1 May 2012

Dr M D Nahan MLA
Chairman
Economics and Industry Standing Committee
Parliament House
PERTH WA 6000
By email: laeisc@parliament.wa.gov.au

Dear Dr Nahan,

Re: Submission to the Inquiry into 2011 Kimberley Ultramarathon Event

Thank you for the opportunity to make this submission to the Inquiry into the 2011 Kimberly Ultramarathon Event on behalf of the tourism industry.

Tourism Council WA is the peak body representing tourism businesses, industries and regions in Western Australia. The Council promotes the value of tourism, facilitates sustainable tourism development and advocates industry policy on behalf of members.

Protecting the safety and interests of visitors to and within Western Australia is critical to the tourism industry and our state's reputation. This submission therefore focuses on the minimum standards required for tourism events and activities, particularly those which are funded, marketed or licenced by the state government.

Yours Sincerely

Evan Hall
Chief Executive Officer

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Parliamentry Inquiry into 2011 Kimberley Ultramarathon Event
Submission by the Tourism Council WA

1. Introduction

Tourism WA markets events, such as the Kimberly Ultramarathon, to attract visitors to Western Australia. State marketing infers that an event or product is a good experience and visitors assume these experiences meet minimum standards.

The legal and ethical responsibility for tourism events, activities and products clearly rests with the actual owner and manager. However, these events and products can negatively affect visitors and our state's reputation as a destination. This presents a challenge to government and the tourism industry.

Government should be assured that events and tourism products meet minimum standards before licensing, funding or marketing those products. However, government should not assume the responsibility for managing events or product through onerous contractual burdens or over regulation.

The tourism industry has taken responsibility for protecting our destination reputation by establishing minimum standards for events and tourism product. The industry runs quality assurance accreditation programs to uphold these standards.

Tourism Council WA contends that all tourism events and products should be quality assured against minimum standards before they are supported by government.

2. Visitor Safety Review

Following several incidents involving the death or injury of tourists, the state government formed a taskforce in 2005 to review visitor safety. The taskforce presented the *Review of Adventure Tourism Visitor Safety in Western Australia* in March 2006.

The review recommendations focused on the development of Activity Adventure Standards (AAS), the Australian Tourism Accreditation Program (ATAP) and DEC licensing arrangements. Many of the review recommendations have been implemented; however current government policy means not all tourism events, activities and product are accredited.

Western Australia remains a safe destination for visitors. While infrequent, visitor injuries do attract media coverage and adversely affect our destination reputation. The Kimberly Ultramarathon bushfire, and the Lancelin 4WD dune crash in July 2011, resulted in injuries and adverse publicity. Neither activity was accredited against minimum standards.

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3. Key Issue

The tourism industry has developed minimum standards and accreditation programs to protect visitors, industry, local communities and our state reputation as a safe destination. These standards apply to events as well as other tourism activities.

Current government policy strongly supports accreditation of tours and adventure activities, but does not adequately cover events. There is also inconsistent policy across departments. A whole-of-government policy is needed for event and tourism product accreditation.

Government policy should uphold accreditation and activity standards as a minimum requirement for all events and tourism product which are licensed, marketed or funded by government.

4. Recommendations

1. The current Tourism WA accreditation policy for tours, accommodation and tourism product should be extended to include events marketed or funded by Tourism WA.

2. Event accreditation should meet the national TQUAL standards and incorporate the state's Adventure Activity Standards.

3. Adventure Activity Standards should be extended to foot races, marathons and any other high risk activities not currently covered.

4. Accreditation should be a selection criteria for funding applications under the Regional Events Scheme.

5. The current DEC accreditation policy should be extended to the 2 month licences used by events.

6. The DEC and Tourism WA accreditation policies should be adopted on a whole-of-government basis as a minimum standard for tourism events and activities supported by government agencies including:

     i.   approval to operate on state land or in state waters; or

     ii. a license, permit or approval under legislation; or

     iii. government sponsorship, grants or other funding; or

     iv. marketing by government or government funded cooperatives.

7. In addition to tourism event accreditation, Tourism WA should conduct a due diligence investigation for extreme adventure activities which are seeking funding or marketing.

