



# Australian Tourism Industry Council Six Priorities for growing Australia's tourism industry and visitor economy

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## Introducing ATIC:

The Australian Tourism Industry Council (ATIC) is the national representative body of Australia's State and Territory tourism industry councils (TIC).

Together, ATIC members represent over 8000 tourism operators across the length and breadth of the country, from Broome to Bruny Island, and Port Lincoln to Port Douglas. This is easily the largest and most diverse representation of tourism operators across Australia.

ATIC and its members deliver three major national programs for and on behalf of the Australian tourism industry; the Australian Tourism Accreditation Program,

the Australian Tourism Awards and Star Ratings Australia, to support quality Australian tourism businesses in their continued development, to review and to benchmark.

ATIC is a not for profit and independent organisation supported by industry. Its board is made up by the Chief Executives of the State and Territory TIC, ensuring decisions and policies of the organisation are grounded in the real priorities and concerns of tourism operators across Australia, and represent the interests and aspirations of the tourism industry across our vast national network.



## Six Priorities for Growing Australia's tourism industry and visitor economy.

Tourism is one of the superstars of the Australian economy.

Our industry supports the employment of almost 1 million Australians and contributes close to \$50 billion to the Australian economy each year. Tourism reaches every corner of the country generating growth, investment, jobs and vibrancy in our largest cities through to our most remote communities.

While other export sectors struggle for competitiveness in the global market, Australian tourism continues to grow around our compelling brand strengths as a global destination and unprecedented access into and around the country, along with the innovation, investment and hard work of tourism operators.

ATIC and its members believe Australian tourism will continue to prosper as a pillar of the Australian economy if we make strategic policy decisions as a nation that further encourage visitor growth, and support our industry to be even more competitive on the global stage – through quality products and professional businesses.

ATIC has identified 6 major policy priorities to support the many tourism destinations and operators we represent to continue to invest, grow and prosper:

- ✓ Grow our gateways
- ✓ No new or increased tourism taxes
- ✓ Invite Australians to holiday at home
- ✓ Invest in the next generation of Australian icon attractions
- ✓ Support a national Quality Tourism Framework
- ✓ Assist the tourism industry in responding to climate change

With a Federal Election due in the first half of 2019, ATIC looks to our federal political leaders for a strong commitment to the Australian tourism industry in this forthcoming campaign, and in the new Government to follow.



### Grow our gateways

For Australian tourism to continue to grow, particularly in regional parts of the country, we must ensure our airports remain competitive in attracting, supporting and sustaining new aviation services, including from international markets.

Many regional and second tier airports across Australia are working hard with local tourism authorities, and state and local government in securing the infrastructure and capacity to attract direct international services. Expanding the network of Australia's aviation gateways makes strategic sense for the nation in taking growth

pressure off our major capital city airports while dispersing visitation into regional parts of the country.

The Australian Government has a critical role in supporting our airports through expediting approvals for new inbound services into regional parts of the country, while assisting our airports to meet the infrastructure, quarantine, and border-force requirements to host international flights. This can be achieved through expanding the Regional Aviation Access Programme (RAAP) to include larger airports across the country, providing direct Australian Government assistance for essential infrastructure and entry into new market opportunities.



### No new or increased tourism taxes

Over the past few years Australia's tourism industry has been asked time and again to increase its share of Australia's revenue burden, with significant increases to the Passenger Movement Charge and disruptive changes to the income tax framework for working holiday makers. These have been direct tax burdens imposed upon the industry generating significant revenue outcomes for the Australian Government, but considerable uncertainty for the industry.

It's now time to end the tax grab on tourism and give the industry certainty to focus on investment and growth.



### Encourage Australians to Holiday at Home

Domestic visitation makes up the bulk of the Australian tourism market, especially in regional parts of the country. With increasing access out of the country and emerging low-cost destinations throughout our region, we need to ensure Australian visitor destinations remain competitive with our primary visitor market – Australians.

The Australian Government can play a much more proactive role in leading and pursuing collaboration among State and Territory destination marketing organisations, and industry sector bodies, in national campaigns reminding Australians of the value of holidaying at home. Currently Tourism Australia has next to no engagement in national domestic campaigns.

This could include for example promoting interstate self-drive touring, national caravanning campaigns, and expansion of successful global marketing initiatives like the Signature Experiences Program for domestic audiences.

Tourism Australia should be empowered to work across the country on strategic marketing activities designed to better align the resources of the nation in domestic marketing activities.



## Invest in the next generation of Australian icon attractions

To continue to grow and be competitive as a destination, Australia must invest in quality visitor infrastructure and experiences. But some of our most important national destinations, particularly in regional parts of the country, are under pressure from growing visitor demand and a lack of long-term investment by State and Federal Governments.

The Australian Government has a critical role in supporting economic-enabling infrastructure that stimulate regional visitation and Australia's competitiveness. This has been demonstrated with tremendous success through Australian Government support for the Three Capes Track in Tasmania, and the Stockman's Hall of Fame in Queensland, among others.

Australia needs to continue to identify and invest in the next generation of demand driving visitor infrastructure across the country. The Australian Government can provide leadership in facilitating action on projects that have been identified by the tourism industry as critically important in developing key destinations across the country, along with direct investment in projects with far-reaching economic and tourism outcomes. This could be achieved through a Tourism Demand Driving Infrastructure Fund being directed to medium to large scale public visitor infrastructure projects with destination-wide benefit, rather than grants to individual proponents.



## Support a national Quality Tourism Framework

We need a genuine national commitment from the Australian Government to an industry-driven program to develop quality tourism. As a high cost destination, for Australian tourism to continue to compete in a global market we must also be recognised as a destination renowned for the quality and professionalism of our visitor experiences as well as our unique natural and built heritage. To do this, we need to support and assist Australia's tourism businesses to not only grow but also

develop their tourism skills, business capabilities, service quality and digital expertise.

ATIC has assumed industry leadership in this space with the launch of the national Quality Tourism Framework (QTF) which has combined disparate industry development, accreditation and awards programs to a single capacity building program for tourism businesses. The QTF provides a tailored pathway for each business, from start-up through to niche products and international markets. The QTF is a single portal for online training, quality assurance, product development, digital distribution, reputation management and market development. The QTF applies to businesses across all regions and in all tourism sectors including tours, attractions, retail, hospitality and accommodation.

Our QTF has been rolled out across 6,500 operators nationwide and has the potential to significantly expanded Australia's range of internationally competitive high quality tourism businesses. This would be achieved through a \$6 million four-year funding and policy commitment by the Australian Government to enable ATIC to train and mentor a further 2,000 SME operators through the QTF and to promote 8,500 high quality tourism businesses across Australia.



## Assist the tourism industry in responding to climate change

Some of Australia's great visitor economies are within natural landscapes highly susceptible to the impact of climate change. This includes the Great Barrier Reef, the Australian Alps, and Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area, along with others.

Destinations and tourism businesses need to be supported now to understand the risks to destinations and businesses, while considering what adaptations may be necessary as climate change starts to affect their visitor experience and brand.

There is a lack of national leadership within the Australian tourism industry in confronting this profound challenge to our core brand and industry attributes. ATIC is prepared to assume this industry leadership with support from the Australian Government. The Queensland Tourism Industry Council has developed an effective and practical program engaging its operators on the challenges emerging from climate change. With support ATIC would be in a position to expand this program nationally and ensure tourism operators of the country have access to specialist advice, information and options to consider how they can effectively position their local destination and business in a period of Climate Change.