





Contents

Message from the Chair	2
Executive Summary	5
About Us	6
Our Vision	8
Our Mission	8
Our Values	8
Situation Analysis	9
Industry Snapshot - Future Trends	14
Visitor Profile	15
Challenges	17
Opportunity	18
Strategic Purpose	19
Strategic Priorities	20
Implementation	24



Message from the Chair

Tourism is a key driver of the Murray Region economy, vital to the future growth of our Region and depends on us all playing a role by providing high quality and memorable visitor experiences.

The tourism industry continues to be an important economic and employment driver for the Region, contributing \$2.17 billion¹ and generating over 22,390 full time equivalent (FTE) jobs in 2013-2014. Achieving our projected growth of \$2.27 billion by 2020 has the potential to generate a further 1100 jobs for the regional economy.

Tourism currently attracts 5.46 million visitors to our Region and by 2020 we anticipate this number to rise significantly to 5.72 million.

I have long believed we are all stakeholders in tourism, as all of us impact every single visitor's experience – so getting it right will require partnership. By leveraging

our collective strengths we will achieve the targets set out in our ambitious plan. We encourage enterprise and investment in quality products and experiences that continue to drive our Region's appeal.

It is also imperative that we move tourism up the political agenda to ensure others recognise their role and act on their tourism responsibilities so we can realise our future growth goals.

At Murray Regional Tourism (MRT), we proudly act as champions and give the tourism industry a voice, how we do this, I am pleased to present in this, the Murray Regional Tourism Strategic Plan 2015-2020.

All of us at MRT are clear about our priorities for the next five years, which include:

- Reinforcing MRT as the primary source of expertise in tourism on the Murray.



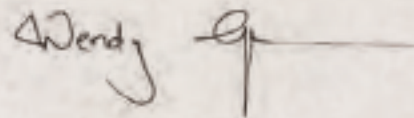
¹ Source IVS, NVS, Urban Enterprise Input and Output Modelling, 2015

- Facilitating growth in visitation to the Region and subsequent employment opportunities.
- Further developing the organisation as an exemplar, progressive tourism board, able to financially support itself and collaborate with destination partners.
- Implementing the long term marketing strategy.
- Education and training.
- Facilitating investment in infrastructure, supporting the development of high quality product and ensuring key marketing initiatives are visitor focused, inspired and respond to current and future visitor needs.
- In partnership, deliver the government's aspirations for the tourism sector as per the national and state strategies.

Through four overarching strategic priority areas, our strategy articulates actions we will take to stimulate tourism in the region.

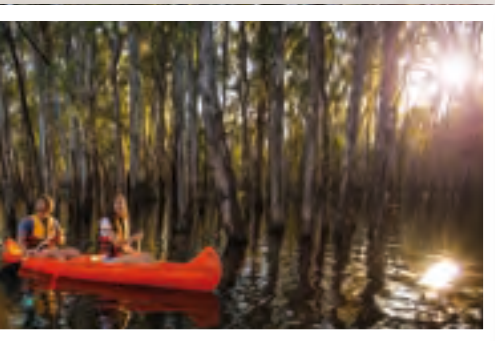
The strategy has been developed with our Board and in consultation with key industry representatives who have provided invaluable feedback to the process.

Our Board is committed to this Murray Regional Tourism Strategic Plan 2015-2020, and we look forward to working with our partners to implement the initiatives identified.



Wendy Greiner

Chair





Executive Summary

Our key aim is to grow visitation by developing a quality visitor experience, promoting the destination and continually improving as an organisation and industry, both individually and collaboratively.

The focus of the Strategic Plan is to achieve the Murray's industry potential of \$2.27 billion of visitor expenditure by 2020. This in turn will generate an estimated additional 1100 jobs to the Murray's economy.

Our strategy is based on delivering significant impact through four strategic priorities (referenced pg. 20 to 23):

- Product Development
- Advocacy and Leadership
- Regional Marketing
- Industry Development

This plan will build on our past achievements which have, over the previous plan, delivered strong outcomes across the four pillars, being:

- Contribution to the growth in total visitation in the Murray Region.
- Development of a whole-of-region blue print for growth, the Murray Region Destination Management Plan.
- Alignment of key local and regional priorities to state strategies.

- Enhancement of the level of collaboration by a reduction in fragmentation of the industry.
- Establishment of a singular Murray brand with a focus on the Region's key experiences.

The plan identifies where and how MRT will add value to the success of tourism in the Murray Region, as well as guide our activities for the next five years in collaboration with the tourism industry as a whole.

Developed to unite the tourism industry, from individual operators, major businesses and associations to all levels of government, the strategy highlights the importance of partnerships and investment made by public and private sector partners in growing the Region's visitor economy.

The plan aligns with the Australia-wide approach to Tourism 2020, whose goal is to double the industry's overnight visitor expenditure by 2020.

Tourism will be one of the top five drivers for the Australian economy over the next four years, as identified by the Deloitte Positioning for Prosperity study².

Our strategic focus reflects this. Developing the visitor economy for the Murray to realise the potential of the tourism industry as well as the ability to provide a significant contribution to the Murray Region's economic prosperity, will be our focus over the next five years.



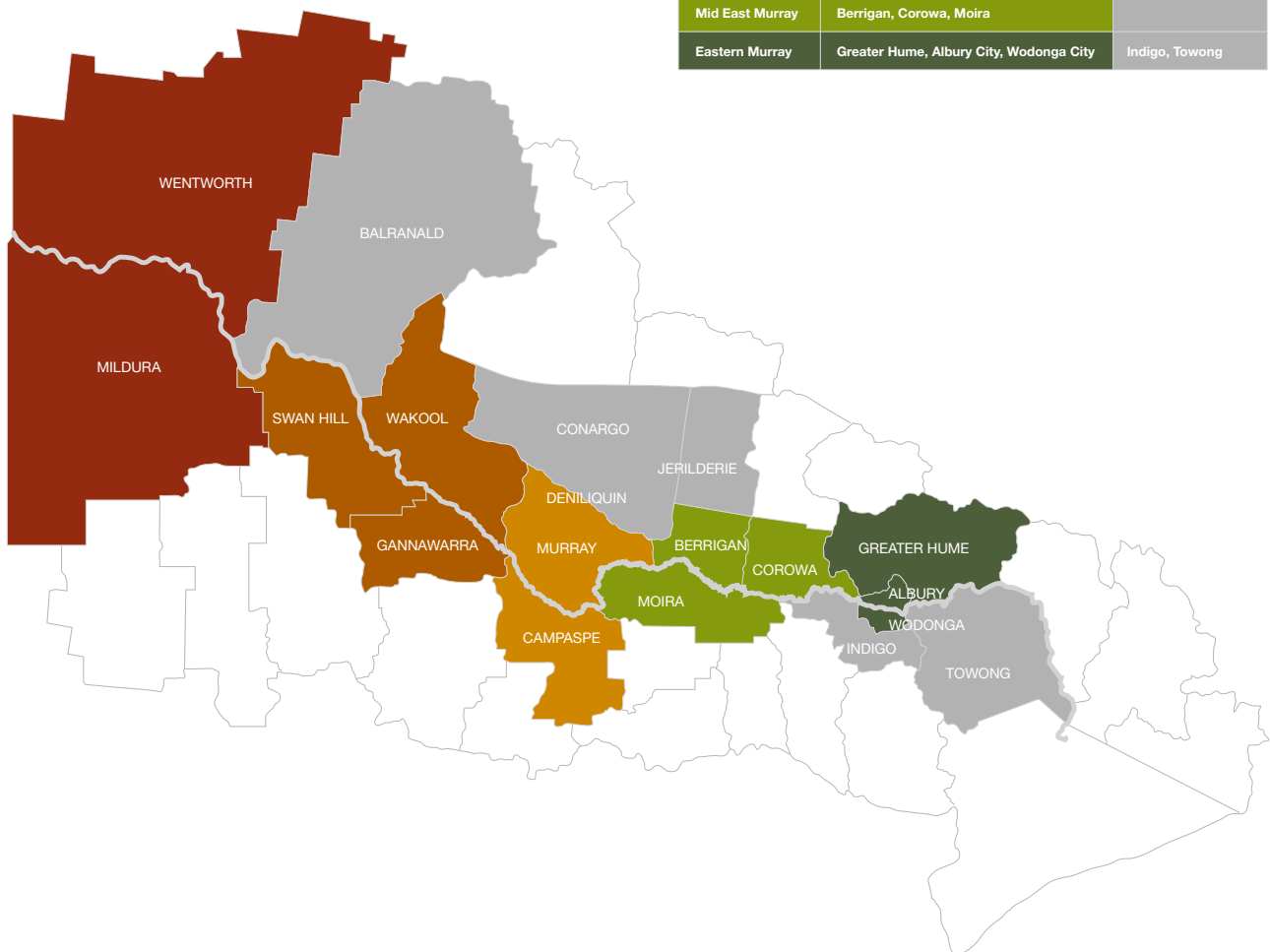
² Deloitte 2014 Positioning for Prosperity, Building the Lucky Country study.