5. Current Government Policy on Accreditation

5.1 Tourism WA Policy
Current Tourism WA policy requires that tourism product must be accredited before it can be marketed by Tourism WA. For example, only accredited product appears on westernaustralia.com or participates in trade marketing missions.

This policy ensures that only quality assured product is marketed by Tourism WA using government funding. The policy applies to tourism product such as accommodation, tours & transport, attractions and visitor information services.

Currently events are not covered by the Tourism WA accreditation policy. Events are not required to be accredited to receive either funding or marketing support by Tourism WA.

5.2 Department of Environment & Conservation (DEC) Policy
DEC requires all commercial tourism operators with a 1 or 3 year licence to be accredited. This includes all tourism product and events. DEC also offers a 5, 7 or 10 year licence to operators with higher standards of environmental management such as the ATAP Eco Plus accreditation.

Currently DEC does not require a commercial tourism operation to be accredited to receive a two month licence. Most events only seek the two month licence and are therefore not required to be accredited. However, a recurring event seeking a 5 year licence would need to be accredited.

5.3 Inconsistent Policy
No other state licensing or land management authority requires tourism accreditation as a minimum standard for approval. This means many higher risk tourism activities do not have quality assurance including most events.

For example a 4WD tour operator must meet accreditation standards to operate in a national park or be marketed by Tourism WA. However a 4WD rally event on the same route would not require accreditation to be licensed by DEC or marketed by Tourism WA. The same 4WD tour on non DEC land would also not require accreditation by the land management agency.

6. Tourism & Events Accreditation

Tourism accreditation protects the interests of visitors and the reputation of a destination and covers all tourism products including: events, tours, transport, retailers, wineries, visitor centres and accommodation.

Accreditation is a quality assurance program which independently verifies that a tourism product or event meets minimum standards. This verification is for:

- Visitors, tourists, customers, participants and spectators and others who may book, purchase or participate in an event, tour or other product.

- Destination marketing bodies who may promote an event or product e.g. Tourism WA, regional tourism organisations and local visitor centres.

- Inbound tourism operators, distributors and travel agents who may develop or sell a tourism package or itinerary which includes the event or product.

- Regulatory authorities who may approve an event or product.

- Sponsors and suppliers who may partner in the delivery of an event or product.

7. Tourism Quality (T-QUAL) Accreditation Standard

The national minimum standard for tourism accreditation is established by the Tourism Quality Council which includes state government and industry representatives. Tourism accreditation programs which meet or exceed this standard may use the TQUAL consumer mark.

The largest TQUAL approved accreditation program is the Australian Tourism Accreditation Program (ATAP). This accreditation program covers events and is operated by the Tourism Council WA across Perth and regional Western Australia.

In Western Australia there are approximately 900 ATAP accredited tourism products, however only 14 events have been accredited compared to over 250 tour operators. See Appendix 1 for list of accredited events. TQUAL and ATAP Consumer Marks:

8. Event Accreditation Standards

The ATAP program covers fourteen areas ranging from risk management to cultural sustainability. Appendix 2 details the application of the program to events. The fourteen areas and relevant examples are:

1. Business Details e.g. business registration

2. Licences & Permits e.g. APRA music licence, liquor licence.

3. Insurance e.g volunteers insurance, cancellation insurance.

4. Business Planning e.g. event budgeting.

5. Marketing Plan e.g. truth in advertising.

6. Customer Service e.g complaints mechanism and disabled access.

7. Business Operating Systems e.g. alcohol and glass management plan.

8. Human Resource Management e.g. volunteer training.

9. Risk Management e.g. Adventure Activity Standards, evacuation plans.

10. Economic Sustainability and Financial Systems e.g cash management.

11. Environmental Management e.g. sustainable energy use, fire management plans.

12. Social & Cultural Sustainability e.g. acknowledgement of local indigenous group.

13. Continuous Improvement e.g. proposed development plans.

14. Final Checklist e.g. compliance with codes of practice.

Please see Appendix 1 for full details on event accreditation.

