

DEPARTMENT OF INFRASTRUCTURE, REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND CITIES

1.13 EVENT BRIEF – Meeting with the Accommodation & Tourism Association

Date and Time:	Wednesday 14 November, 2018, 3.30 pm – 4.15 pm
Location:	Administrator’s Office
Meeting with:	Accommodation & Tourism Association (ATA)
Attendees:	Eric Hutchinson, Administration Rael Donde, ATA President Sue Sills, ATA Secretary

Outcomes Sought:

- To discuss key issues in the “Federal Government Changes to Norfolk Island, Framework to Address Economic Impact” submission (Submission) made by ATA in 2016 (**Attachment A**) and the issues which ATA have identified as a priority in October 2018 (**Attachment B**).
- To provide feedback and information on the Australian Government’s actions in relation to the priority key issues which have been raised by the ATA.

Key Issues:

- The ATA provided the Submission to the former Minister for Local Government and Territories, Ms Fiona Nash on 23 August 2016.
- The Submission had 17 key issues the ATA would like the Government to address, as follows:
 - Commit to funding Norfolk Island tourism promotion;
 - Share visitor statistics with industry;
 - Initiate an economic impact assessment of Australian Government reforms;
 - Publish an economic strategy for Norfolk Island;
 - Clarify policy regarding public sector/private sector responsibilities, monopolies and barrier to entry;
 - Provide a timeline for extension of legislation, i.e. company law, corporation law, occupation health and welfare (sic), consumer and competition law, ombudsman, anti-corruption law, etc.;
 - Ensure that Commonwealth entities, such as KAVHA, Tourism Australia, National Parks, Administrator’s Office, Department of Infrastructure, Regional Development and Cities (Department), commit to supporting a tourism strategy and publish their implementation plans to do so;
 - Clarify the roles of the Administrator’s Office, the Department and other Australian Government officials with respect to tourism;
 - Create a visa category or visa sub-class to enable foreign nationals from countries such as Fiji to perform accommodation industry work that cannot be filled by locals;
 - Direct Tourism Australia to fully include Norfolk Island;
 - Include Norfolk Island in the Australian Tourism Data Warehouse;
 - Clarify the role, if any, of Destination NSW;

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- Initiate an enquiry into the actions of the action of the Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital and External Territories (JSCNCET) since 2014;
 - Extend anti-corruption legislation to Norfolk Island to provide access to independent review mechanisms for actions of public servants;
 - Create a commission of experts and stakeholders to recommend a new governance structure and constitutional relationship;
 - Respond to submissions and issues raised by the ATA and other business organisations; and
 - Ministers and Departmental staff to meet and meaningfully consult with elected officials of the ATA and the Norfolk Island Chamber of Commerce.
- In preparation for their meeting with you, the ATA provided a list of related issues in October 2018, as follows:
 - Tourism is a State function and should thus be carried out by the Government.
 - The funding provided for tourism by the Government is inadequate.
 - Increases to the flight schedule are needed, including from Sydney and in the peak period.
 - Continuing lack of Norfolk Island presence on the Tourism Australia website and in the Australian Tourism Data Warehouse.
 - Tourist numbers declined 11.8% between March and June 2018
 - The Government has taken action on these issues, as has the Norfolk Island Regional Council (NIRC). Key achievements are listed below:
 - NIRC are taking the lead in promoting Norfolk Island, supported by the Government.
 - The Government has committed funding of \$0.77 million to NIRC over the next two years to invest in marketing and promotion.
 - You recently announced that the airline services will be expanded to provide year-round, twice-weekly return flights between Brisbane and Norfolk Island from mid-2019. This change to the schedule adds a flight during winter and it was the first in a list of three requests put forward by NIRC.
 - You may wish to indicate that additional flights from Sydney and Brisbane are being considered, noting that they are not commercially viable without significant financial support through underwriting. The costs of supporting additional flights are not insignificant and the current budget for the airline underwrite would need to be increased.
 - The Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development is currently in discussions with Tourism Australia about increasing their focus on Norfolk Island.
 - The Government is developing a package of information on the performance and features of the airline underwrite contract which will be accompanied by key tourism statistics. This information will be shared with the community.
 - You may wish to comment that you are aware that visitor statistics are available from NIRC, for example in the minutes of the Tourism Advisory Committee.
 - You may wish to indicate that you are aware that NIRC has published economic development strategies for Norfolk Island, including the Norfolk Island Tourism Strategic Plan 2016 – 2023. NIRC are active in this area, having recently held a workshop focused on air services and a separate workshop with the Island’s tourism industry facilitated by Regional Development Australia. NIRC have also established regular Tourism Industry Gatherings which are focused on developing this important sector of the economy.

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Background:

- ATA aims to represent the businesses which provide accommodation and services to visitors to the island. The ATA provides a hard copy publication and maintains a website and Facebook page. The ATA meets on a monthly basis.
- The ATA is supported by the Accommodation Association of Australia through a Memorandum of Understanding.
- The ATA would like to make a positive contribution to the economic development of Norfolk Island.
- A few of the challenges facing the Norfolk Island tourism sector identified by the ATA are:
 - overall awareness of the Island as a destination and its offerings;
 - perception that the Island is a destination for an older market;
 - major travel agency distribution limited to five main partners, which are driven by high volume, price driven destinations;
 - limited and uncertain tourism promotion budgets;

Tourist Accommodation Legislation Survey 2018

- The Tourist Accommodation Legislation Survey 2018 (Survey) is being run by the Norfolk Island Regional Council.
- The Survey is to gather information on how the legislation currently in force impacts on the tourism industry in both positive and negative ways.
- The findings of the survey will assist in developing a list of recommendations for legislative reform.

Sensitivities: Nil

Attachments:

- A** Submission to DIRDC dated 23 August, 2016.
- B** Correspondence from ATA to the Administrator's office dated October 2018