About Us

Murray Regional Tourism (MRT) was established in November 2010 through an agreement between Destination NSW, Tourism Victoria and 14 local government councils in the Murray with the purpose of developing a holistic approach to the effective coordination of tourism activities, as well as growing the visitor economy in the Murray Region.

THE MRT GEOGRAPHICAL AREA

REGION	MRT COUNCIL	ALIGNED COUNCIL
Western Murray	Mildura, Wentworth	
Mid West Murray	Wakool, Gannawarra, Swan Hill	Balranald
Central Murray	Deniliquin, Murray, Campaspe	Conargo, Jerilderie
Mid East Murray	Berrigan, Corowa, Moira	
Eastern Murray	Greater Hume, Albury City, Wodonga City	Indigo, Towong



MRT is a company limited by guarantee which is driven by a highly skilled Board who collectively bring a wealth of experience and skills to the organisation.

We provide member councils, state agencies and the Region's tourism industry with energetic and cohesive leadership to:

- Improve supply and quality of tourism experiences.
- Increase awareness of destinations, products, experiences and events.
- Enhance skills and capacity of tourism industry members.

- Facilitate and where appropriate, coordinate tourism activities within the Region.

MRT will continue to play a key role in ensuring the Murray's economy is sustainable by growing the contribution of the tourism sector. In order to achieve this, it will require many different agencies and organisations working in collaboration to achieve the shared vision.

The below chart outlines the partner framework in which MRT operates.



Our Approach

OUR VISION

Our vision is to hold our rightful place as one of Australia's most vibrant and iconic tourism destinations focused on the legendary Murray River.

OUR MISSION

To deliver growth by building tourism product, developing quality visitor experiences and promoting the Region in partnership with both the public and private sector.

OUR VALUES

Collaboration

To develop and maintain positive and engaged stakeholders, who promote the development of shared understandings, visions and solutions.

Integrity

To demonstrate honesty and sincerity in all of our dealings, upholding only the highest ethical principles; to provide open and transparent communications to create informed opinions and decisions.

Leadership

To lead by example and actively implement, promote and support these values; to be accountable and take responsibility for outcomes.

Innovation

Provide a proactive and adaptable environment that embraces emerging trends and opportunities, where new paths are considered in the achievement of goals and objectives.

Teamwork

To value and empower people with shared responsibility, equal opportunity and access to expertise and knowledge; provide opportunities for constructive communication, sharing of information and decision-making.



Situation Analysis

The tourism sector in the Murray Region is an important driver of the economy and currently contributes over \$2 billion and generates over 5.46 million visitors. To further expand on these indicators, provided below is an overview of the various visitation profiles, economic indicators and key source markets which when combined, are key elements of the Murray Region visitor economy and provide further context for the strategic plan.

MURRAY VISITOR ECONOMY INDICATORS

- Direct expenditure: \$1.47 billion
- Indirect expenditure: \$0.696 billion
- Estimated FTE jobs: 22,390
- Tourism sector employment contribution: 17% (direct and indirect)
- Total visitors to the region 5.46 million for the 2014 calendar year
- Total nights 8.5 million for the 2014 calendar year

CURRENT VISITATION PROFILE

MARKET	VISITORS	NIGHTS	TOTAL EXPENDITURE (\$)	EXPENDITURE PER DAY (\$)
Domestic day	2.9 Million	n/a	421 Million	143
Domestic overnight	2.5 Million	7.3 Million	1 Billion	140
International	53,000	1.2 Million	52 Million	45

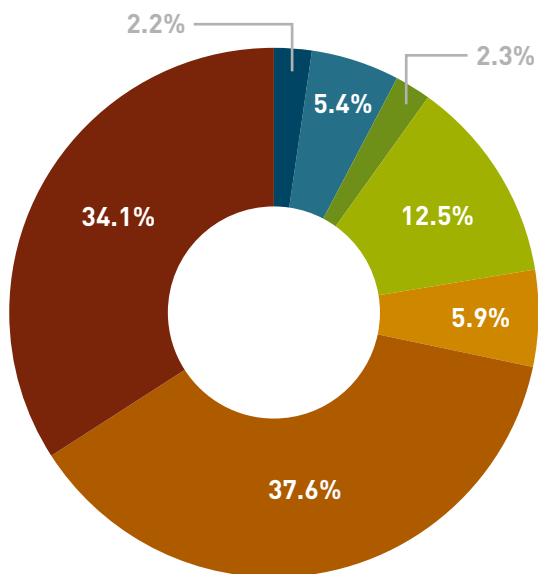
Source: National and International Survey Data, Tourism Research Australia 2014



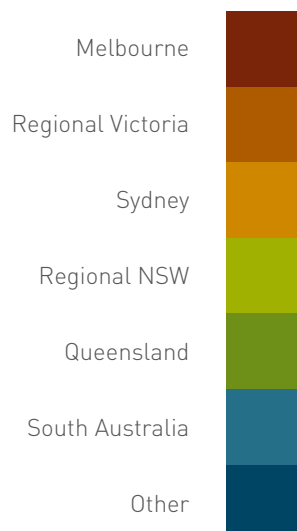
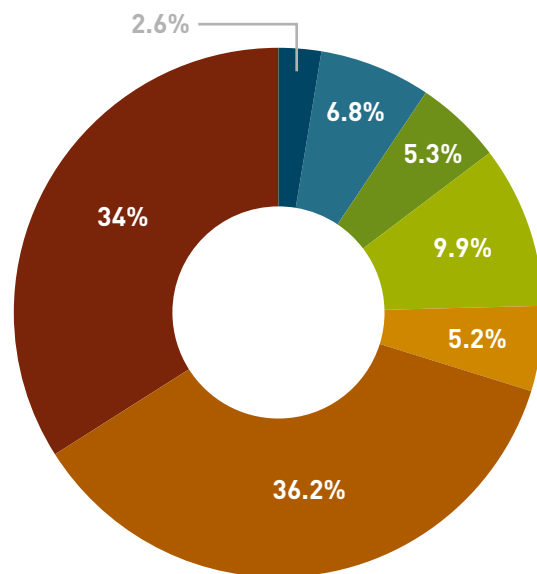
CURRENT DOMESTIC SOURCE MARKET

The Murray Region currently has a heavy reliance on the domestic market both for visitors and nights. Below is a breakdown of the source markets by state driving both these indicators.

