

## SUBMISSION

### TO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL SELECT COMMITTEE INQUIRY INTO SHORT STAY ACCOMMODATION IN TASMANIA FROM THE EXHIBITION AND EVENT ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALASIA (EEAA)

#### BACKGROUND

The short stay accommodation sector, as a part of the new sharing, or peer-to-peer economy, has experienced rapid growth in recent years, with the increasing popularity of online booking services such as Airbnb and Stayz. Whilst hotels and traditional accommodation providers are still very much in demand, short stay accommodation operators offer consumers a greater choice in accommodation options, and importantly, provide additional capacity during peak periods.

The EEAA is providing this Submission in response to the Inquiry on Short Stay Accommodation in Tasmania on behalf of the exhibition and business events industry which relies on the availability of accommodation for use by the sector itself, and for the visitors, buyers and exhibitors their events attract.

#### ABOUT EEAA

The Exhibition and Event Association of Australasia (EEAA) is the peak industry Association representing Organisers, Association Organisers, Venues and Suppliers within the exhibition and event sector. Airbnb is a Member of our Association and a supplier of valuable accommodation stock to the industry.

Awarded the Global Exhibitions Day Industry Impact Award in both 2017 and 2018, EEAA has been recognised internationally by UFI, The Global Association of the Exhibition Industry, and Exhibition World for having had the most positive impact supporting exhibitions as an industry.

The work of the Association and its Members is a testament to the **Power of Exhibitions and Events** as a driver of the economy and in particular economic development, trade and export, employment, visitation and knowledge sharing.

A not-for-profit organisation, EEAA works to ensure industry growth by encouraging high industry standards, promoting the professionalism of EEAA Members and highlighting the unique business opportunities that exist through exhibitions and business events. Read more about [EEAA](#), our [advocacy work](#) or view the [Power of Exhibitions](#) video.

## THE EXHIBITION AND BUSINESS EVENTS INDUSTRY

The exhibition and event sector is an important part of Australia's business events sector which is an important driver of the Australian economy, contributing to trade and investment, innovation, jobs creation and visitation.

A 2015 Report released by Ernst & Young, *The Value of Business Events to Australia*, found that in 2013-2014, over 9.3 million people attended 2,157 exhibitions across Australia. These events directly generated:

- \$3.1 billion in direct expenditure
- \$1.5 billion in direct value added
- 21,000 direct jobs

Business events stimulate the visitor economy and drive trade, export and employment in all regions of Australia.

## FEEDBACK TO INQUIRY INTO SHORT STAY ACCOMMODATION IN TASMANIA

It is important to ensure that any policies implemented in Tasmania maintain the economic and business benefits of short stay accommodation whilst managing the social and environmental impact.

Our Association has advocated in other States around Australia, that any reforms should not compromise the availability of all types of accommodation stock for access by the business event sector, from traditional hotels, apartment hotels and also short stay accommodation.

The visitor economy is driven by the business events sector as well as the leisure travel market. The Members of our Association deliver trade and consumer exhibitions and their associated conferences in every industry category from mining and agriculture, health and lifestyle, boating and clean energy. Our venue and supplier Members support the wider consumer and special events industry as well.

A key component of the enabling services is accommodation. The presence of Airbnb and other short stay accommodation platforms in the market has also provided complementary stock and additional capacity during major event peak periods when multiple events may be held in the same location at the same time. Accommodation shortages can impinge on the success of events and hinder their growth. The additional capacity provided by the share economy can help mitigate this pressure during peak periods and enable events to grow to their full potential.

It is therefore vital to the industry that reforms do not create a barrier or deter potential short stay accommodation operators from entering the market as this would have a detrimental effect on the industry and the visitor economy.

Whilst the EEAA recognises there is a need to limit any negative impacts from short stay accommodation and to ensure the safety and security of guests, hosts and the wider community, there is also a need to ensure that the events sector can continue to flourish. It is also important to recognise that consumers have an appetite for the choice and benefits provided by short stay accommodation and that any reforms that significantly limit their choices would not be in the spirit of the new share economy.

State and local government policies in relation to the accommodation sector must ensure that a range of operators can be part of the services that support the greater business events sector, and therefore the visitor economy of Tasmania. Regulatory measures must be considered in the light of the changing nature of consumer demands and the burgeoning of the events industry across Australia.

It is vitally important to maintain a healthy stock of all kinds of accommodation options from traditional hotels and apartment hotels to Airbnb within Tasmania to facilitate the growing business event sector which continues to attract visitors from both interstate and overseas.

The EEAA membership includes all categories of accommodation types as these are important suppliers to the event industry.

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