9. Accreditation of Adventure Activities

All ATAP accredited events, tours and products must comply with the relevant Adventure Activities Standards (AAS). AAS benchmark the minimum industry requirements for organisations and leaders conducting outdoor adventure activities for commercial and non commercial groups. The current standards cover:

- Canyoning
- Abseiling
- Artificial Climbing
- Rock Climbing
- Challenge Ropes Courses
- Snorkelling and Wildlife Swims
- Recreational SCUBA Diving
- Canoeing / Kayaking & Sea Kayaking

- Bushwalking
- Rafting
- Mountain Biking
- Trail Bike Touring
- Horse Trail Riding
- Four Wheel Driving
- Caving
- Surfing

Many AAS standards have been updated or developed since the Visitor Safety Review in 2006. However not all adventure activities have standards, notably marathons and foot races. These should be completed as a matter of priority.

While the review was largely successful in developing standards, their application has been more limited. Tourism Council WA is not aware of any program except ATAP which upholds these standards. Due to the policy gaps noted previously most events will not meet this standard, particularly if the event is not on DEC managed land.

10. Accreditation process, cost and accessibility
Tourism Council WA operates the ATAP program on a non profit basis. Our objective is to improve the quality of tourism experiences in Western Australia.

Accreditation is based on ISO9000 principles and is essentially an audit of documentation, and a site inspection, to verify compliance with minimum standards. Initial accreditation requires the completion of an online program and uploading copies of documents e.g. current insurance certificates and copies of evacuation plans. Initial accreditation also requires an onsite visit and interview.

Ongoing accreditation requires an annual update of the online program and a repeat inspection every 2-3 years. Compliance is also tested through an ongoing complaint mechanism to investigate complaints from customers, booking agents, etc.

Accreditation is provided for tourism activities in remote and regional areas and is cost effect for small business and volunteer events. The majority of tourism businesses pay $299 per annum for accreditation and regional areas are regularly visited for site inspections.

Accreditation is an accessible and cost effective standard for small regional events funded under the Regional Events Scheme. Larger events such as those sponsored by Tourism WA to attract visitors or achieve publicity should absolutely meet accreditation standards as a minimum.

11. Need for due diligence of adventure activities by Tourism WA
Accreditation is a paper audit and site inspection to provide assurance that minimum standards are met. Accreditation is not a risk management program for high risk activities.

Accreditation should be a minimum requirement across the board for all tourism events and activities supported by government. Accreditation should be sufficient for most tourism activities such as food festivals and camel tours.

However high risk activities should have an additional due diligence investigation by Tourism WA before they are funded or marketed. This additional requirement should be limited to high risk activities and should ensure compliance with the relevant Adventure Activity Standards.

Tourism Council WA does not believe that Tourism WA should become a quasi-manager of tourism events, activity or product through sponsorship contracts or regulation.

12. Contact
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Appendix 1 – ATAP Accredited Events

Event Owner	Accredited Events
Araluen Botanic Park Foundation Inc	Araluen Chilli Festival
Kulin Bush Races	Kulin Bush Race
Ord Valley Muster - Kimberley Moon Experience	Ord Valley Muster - Kimberley Moon Experience
Boyup Brook Country Music Festival	Boyup Brook Country Music Festival
Harvey Dickson Country Music Centre	Harvey Dickson Country Music Centre
City of Mandurah	Crab Fest
Gascoyne Offroad Racing Club Inc	Gascoyne Dash
Musselfest Rockingham	Musselfest Rockingham
City of South Perth	Australia Day Celebration Zone
Broome Turf Club	Broome Race Round
Sandalford Wines	Sandalford Winery Concerts
Leeuwin Estate	Leeuwin Estate Concert Series
Augusta Margaret River Tourism Association	Margaret River Cow Parade
City of Perth	Skyworks, Perth International Arts Festival, Symphony in the Park, Opera in the Park

Appendix 2

Event Accreditation

Australian Tourism Accreditation Program

The Australian Tourism Accreditation Program (ATAP) is an online business development program that is based on Quality Assurance principles. It is a national program delivered in WA by TCWA and is open to all tourism related activities and businesses including events.

Accreditation for the events industry is designed to assist event organisers to meet the ever increasing domestic and international visitors' expectations of receiving a quality professional event leading to a positive total tourism experience.

Accreditation provides consumers and the industry with an assurance that the event is committed to professionalism, both in the event operations and delivery of service.

To gain accreditation, events must demonstrate their commitment to and use of specific business practices. These business practices are the essential elements of the Australian Tourism Accreditation Standard.