VISITORS



NIGHTS

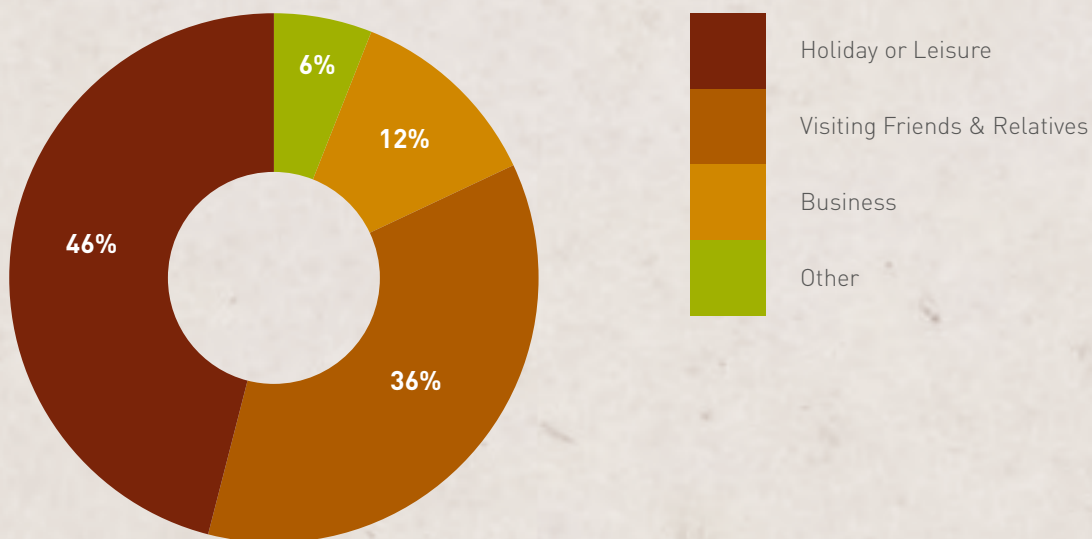


Source NVS, 2014

PURPOSE OF VISIT

The region has four main triggers for visitation. The graph below provides a breakdown of these and is consistent for both domestic and international visitors.

PURPOSE



Source IVS, NVS, 2014

CURRENT INTERNATIONAL SOURCE MARKETS

International Visitation currently contributes 53,000 visitors and 1.2 million nights to the region. The table below provides a detailed breakdown of the origin and corresponding contribution for each of the source markets.

NO.	MARKET	SHARE
1	United Kingdom	20.2
2	New Zealand	15.0
3	Germany	6.3
4	USA	5.8
5	Hong Kong	4.6
6	France	3.9
7	China	3.6
8	Switzerland	2.8
9	Italy	2.8
10	Singapore	2.5
11	Malaysia	2.2
12	Scandinavia	2.1
13	Taiwan	2.1
14	Canada	2.1
15	Netherlands	1.8
16	Korea	1.7
17	Japan	1.5
18	Thailand	1.0
19	Indonesia	0.5
20	Other Asia	2.0
21	Other Europe	8.6
22	Other Countries	6.9

Source: IVS, NVS, 2014

CURRENT KEY MARKET SEGMENTS

Specific target market segments for MRT have been identified based on the Murray Region's product strengths. These include:

- Caravan and camping
- Golf
- History and heritage
- Adventure - water sports
- Food and wine
- Events
- Nature (eco-tourist)
- Corporate - business events visitors
- International

ACCOMMODATION PREFERENCES

Domestic

The most popular accommodation option for domestic visitors to the Murray was visiting friends and relatives' properties at 37.2%, caravan parks or commercial camping grounds accounted for 18.4% of visitors, with standard motel accommodation at 17.7%.

International

The most popular accommodation option for visitors to the Murray was rented house/apartment at 26.3%, followed by the home of a friend and or relatives' properties with 24.8%, and backpacker/hostel at 15.3%.

