

**Review of the Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources (DEDJTR) Regional Service Delivery Model And Strategic Directions for Regional Policy**

# Submission – Grampians Tourism Board

Grampians Tourism (GT) is the peak industry body for tourism in the Grampians region. It encompasses (and is directly supported by) the Rural Cities of Ararat and Horsham, Northern Grampians Shire, Southern Grampians Shire and the Pyrenees Shire. Its charter is to develop a coordinated approach to marketing, product development, infrastructure investment, and industry development for the Grampians Region.

GT’s strategic oversight focuses on both supply (tourism operators, services, facilities and infrastructure) and demand (existing visitors and potential for growth in visitor markets). As such, GT is in a key position to provide an informed view on the role and effect of the Visitor Economy for regional Victorian growth.

GT’s submission will address specific aspects of the Terms of Reference most relevant to the Visitor economy and the Grampians Tourism region.

## Identify best practice, evidence-based policy directions to foster regional growth and job creation.

Digital and Mobile coverage and accessible bandwidth in the Grampians tourism region is a key barrier to the realisation of a number of Regional Priority Opportunities (RPO) and Significant Opportunity (SO) projects as identified via the GT Destination Plan and Investment Roadmap.

Analysis recognises the provision of services to the Grampians region is critical to the future economic sustainability of our communities. Increasing reliance on telecommunications in tourism, agriculture and emergency management puts the Grampians region at a competitive disadvantage due to poor access and lack of competition in the provision of the necessary telecommunications services.

As an industry leader and advocate, GT recognises that digital infrastructure is key to attracting tourism investment in regional Victorian areas. Service Delivery by the Victorian Government needs to ensure that ICT and broadband capacity, mobile Blackspot coverage and Wi-Fi access across the region is recognised as a priority project in state and federal government programs.

## Industry profile – key sectors, strengths and weaknesses etc. – the role of the Regional Tourism Board (RTB) and investment in regional tourism infrastructure

GT welcomes the Andrew’s Government’s recognition of the value of the Visitor Economy to the state of Victoria. In the Grampians region it generates $239 million in direct and $1,761 million in indirect tourism output, and $2,000 million in total tourism output.

It employs 2,300 people directly and 6,000 indirectly with a total employment impact of 8,300 jobs.

Grampians Tourism welcomes analysis of best practice delivery of programs and campaigns that promote the growth of all aspects of the Visitor Economy. The RTB Model has established a high skill set in the regional destinations. The Model has a strong and mature relationship with local government and industry. It is recommended this structure is evolved to ensure the best delivery and communications model for industry and local government engagement, campaign delivery and investment attraction.

GT congratulate the Victorian government’s support for the development of regional tourism infrastructure. It will enable the private sector to have confidence to invest in regional Victoria. This will result in an improvement in the quality of the regional experience and industry’s ability to invest in marketing and infrastructure. Increased profitability by tourism operators (and other stakeholders) will lead to an improved reinvestment environment, which equals more jobs for regional communities.

GT welcomes efficiencies in the Regional Service Delivery that will enable the tourism industry to grow and create sustainable regional economies in Victoria.

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