

Joint Standing Committee on Northern Australia
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
CANBERRA
Canberra ACT 2600

To Whom it may Concern

I provide my submission as an individual Territorian with some investment in the tourism sector. I am a firm believer that tourism is fundamental to the NT, and due to the size of the NT and the small scale of its population, its effect on the successful economy of the NT is greater than other states.

Tourism offers the most opportunities to contribute to sustain and grow the economy of any sector of the economy of Northern Australia, in my view.

IMPEDIMENTS AND CHALLENGES TO STIMULATING THE TOURISM INDUSTRY.

1. Lack of Product.

Tourism in Northern Australia has developed historically from the use of the natural wonders of its environment as being the attraction to draw the visitor. Over the years, the industry has improved the experience of the visitor by developing some infrastructure to enable the visitor to view/ experience the natural product.

But what has evolved does not cut the mustard any longer to a tourist that we are competing with the rest of the world to attract.

Ayers Rock, Kakadu, Katherine George etc – all great- but when you compare these products with other tourism environments globally – we need to do much more. We need to invest in more complex, sophisticated facilities to scales that make these part of the attraction.

This also applies to our cities and towns as well. Providing quality product in Darwin and Alice Springs in particular is essential. We need to give the visitor and local alike, product to experience and use where they live, just like Sydney, Melbourne, Singapore, Vancouver, San Francisco does day in day out.

Modern product can be developed and made sustainable through government and private sector arrangements formed.

We need to think big about Product.

Recommendation: Establish a direct funding model for Major Product development and resource this with a dedicated funded inception launching team.

2. COST OF ACCESS TO VISITOR

Unfortunately, air travel within Australia, in particular, to Northern Australia, is expensive and is a very real deterrent to increasing tourism visitation to Northern Australia.

I understand the reasons why and the constraints to improve this but it still is a major constraint.

Air travel in Australia is the major form of travel used by domestic and international visitors so it deserves focus.

Is there a scheme that could be developed that somehow provides a discount to this direct cost to a proven, complying visitor?

For the domestic tourist, can the air travel cost be made tax deductible to the individual?

For the international tourist, can the air travel to Northern Australia be capped at \$250? (just a number)

The point of my submission is that it is a major constraint that needs to be addressed, to grow the tourism visitation numbers.

Recommendation: Consider developing a discounted travel cost scheme for the proven tourist visiting Northern Australia.

3. QUALITY OF SERVICE

Unfortunately, there are too many venues and providers of tourism product that provide poor or not great service to the customer which degrades the tourist experience and can, by word of mouth or digitally technology (TripAdvisor etc.) demolish /effect the product delivered very badly.

Investment in training and customer service throughout the industry should be formalised somehow and perhaps a system of certification and compliance needs to be established that focuses on consistency and improvement of service and customer engagement and satisfaction.

Recommendation: establish a fund or body that can provide direct and on-going assistance and support to the product provider to meet and exceed customer expectations.

I attach some images of a world class tourism attractor I proposed to the Northern Territory Government in 2016 as an example of my point to think big on Product.

Yours faithfully

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Darwin, NT

15 February 2017