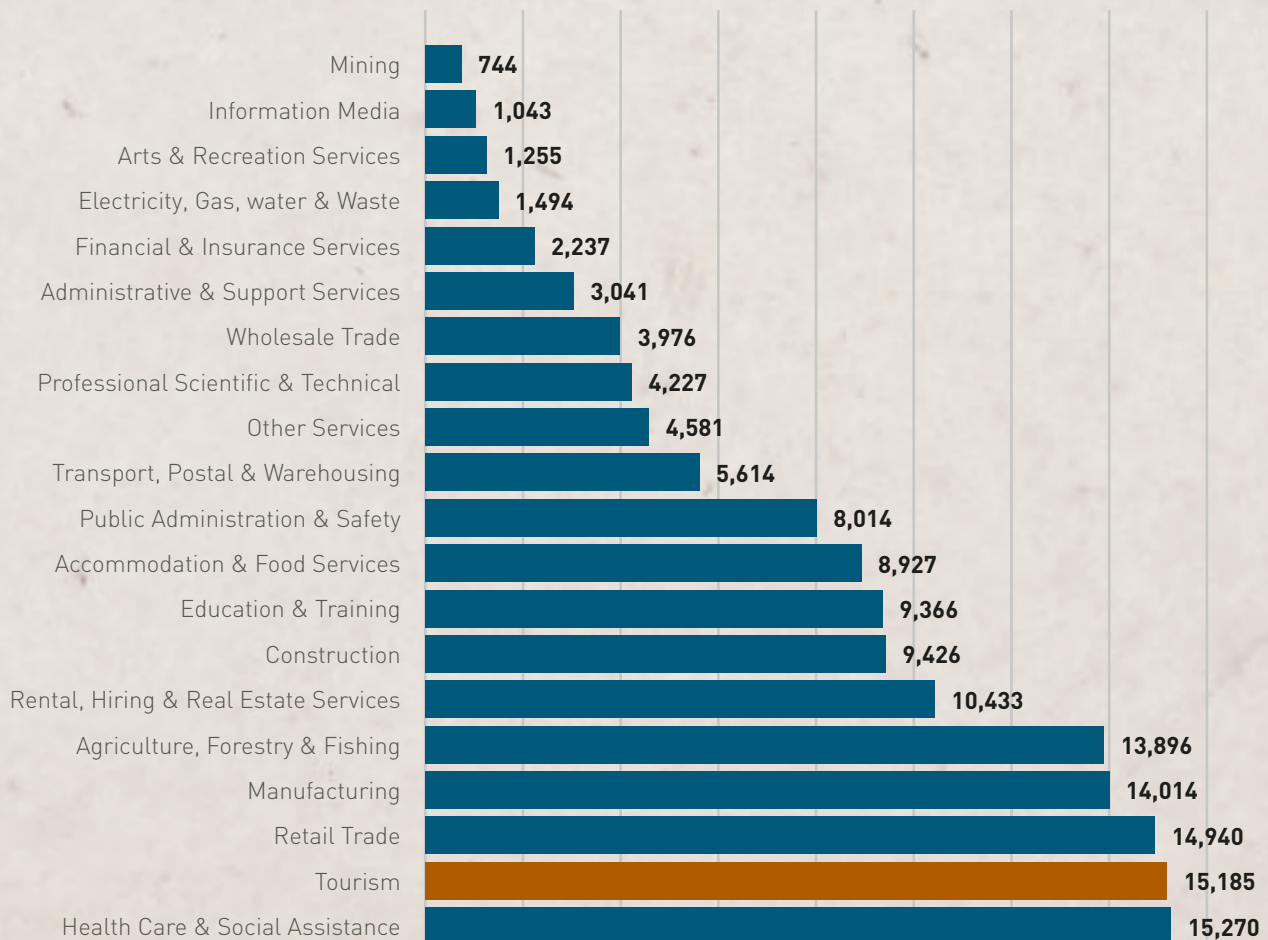
EMPLOYMENT CONTRIBUTION

The tourism industry in the Murray Region directly employs 15,185 people. This employment cuts across a range of traditional Australian Bureau of Statistics defined sectors such as accommodation, food and recreation.

The tourism industry is one of the key employing sectors in the Murray Region along with Health Care and Social Assistance, Retail, Manufacturing and Agriculture.

When indirect flow on employment is included, the tourism industry accounts for 17% of jobs of all jobs across the Murray Region.

MURRAY REGION DIRECT EMPLOYMENT BY SECTOR



Source: Urban Enterprise Input Output Modelling, 2015 plus ABS Census Data

Industry Snapshot - Future Trends

FUTURE TARGET MARKETS

For the next five years, MRT will predominately focus its marketing efforts on a key overarching tourism audience market known as the Lifestyle Leader, which offers the greatest growth potential for the Region.

Roy Morgan's Lifestyle Leaders have the propensity and finances to travel, they travel to experience new things and as this segment is based on a mindset, they cut across all regions, age and life-cycle groups, however, they do skew towards a younger age group (15-44 years).

Based on MRT's visitation research, focusing on this market will overcome declining visitation from younger segments and attract new visitors. As this market looks for more active, immersive experiences, it aligns with the Murray's experience strengths. MRT's direction in focusing on the Lifestyle Leaders market also aligns and complements the future focus of our two state tourism partners.

To ensure targeted marketing practice and cut through, Lifestyle Leaders will be further segmented into market

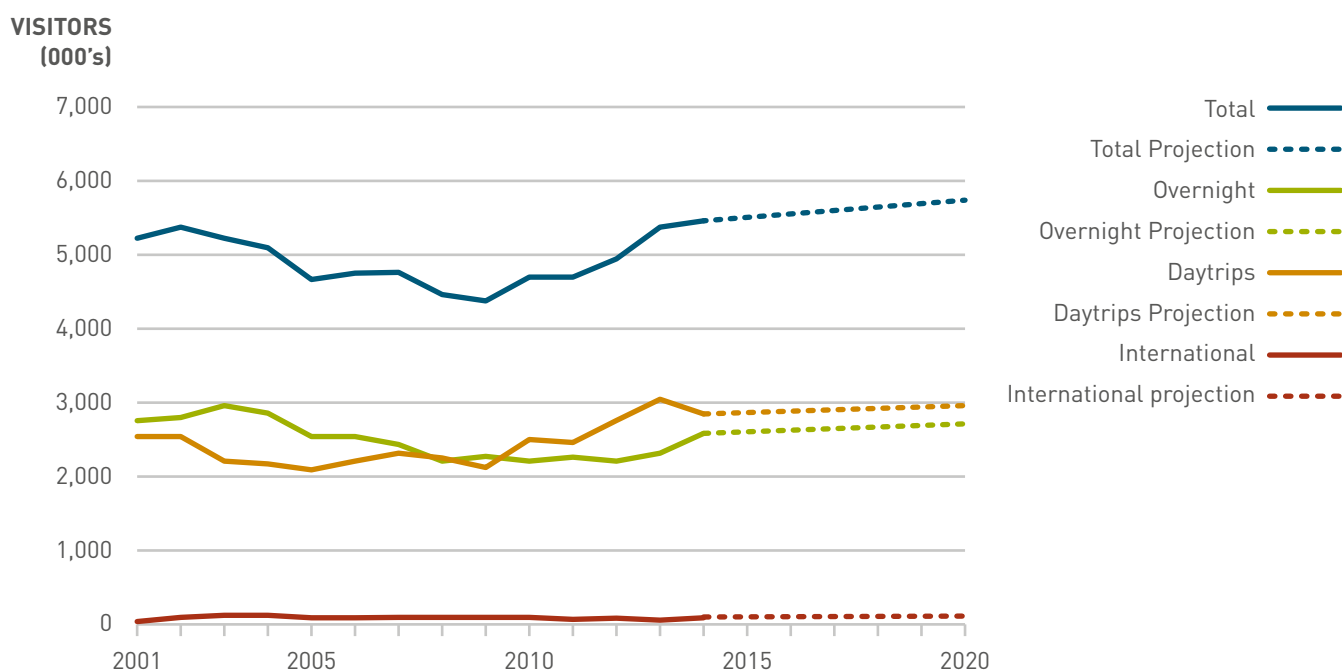
sectors based on experience preferences: Inspired by Nature, Creative Opinion Leaders, and Food and Wine Lifestylers; and life stages: Young Families, Active Mid-life Families, SINKS, DINKS and Empty Nesters.

To a lesser extent, MRT, along with our destination partners, will also focus on habitual visitors, those who come to the Murray each year, sometimes on numerous occasions, and tend to return consistently to a destination.

VISITOR FORECASTS

The total visitation projected for the Murray Region is based on the long term historic averages. It indicates strong growth over the following ten years, and amounts to an additional 9% of visitors by 2025 or an annual growth rate of 0.8 percent. The projected visitation for 2020 is 5.72 million visitors. This has been revised upwards from previous projections due to the strong performance of the Murray Region over the past 5 years, particularly in domestic markets.

FORECAST VISITATION TO THE MURRAY REGION



Source NVS, IVS, 2014 plus Urban Enterprise Input Output Modelling 2015

Visitor Profile

Overall, analysis of the changes in the age of visitors to the region indicates there will be a continued aging of the visitors to the Murray Region over the next five years. Between 2001 and 2011, the percentage of visitors aged 15-44 years decreased from 52% to 44%; the projection for 2021 indicates a further decrease to 40%.