The Standard requires that an event has documented and active:

- Compliance with both business and industry specific regulations
- Adherence to industry sector standards and codes of practice
- Risk management procedures and training
- Corporate, strategic, business and marketing plans
- Human resources management policy and procedures
- Customer service policy and procedures
- Environmental management policies and procedures
- General maintenance schedules and procedures

The outline below gives a detailed example of the types of requirements that event organisers may need to submit depending on the size and type of the event in order to gain accreditation.

Section One: Business Details

- o Business name registration (if applicable to the event)
- o ABN (association etc)
- o Tourism sector – events
- o Business Description – event description
- o Type of business – association, local govt. etc.

Section Two: Licences & Permits (as applicable)

- o Shire approval for the event
  - o planning approval
  - o approval for activities on parks/reserves/foreshores
  - o approval to conduct an outdoor fair, festival or other event,
  - o certificate of approval to open or use a public building, commercial activities licences, public open space booking permit

- o DEC – if operating in National Parks
- o APRA/PPA (music licence)
- o Liquor licence
- o Permit to consume or possess liquor in public places
- o Food registration (local government)
- o Permits for public event on roads or streets
- o Fireworks permits (permit to discharge fireworks, fireworks event permit, fireworks operator licence)
- o Permits for commercial activities within the Swan River trust area
- o Approval of commercial advertising signs (signs on roads)/licence to erect or maintain a sign
- o Continuing lottery permit (certain types of raffles)
- o Fundraising permission
- o Permission to erect or alter a fence
- o Noise & pollution

Section Three: Insurance

- o Public liability (compulsory)
- o Volunteers (compulsory if applicable)
- o Workers (compulsory if applicable)
- o Cancellation/non-appearance insurance
- o Professional indemnity
- o Property
- o Motor vehicle

Event organisers should also have a procedure in place to ensure appropriate insurance cover of contractors, including asking for copies of certificate of currency's as well as the event venue insurance.

Section Four: Business Planning

- o Business History & Background – What is the event, where will it be held, who will come to the event, where will they come from? When is the event (public holidays, school holidays)?
- o Business Description – Weather conditions, road closures, security (spectator control), police presence, ambulance/first aid, support vehicles, alcohol, food, parking, noise etc.
- o Mission Statement – What is the aim of the event? Desired outcomes?
- o Goals/Actions Plans – What do you achieve by staging it?
- o Strategies – How will you get people to the event? What do you need to run the event (approvals, permits or licences)? Event Budget (sponsorship, ticketing, fundraising costs).

Section Five: Marketing Plan

- o Marketing Analysis – What other events are being staged? Social impact assessment.
- o Competitor Analysis & Competitor Advantage – As above.
- o Marketing Goals – Who do you hope to attract? Local, intrastate, interstate, international?
- o Marketing Strategy – Timing of the event, communication strategy, promotions timeline, ticket pricing and media tools for promotion.
- o Marketing Budget – Cost of staging the event, sponsors etc.
- o Truth in Advertising – Tick box.

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Section Six: Customer Service

o Customer Service Policy – Expectations of volunteers
o Procedure for Answering Correspondence and/or Enquiries – Communications Plan (pre event, post event and during the event):
    o where to purchase tickets
    o what to bring
    o how to get there
    o conditions of entry
    o services and facilities available
    o event times & entertainment program
    o communications protocol
o Booking Procedures & Cancellation Policy – Ticketing procedures (might include accommodation, transfers/tours etc.).
o Signage, Access and Parking – Erection of signage, parking, emergency access etc… patron access (maps), site plans.
o Customer Feedback & Complaints - Evaluate event to assess what worked, what didn't and where improvements can be made.
    o conduct a survey or provide feedback forms during the event
    o hold a debrief
    o send out an evaluation sheet to all key stakeholders
o Catering for people with special needs (not compulsory)
    o hearing loops and Auslan (sign language) interpreters for people with hearing impairment
    o public or private transport to and from event
    o special parking areas for people with disabilities
    o accessible facilities such as toilets and food and drink counters
    o special viewing areas for people with disabilities
    o regular resting spots along entrance and exit paths
    o information in large print and/or Braille for people with a sight impairment
    o drinking water and shade for guide dogs
    o ticket pricing that includes admission for people with disabilities and their carers.

