



## **ACTION STATEMENT – 2005 LGSA TOURISM CONFERENCE, FORBES**

### **Background**

The inaugural Local Government and Shires Associations (LGSA) Tourism Conference was held in Forbes from 13-15 March 2005. It was hosted by Forbes Shire Council in partnership with Tourism NSW, and over 200 people participated in what was a very successful conference.

### **Resolutions and actions taken**

The 2005 LGSA Tourism Conference made the following resolutions. The resolutions are not binding on the Associations as the conference was not constituted as a policy-making forum but they do provide guidance for the Associations' and Local Government's ongoing engagement with tourism.

The actions taken by the Associations to date on these resolutions are indicated in **bold** following the each resolution.

1. *That the LGSA forms a partnership with Tourism New South Wales to develop tourism policy and strategy in relation to local government. This is to be facilitated by the establishment of an ongoing, high level liaison committee.*

**Action taken: The Associations have taken steps toward the establishment of a high level liaison committee with Tourism NSW. We view the establishment of such a committee as very important for improving the relationship and interactions between Tourism NSW, the Associations, councils and peak tourism associations and progressing the development of tourism policy and strategy in relation to Local Government.**

**Preliminary discussions have taken place between Tourism NSW and the Associations concerning the establishment of a liaison committee. A report which outlines a proposed structure, membership and terms of reference for the establishment of a committee will be considered by the Associations' Finance and Economic Development Committee on 8 September 2005 and subsequently the Associations Executives on 6 and 7 October 2005. Following these meetings, the Associations will formally advise the Minister for Tourism, the Hon. Sandra Nori MP, of our desire to form a partnership with Tourism NSW.**

2. *That the LGSA works in close collaboration with the Council of Tourism Associations (CTA), the Tourism Industry Council (TIC) and other relevant stakeholders to promote more effective and sustainable management of tourism.*

**Action taken:** This resolution will be progressed through the establishment of a liaison committee referred to in Resolution 1. It is proposed that membership of the liaison committee should include a representative from the NSW Council of Tourism Associations (CTA) and the Tourism Industry Council (TIC).

3. *The impact on essential service infrastructure through the intensive increase in population due to tourism be measured and financially supported by State and Federal governments.*

**Action taken:** This resolution will be progressed through the establishment of a liaison committee.

4. *That the Tourism Planning Toolkit developed for tourism in New Zealand be investigated for potential application in NSW*

**Action taken:** This resolution will be progressed through the establishment of a liaison committee. One of the committee's proposed terms of reference will be to develop tourism policy and strategy in relation to Local Government.

5. *That the LGSA works towards simplifying the current tourism signage regulations in conjunction with the RTA, Tourism New South Wales and other stakeholders as a matter of priority.*

**Action taken:** The Associations have been invited to participate in the Tourist Attraction Signposting Assessment Committee (TASAC) on an ongoing basis. This will assist in identifying the key issues surrounding tourism signage from the Local Government perspective, provide an avenue for communication of signposting policy issues to individual councils, and facilitate discussion in a range of areas including simplification of existing signage regulations and protocols.

6. *That the LGSA strongly urges the Federal and State governments to fully recognise the value of all kinds of tourism to the economy of NSW, both in regional and metropolitan areas, and provide appropriate funding assistance to the industry and local government. This should include:*

- *funding to establish and operate Visitor Information Centres*
- *funding for tourism positions on councils.*

**Action taken:** This resolution will be progressed through the establishment of a liaison committee. One of the committee's proposed terms of reference will be to explore opportunities for Federal and State funding assistance to Local Government and industry, recognising the value of all kinds of tourism to the economy of NSW.

7. *In respect of holiday letting, to amend s68 of the Local Government Act to allow regulation for temporary use through an annual licence.*

**Action taken:** This issue has been investigated by the Associations. At the 2004 conference of the Local Government Association (LGA) it was resolved that: "The LGA review and survey member councils' positions on the use of dwelling houses or attached or detached dwellings in residential areas for the purposes of self contained holiday or short term accommodation." The Associations carried out a survey of councils which found there is a wide range of views on the use of dwellings for short

term accommodation and that a uniform approach had not been taken. The Local Government Association Executive subsequently resolved to advise councils that the approach to managing short-term accommodation in residential areas be left up to individual councils to decide. Byron Bay Council, which put forward this resolution at conference, is currently considering a plan to restrict holiday letting to two months of the year in Residential 2a zones.

8. *Regional NSW needs a reliable and regular train system for the local community as well as for visitors. The rail system is a vital link for our growing tourism industry. We have had severe cuts to services recently which will have an ongoing impact and we need those services restored and upgraded urgently.*

**Action taken:** The decline of passenger rail services in regional areas of the State is an ongoing issue and one which the Associations have made various representations to the State Government about. In 2004, the Associations commissioned a study to explore the broader social, environmental and economic aspects of passenger rail services. A summary report has been produced which looks at regional travel needs, surveys some recent history of regional rail services, analyses public attitudes to train travel and explores opportunities and challenges for the future.

9. *That the LGSA tourism conference be held on an annual basis, alternating the location between regional, coastal and metropolitan locations*

**Action taken:** Organisation for the 2006 LGSA tourism conference is currently underway and there have been a number of informal meetings with Tourism NSW. The Associations have recently invited Expressions of Interest from councils interested in hosting the 2006 LGSA Tourism Conference, which is to be held in a metropolitan or coastal location. Expressions of Interest close on 9 September.