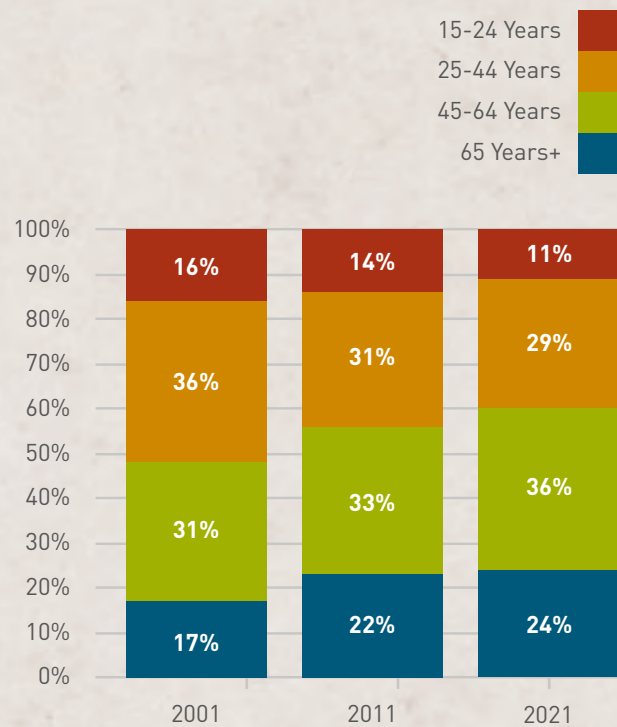
This trend reinforces the need to shift the focus to the Lifestyle Leader segment.

ECONOMIC AND EMPLOYMENT PROFILE

In line with projected growth in visitation to the Murray Region, direct and indirect expenditure from visitors will grow significantly. Total output as a result of tourism (direct and indirect) is projected to increase from \$2.2billion in 2014 to \$2.36 billion by 2025.

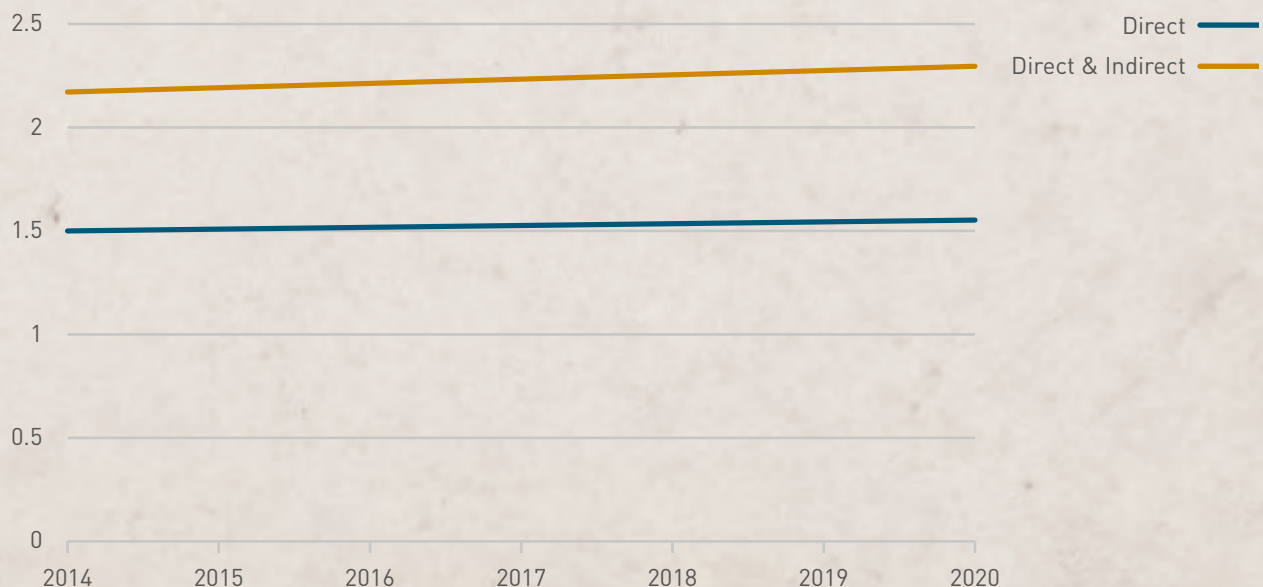
As a result of this increase in visitor expenditure, jobs created by the tourism industry (direct and indirect) are projected to increase from 22,390 in 2014 to 24,419 by 2025. A net increase of 2029 jobs over the next 10 years.

FORECAST AGE PROJECTIONS FOR THE MURRAY REGION

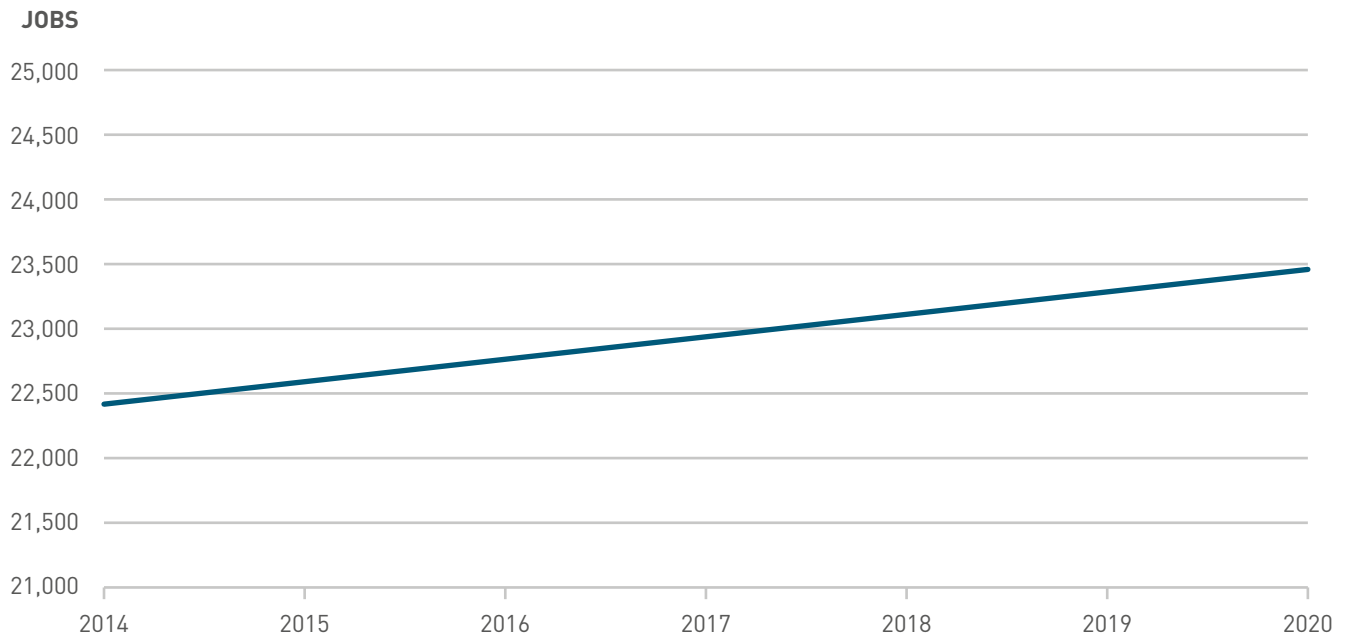


FORECAST DIRECT & INDIRECT EXPENDITURE

SPEND
(\$ Billions)



Source Urban Enterprise Input Output Modelling 2015

FORECAST EMPLOYMENT AS A RESULT OF TOURISM (DIRECT & INDIRECT)

