



# Australian Tourism Council's Advocacy Group (ATCAG)

## FACT SHEET

### Introduction

When it comes to managing tourism, LGA's across Australia share many of the same challenges including growth of holiday letting, peak season traffic and congestion, and impacts on our infrastructure. These challenges impact on achieving manageable visitor numbers across destinations, by way of declining visitation or over popularity.

We know that we can be more effective at engaging State and Federal Government and receiving support by working together and advocating with one voice. When councils band together, we speak with a louder voice and our proposed solutions can be easier to hear and harder to ignore.

By sharing information, knowledge and experience, councils can learn from each other to build resilience for communities in tourist destinations.

### Background

In December 2017, over 50 councils took part in an initial meeting to consider the many and varied challenges facing LGA's as a consequence of tourism and its impacts. The meeting presented many challenges and a follow-up survey was used to establish the top four issues councils shared (see below). It was proposed that an advocacy group be established to lobby governments to address the critical issues faced by the broader group of councils Australia wide.

### About the group

Based on the survey results and meeting, the preference is an action based group with a focus on research and advocacy. An overarching group, chaired by Byron Shire Mayor Simon Richardson, will provide a coordination and support role for the working groups, governed by a Terms of Reference to be agreed upon during the ATCAG's meeting.

The ATCAG will meet bi-annually and all member councils will be invited to attend these meetings. Working groups will be established and a chair and secretary will be nominated for each working group at the first meeting of ATCAG.

Working groups will comprise of elected members, CEO's or a combination.

## The issues

These four issues will form the basis of the working groups to action:

### 1. Tourism impacts on infrastructure

Road, water, waste, toilets, beaches, tourist attractions and Crown land transfers, loss of national parks tourism.

### 2. Lack of Public Transport

Inland and regional tourist destinations facing declining visitor numbers that they say are linked to reduced bus and train services.

### 3. Increases to holiday and short-term rentals and impacts

Airbnb, holiday letting, impacts on affordable housing for local communities, conflicts on housing and issues-affordability, between residents and visitors.

### 4. Creating sustainable tourism opportunities and Agritourism

Looking at opportunities and current regulations/restrictions in place and work with operators and government to develop Agritourism.

## Joining Investment

Byron Shire Council is delighted to offer initial administration and financial support for the inaugural meeting. In order to achieve its goals, the group will need to raise funds to cover administration and communication costs.

**The Annual Investment will be:** \$1,100 (Inc. GST) initial membership charge, per Council, per year with an ongoing amount to be determined by the group. The membership period is calendar year and commences on 1 January 2019.

If the working group commissions research or undertake a communications campaign, those costs will need to be covered by working group member councils and with support from the majority of participating working group members.

## Join ATCAG

For more information, or to join, contact:

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