Section Seven: Business Operating Systems (Following Local Government Events Policy if applicable)

o Business Operating Systems Policies and Procedures – An event plan which includes (depending on size and type of event):
    o run sheet of key event time, activities and programming
    o food and beverage procedures
    o firework procedures
    o location/site plan
    o erection of structures such as stages, amusement rides, etc.
    o electricity
    o waste management
    o toilets
    o first aid
    o noise
    o traffic, transport and public transport
    o duration of event and timing of activities (including setting up and packing down)
    o site plan with key facilities, entrances and exits marked
    o outline of command and control structure
    o transport management plan
    o crowd management plan
    o security plan, including for cash management and hazardous substances
    o alcohol and glass management plan
    o waste management plan

- o communication protocols, and command and control structures

- o Procedures for Goods & Services Management (may be incorporated above)
    - o handling of electricity, gas, and other hazardous materials
    - o supplying ear protection for people working in noisy areas
    - o operating equipment and machinery and whether licensed operators are required
    - o supplying sunscreen and other personal protective equipment for people working at an outdoor event
    - o obtaining safe work method statements from contractors
    - o providing drinking water for staff and volunteers working at the event
    - o providing adequate training to safely carry out assigned jobs at the event such as: handling money (security, appropriate permission, handling procedures etc.), moving heavy items, managing and directing traffic and crowd management
    - o food/catering management
    - o toilets
    - o waste
- o Cleaning & Daily Maintenance – Post event clean up, cleaning of toilets and other facilities during the event.
- o Preferred Contractors Checklist
    - o list of the approvals and licences needed to deliver the event, the names of the approval bodies and the amount of notice required for each
    - o contractors engaged with contact details
    - o suppliers being utilised for the event with contact details

Section Eight: Human Resource Management

- o Recruitment & Selection – Where are volunteers sourced from? What skills do they need to have, do you screen volunteers?
- o Induction – Pre event briefing, orientation, induction checklists, volunteer packs.
- o Position Descriptions for each role — Are any agreements made with suppliers, authorities, performers, staff, and volunteers etc., safe work method statements from contractors. JD's for volunteers and staff.
- o Communication with volunteers/contractors/staff – Communications plan
    - o between staff/volunteers/contractors/suppliers, etc.
    - o between event staff and emergency services and Police
    - o between event staff and those who have access rights to the event, such as local council and inspection officers
    - o between event staff and those people attending the event within the event coordination centre and within the emergency response room
    - o between the event coordination centre and emergency response room
- o Training & Development Program – How are staff, volunteers trained appropriately.
- o Staff Appraisals – Evaluation/debriefing.
- o Personnel Records – What details are collected? NOK, tax info, pay etc. What qualifications do volunteers/staff require?
    - o RSA
    - o first aid
    - o working with children
    - o food handling
    - o money handling
- o Roster Maintenance – How are volunteers/staff/contractors rostered?
- o Organisation Chart – How do volunteers, staff, contractors know what the reporting lines are .

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Section Nine: Risk Management

- Risk Management Policy – Overall policy.
- Risk Management Plan – Potential risks with staging the event, medical risk assessment, risks could include:
    - financial (from budget blowout, cancellation or poor attendance on event day)
    - non-arrival of performers or deliveries of goods
    - equipment failure
    - property damage or loss
    - inadequate security
    - food poisoning
    - lost children
    - breach of noise restrictions
    - handling money
    - larger than expected crowds
    - sun exposure or adverse/extreme weather
    - fireworks
- Emergency & Evacuation Policy
    - emergency response plan, including who is responsible, how information is distributed to workers (briefing), how emergencies will be handled?
    - emergency medical plan
    - site plan, with access points for emergency services, evacuation exits and meeting areas
    - descriptions of roles & chain of command
    - emergency evacuation plan
- Emergency Contact Numbers
    - emergency communications plan
        - how to contact emergency services (always dial 000 first)
        - communication protocols during an emergency (such as how, and to who, incidents are reported and logged)
        - coded messages for incidents, such as:
            - Red – fire or smoke
            - Orange – evacuation
            - Yellow – internal emergency
            - Blue – medical
            - Brown – external emergency
            - Purple – bomb or substance threat
            - Black – personal threat
        - who else needs to be contacted in an emergency such as: the family of anyone involved in a serious incident, employees, volunteers, contractors, etc., the media
        - who are the key stakeholders (with contact details)
        - the mode of contacting key stakeholders, e.g. two-way radio, mobile phone, email, etc.
        - who will respond to media enquiries
        - how to communicate with people attending the event
        - when completed, copies of your ERP should be provided to:
            - emergency services
            - local council (an ERP may be required when submitting an application to stage your event)
            - any other agencies working with you to stage the event, e.g. Roads and Traffic Authority, State Transit Authority, etc.
            - staff/volunteers/contractors (within a pre-event briefing)
            - suppliers who will be present at the event
- Incident Report Form – Record any incidents or accidents that occur. Also, it is important that everyone working at the event has a clear understanding of how to record incidents and what to do with this record at the end of the event.