Challenges

Infrastructure investment	To deliver on demands of the new visitor, significant investment is required to diversify product offerings. This will require investment by both the public and private sectors.
The need for differentiation	Visitors no longer simply choose a holiday destination. They are motivated by experiences and will opt for a destination which offers an authentic experience that meets their needs, one where they can immerse themselves in the culture. Developing and delivering tailored, unique, world-class experiences in the Murray Region will be critical to ensure it is a competitive destination in the future.
The need to be visitor inspired/focused	We need to listen, know, understand and respond to our visitors and their needs. We need to see things from their point of view and deliver unique and authentic experiences. We need to build product, develop quality experiences and deliver marketing communications in response to what visitor research has revealed.
The changing purchase patterns	The way people source, book and discuss their holiday is transforming as social networking and technologies evolve. Technology has helped people to become more value sensitive, allowing consumers to easily shop around in their desire for maximum value and quality.
Intensive competition	Competition globally has intensified and the trend is set to continue. The rise of emerging economic powerhouses and increasing wealth is driving travel demand. This new demand brings intensive tourism competition from all parts of the globe in an effort to secure market share.
Changing travel patterns	Domestic travel no longer meets the aspirations of the new visitor. For over four years the travel deficit in Australia has been growing. This will continue as Generation Y and Z's desire to see the world maintains its growth patterns and the baby boomers take advantage of their accumulated wealth and free time. The increasing trend of short break, domestic holidays (as opposed to traditional long stay holidays) will also be a challenge into the future. The industry will need to adjust to this behaviour and seek new markets to fill capacity.
Price competitiveness	Travel to Australia is regarded as expensive due to the long haul nature of the traditional visitors. The changing dollar will increase the appeal for international visitors, however, it will remain a challenge. Domestically, the same challenge remains. With the globalisation of travel, domestic consumers are constantly being persuaded by high quality, price sensitive messaging, which raises expectations against domestic product offerings.

Opportunity

The forecast growth and increased importance the tourism sector is estimated to provide over the coming five years to the national economy will provide many opportunities for the Murray Region.

From a sector perspective, the opportunities are to:

- Invest in key infrastructure to prepare for the changing visitor and increased potential on high yield visitors as identified in the Murray Destination Management Plan.
- Consolidate regional investment in tourism to maximise efficiencies and return on investment across the Region.
- Continue to focus on and build the profile of the Region's key strength, the Murray River.
- Embrace digital mediums in delivering marketing programs to create targeted and direct engagement with visitors.
- Focus on all facets of visitor servicing to enhance the quality of experience along with increasing the expenditure per visitor.
- Identify opportunities for increased collaboration with Victorian, NSW and South Australian stakeholders to provide a coordinated whole-of-Murray Region experience.
- Build industry capacity through education and skills development, matched to the identified gaps.

From a market perspective, the potential to service the needs of the changing visitor is directly aligned to the Region's product strengths.

Consumer research undertaken by MRT indicates the low level of market awareness regarding the calibre of experiences in the Region. In particular, nature-based tourism opportunities, waterfront dining, fresh quality produce, food and wine, along with unique accommodation, will all be drivers to potential visitors.

Overall, the experiences that are most likely to generate additional visitation were found to be:

- Escaping into the natural world
- Touring routes
- History and heritage products
- Food and wine

Touring routes, adventure trails and local produce were also identified as being more likely to attract higher income visitors, which may translate into higher visitor yield.

In addition to experience based themes, the following initiatives also provide opportunity to achieve growth:

- Further leverage regional air access of the Region
- Events tourism
- Take advantage of digital capacity
- Rejuvenation of experiences

Strategic Purpose

GROWING THE VISITOR ECONOMY

Our purpose is to increase the contribution of the Murray Region's tourism sector to the economy, employment and quality of life.

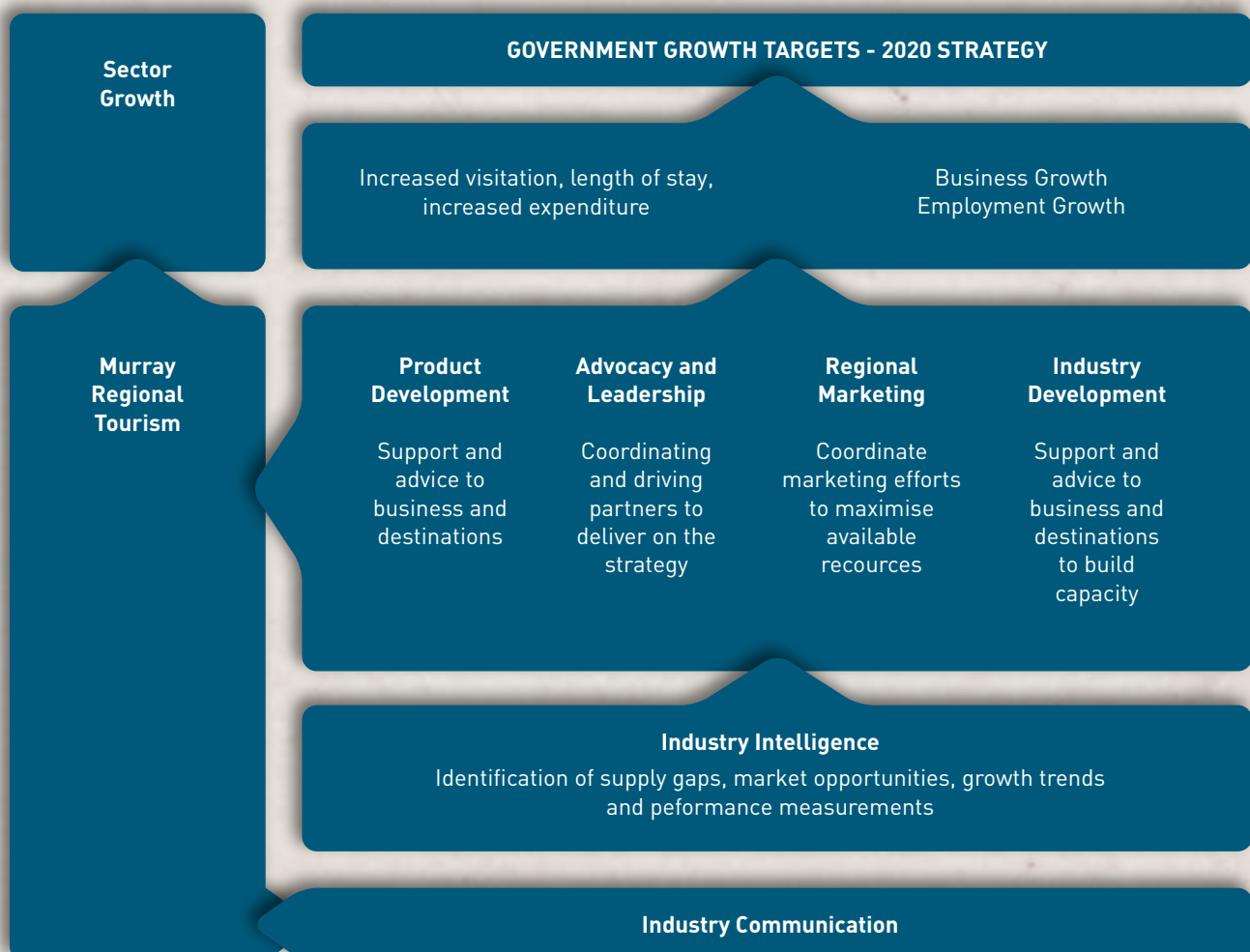
In order to achieve this, the Strategic Plan has been developed on four key strategic priorities:

1. Product Development
2. Advocacy and Leadership
3. Regional Marketing
4. Industry Development

The above four strategic priorities, when integrated, will drive the Region's tourism sector to realise the potential and aspirations of the national, Victorian and New South Wales visitor economy 2020 goals.

