e.g. party first vs. greater good and long-term planning) and environmental (e.g. lack of responsible action). Tourism's increasing value to our economy should be reflected a real say across government departments. The lack of serious ministerial clout is an ongoing issue.

**Title:** What is the appropriate title for the strategy?

Beyond Tourism 2030. Please don't create a title that requires re-learning or isn't accessible to those outside our industry.

**General:** Any other comments

Beyond Tourism 2030 should speak to the platform that Business Events provide for a smart Australia. Dedicated funding should be provided to target strategically aligned conferences whose benefits to the economy extend beyond the (significant) tourism dollars.

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