- Scheduled Equipment Maintenance Records
- Procedure for Handling and Storing Hazardous Chemicals – See Goods & Services Management.
- First Aid –Adequate facilities and qualified personnel to administer first aid.

Section Ten: Economic Sustainability and Financial Systems

- Budgeting & Cash Management
- Profit & Loss Statement
- Balance Sheet

Section Eleven: Environmental Management

- Contributing to Conservation and Sustainability
    - develop a sustainability plan
    - consider the event venue or location in relation to transport options and accessibility
    - promoting public transport options and developing communications with public transport authorities to provide combined travel and entry event tickets
    - provide bike racks or bike valets, change areas and lockers at each event to encourage bike travel
    - encourage visitors who have flown to offset their impact through an accredited offsetting company
    - waste generation and management, packaging, greenhouse gas emissions, water, energy and other resource use, environmental effects on health and environmental biodiversity, and working conditions
    - communicate with stakeholders the desire to implement some form of sustainable purchasing to support a sustainable event plan
    - promote energy-saving initiatives through the event's communication strategy
- Sustainable Energy Use
    - encouraging the venue/site that has access to power from the grid to use 100 per cent accredited green power
    - considering alternatives such as diesel generators that run on ethically-sourced biofuel or waste vegetable oil if the site is not connected to a regular power grid
    - develop an energy-saving guide for use by all production staff and contractors
- Environmental Monitoring & Reporting
    - measure and recording emissions/water usage, impacts
- Fire Management
    - if in natural areas, how will you avoid starting wild fires
- Interpretation
    - identifying upcoming stages and opportunities for communicating with stakeholders, contractors, participants and visitors
    - contacting water businesses, energy retailers and local council to see what educational installations or programs are available and which ones best suit your event
    - communicating the environmental/sustainability plan to stakeholders, contractors, vendors and the public
- Compliance
    - waste
    - noise
    - appropriate permits
- Water Use
    - working with venues and sites that have implemented or support water saving initiatives
    - providing water trailers or purchasing drinking water in bulk as this will satisfy the need to provide drinking water to the event and also reduce the need for single-use drinking water sales, resulting in less waste

- o engaging with stakeholders to explore the possibilities of grey water recycling at locations where water is used
- o using composting toilets, which is one of the simplest ways to eliminate the need for water and harmful chemicals
- o reducing water in unseen ways through the type of printing services used to the food being provided
- o Wildlife Issues
  - o how does the event affect the wildlife and how will this be minimised

Section Twelve: Social & Cultural Sustainability

- o How the Business Benefits and Respects the Local Community
  - o raising money for a local charity/community organisation
  - o sourcing products and services locally which will not only help reduce impacts, but will also support the community where the event is being held
  - o including the goals of the event's sustainability plan when requesting quotes or conducting a tender for larger events
- o Country and Culture
  - o welcome to country from appropriate indigenous representative
  - o acknowledgement of local indigenous group
  - o asking for permission from local indigenous groups to hold event on land

Section Thirteen: Continuous Improvement

- o Achievements – List past achievements.
- o Proposed Actions – List previous achievements.

Section Fourteen: Fees, Final Checklist

- o Code of practice Compliance – Read and agree to tick box.
- o Declaration – Read and agree to tick box.