The quality visitor experiences, economic growth, increased investment and employment can only be achieved in collaboration at both state and local levels.

To ensure this is achieved, below is the framework within which the Strategic Plan will be implemented in order to grow the Murray Region visitor economy.



Strategic Priorities for 2015-2020

1. PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

Facilitate investment in infrastructure, new products and experiences that revitalise the Region's tourism offer.

We will achieve this by:

- Coordinating the management of the digital program to ensure a visitor focused whole-of-Murray experience.
- Encouraging investment in new or renewed experiences along with high quality product aligned to the Destination Management Plan.
- Identifying international-ready product.
- Linking key product within the Region to create a touring experience.
- Facilitating the delivery of a whole-of-region events program.

Key Initiatives

- 1.1** In partnership with LGA stakeholders, regional tourism associations, Regional Development Australia and other key state agencies, continually review and implement the Murray Region Destination Management Plan.
- 1.2** Oversee the implementation of Stage 1 of the Murray River Adventure Trail.
- 1.3** Facilitate the implementation of the Murray Region Events Strategy.
- 1.4** Develop a Visitor Service Plan to maximise visitor opportunities
- 1.5** Facilitate an accommodation supply and demand study to ensure investment in new and existing accommodation matches the visitor market needs.
- 1.6** Assist the development of touring routes and product clusters aligned to product segments.
- 1.7** In partnership with industry stakeholders, identify each destination's competitive strength to attract new and/or niche tourism visitors and events.

KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- Increase in investment in tourism assets and infrastructure measured by LGA area
- Grow the economic contribution of the events sector by 10%
- Shift the comparative product strengths of our key experiences through the product life-cycle stages

2. ADVOCACY AND LEADERSHIP

Provide a clear direction for growth and development for the Murray Region through strong leadership, advocacy and industry engagement.

We will achieve this by:

- Developing a strong and mutually supportive relationship with stakeholder councils, state governments and federal representatives, as relevant.
- Engaging with regional and local tourism associations and tourism managers.
- Diversifying our revenue base.
- Increasing engagement with industry operators and interest groups.
- Focus on the management and sustainability of the regions natural and environmental resources.

Key Initiatives

- 2.1** Implementation of the Communication and Engagement Plan to raise awareness of tourism developments and the importance of tourism to the economy.

- 2.2** Invest in collaborative research projects with shared benefits that can be adopted widely by industry.
- 2.3** Create opportunities to access government funding assistance for the Region.
- 2.4** Engage with key government agencies to monitor the implementation of the region's natural resource management plans.
- 2.5** Develop evidence-based positions and strong advocacy statements in relation to issues that impede the growth and competitiveness of the tourism industry.
- 2.6** Engage with South Australian Tourism stakeholders to explore collaborative opportunities.
- 2.7** Explore opportunities to become less dependent on public sector sources of funding by assessing the way we deliver services and/or opportunities for alternate revenue services.
- 2.8** Continue to examine, rethink and redesign processes that will help MRT improve performance in areas that are important to our internal and external stakeholders.

KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- Long term funding agreements in place with LGA and government partners to 2020
- Diversification of revenue source to 20% from non-government entities
- Increase the employment contribution of the sector by 1100 jobs

3. REGIONAL MARKETING

To promote the Murray Region in partnership with key stakeholders and industry.

We will achieve this by:

- Maintaining a program of Industry Forums in key destinations across the Region.
- Managing and promoting the Murray brand.
- Ensuring all marketing decisions are based on sound research.
- Leveraging the use of best practice digital technology.
- Developing key partnerships to promote the region.
- Maximising return on marketing spend.

Key Initiatives

- 3.1** Implement the MRT Strategic Marketing Plan.
- 3.2** Optimise best practice marketing channels, both traditional and digital, to create two-way communication with key visitor segments and drive online conversion.
- 3.3** Deliver a research program that enables both public and private sectors to make informed decisions that will drive and grow the visitor economy.
- 3.4** Develop product and visitor databases for the Murray Region through a single management system.
- 3.5** Develop visitor focused brand platforms which encourage industry to integrate and facilitate alignment to the overall Murray brand position.
- 3.6** Work with strategic partners to maximise marketing spend against shared objectives and improve return on investment.
- 3.7** Facilitate integrated partner programs that connect all industry stakeholders.

KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- Increase Visitation to 5.72 million visitors and Expenditure to \$2.27 billion tracked by NVS and IVS data
- Increase in online enquiries and conversion to bookings by 30% from current benchmark
- Increase industry participation rates in marketing services by 20%

4. INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT

Improve the supply and quality of tourism experiences in the Region through industry training and development.

We will achieve this by:

- Focusing on a Region-wide educational program.
- Developing the leadership capacity of industry.
- Managing and promoting a Tourism Awards program.
- Understanding visitor and industry trends.

Key Initiatives

- 4.1** Develop a whole-of-Murray Region tourism industry database to enable direct engagement with industry and corporate stakeholders.
- 4.2** Facilitate a Tourism Education program to address the identified gaps, develop the capability and competitiveness of the Region's industry.
- 4.3** Engage with employment and industry stakeholders to support the growth of tourism and hospitality careers and skills in the Region and address both labour force and skills gaps priorities.
- 4.4** Facilitate the implementation of the recommendations of the Visitor Service Plan.
- 4.5** Support industry through the provision of research and insights that identify consumer trends, emerging opportunities and competitor initiatives that are shaping tourism.

KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- Minimum 25% of operators in the Murray Region participated in training programs delivered by MRT and our partners over the life of this plan
- Growth of industry engagement from current benchmark
- Achieve a satisfaction rating of minimum 70% by training attendees

Implementation

The Murray Regional Tourism 2015-2020 Strategic Plan sets the direction and provides the framework for the collective industry to realise the growth potential of the Region.

The plan provides the top-line initiatives across the four key strategic pillars which we will work collaboratively to achieve and will be supported by a detailed annual plan. The plan will continually be monitored and evaluated on the progress and success against the aspirations.

Success will require all agencies to play a pivotal role, to allocate the right resources and develop a new, shared approach across the sector. It will require sustained investment in integrated marketing programs, better alignment across government resources and investment to better deliver tourism.

The vision for the Region by 2020 is:

- Increased visitation in the Murray Region by 4.5% from 5.46 million to 5.72 million.
- Increased employment contribution of the tourism sector by 1100 jobs and an increase in the overall percentage contribution of tourism jobs as a proportion of total employment in the Murray Region.
- Build and maintain the industry's tourism position on the economic agenda in light of the opportunities presented by our growth forecast.
- Continued building of partnerships with stakeholders to ensure government departments recognise and deliver policies, programs and funding in support of tourism.
- Increased investment and participation by our public and private sector stakeholders.
- Established benchmarks in place which demonstrate continual improvements of return on investment ratios, required to increase visitation.
- Continued improvement of the quality of our visitor experience by attracting investment in infrastructure developments that are visitor focused and inspired.
- Increased destination appeal by the delivery of authentic experiences.
- Creation of strong advocates, generating repeat visitation and economic return through product development initiatives.

The Board is committed to achieving the long term goals for the industry, and look forward to working collaboratively with our partners to grow the visitor economy and employment for the benefit of all the community in the Murray Region.





CONTACT DETAILS:

Email: ceo@mrtb.com.au

Ph: 03 5480 7110



2017-2020 PARTNER COUNCILS' FUNDING AGREEMENT

Between

MURRAY REGIONAL TOURISM BOARD

And

**Albury City Council
Berrigan Shire Council
Campaspe Shire Council
Federation Council
Edward River Council
Gannawarra Shire Council
Greater Hume Shire Council
Mildura Rural City Council
Moirra Shire Council
Murray River Council
Swan Hill Rural City Council
Wodonga City Council
Wentworth Shire Council**

(Insert date of execution)

Murray Regional Tourism Board
AGREEMENT

I. Parties to the Agreement

The Parties to this Agreement are:

Murray River Region Tourism Limited trading as Murray Regional Tourism Board.

Partner Councils established under the Victorian Local Government Act 1989 or the NSW Local Government Act 1993:-

- **Albury City Council**
- **Berrigan Shire Council**
- **Campaspe Shire Council**
- **Federation Council**
- **Edward River Council**
- **Gannawarra Shire Council**
- **Greater Hume Shire Council**
- **Mildura Rural City Council**
- **Moiria Shire Council**
- **Murray River Council**
- **Swan Hill Rural City Council**
- **Wodonga City Council**
- **Wentworth Shire Council**

2. Preamble

- 2.1.** In order to grow and promote tourism in the Murray Region, it is proposed to continue funding the Murray Regional Tourism Board over the three year term 2017-2020.
- 2.2.** This Agreement may be renewed or renegotiated by further agreement between the parties to this Agreement.
- 2.3.** The Murray Regional Tourism Board is a Company Limited by Guarantee and is maintained as a financially autonomous body with responsibilities for its strategy, budget and financial sustainability.
- 2.4.** The Directors of the Company are appointed and must operate in accordance with the Company Constitution.

Murray Regional Tourism Board
AGREEMENT

3. Murray Regional Tourism Board

3.1. History

The Murray Regional Tourism Board formed in 2010 following extensive industry consultation which highlighted the need to establish an overarching organisation to contribute to the development and growth of tourism in the region.

3.2. Role of the Murray Regional Tourism Board

The Murray Regional Tourism Board provides:

- **A United Voice** - a strong unified voice on all issues relating to tourism in the region.
- **Leadership** – a lead role in supporting, guiding and mentoring.
- **A Funding Channel** - all State Government (NSW & Victoria) tourism funds are channelled through the Murray Regional Tourism Board so all stakeholders are closer to the point of decision-making.
- **A Partnership** - an opportunity for local government authorities to work together on tourism issues rather than in isolation.
- **Coordination** - greater cooperation to avoid duplication of effort resulting in greater efficiencies for the industry.
- **Regional Ownership** - the strategic direction for tourism is managed by the region and not state government tourism offices.

The Murray Regional Tourism Board is responsible for the holistic development of tourism for the Murray Region. Its **Purpose** is:

- Industry development
- Product development
- Regional marketing
- Leadership and advocacy

The Partner Councils recognise the independent role, structure and **Purpose** of the Murray Regional Tourism Board including in its advocacy for regional tourism as an independent voice to local, state, national and international media.

The Murray Regional Tourism Board:

- Plays a critical role in creating a platform for the future growth of tourism within the region.
- Identifies region-wide tourism issues and develops initiatives and solutions for the Partner Councils.

Murray Regional Tourism Board
AGREEMENT

- Sets the overarching strategic direction for tourism across the entire Murray Region.
- Communicates with key stakeholders such as Destination New South Wales, Local Government, Tourism Victoria and industry participants.

4. Role Of Partner Councils

The Partner Councils support Murray Regional Tourism Board activities through the involvement of local government personnel and departments: tourism; economic development; Visitor Information Centre.

5. Resourcing

- 5.1. The Partner Councils agree to three year funding to the Murray Regional Tourism Board as per Schedule A of this Agreement. Annual payments are to be made following the receipt of an invoice from the Murray Regional Tourism Board. Payments are to be made no later than 1 September each year.
- 5.2. The Partner Councils agree to this funding to enable Murray Regional Tourism Board to deliver against its **Purpose** and meet its agreed obligations in Schedule B. Partner Councils agree to meet their Schedule B obligations in return.
- 5.3. The funding commitment commences on 1 July 2017 and concludes on 30 June 2020. By mutual agreement, it may continue beyond that date subject to Clause 9.
- 5.4. Additional funding may be provided by the Partner Councils, upon agreement, for the delivery of specific programs.
- 5.5. As a condition of funding, the parties to this Agreement expect that Murray Regional Tourism Board will consult with each of them in the development of Murray Regional Tourism Board's Strategic Plan and annual business plans.

6. Performance Review

- 6.1. Murray Regional Tourism Board will undertake a review (as per Schedule C) of its performance in the period July – September 2019 to determine its effectiveness in delivering its Strategic Plan.

Murray Regional Tourism Board
AGREEMENT

7. Dispute Resolution

7.1. Any disputes arising from this Agreement will be first referred to a meeting of the Chair of Murray Regional Tourism Board, two Partner Council representatives and a representative of each of Tourism Victoria and Destination New South Wales. Tourism Victoria or Destination New South Wales will convene and manage this process.

7.2. Final dispute resolution, if required, will be referred to a Committee consisting of one representative from – a) Partner Councils, b) Murray Regional Tourism Board, c) Tourism Victoria, and d) Destination New South Wales and e) an independent, industry representative. Tourism Victoria or Destination New South Wales will convene the meeting and chair the Dispute Resolution Committee.

7.3. The independent industry representative will be appointed by a group consisting of a representative from –

- a) Partner Councils,
- b) Murray Regional Tourism Board;
- c) Tourism Victoria, and
- d) Destination New South Wales.

8. Indemnity

8.1. This Agreement does not constitute a guarantee or indemnity by Partner Councils in regard to activities undertaken by the Murray Regional Tourism Board.

9. Term of Agreement

9.1. This Agreement lapses on 30 June 2020 and may be renewed or renegotiated by further agreement between the parties.

9.2. Negotiations to renew or renegotiate the Agreement must be completed by 31 December 2019.

10. Parties Agree to be Bound

10.1. It is the intention that this Agreement be binding on all of the parties which have signed this Agreement without the right of withdrawal from the arrangement except where there is a fundamental breach of any material term or condition of this Agreement by another party.

II. List of Schedules

- A. Partner Council Funding***
- B. Agreed Obligations***
- C. Review Process***

SCHEDULE A.

A. Partner Council Funding

It is agreed that the following funding commitments will apply for the period 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2020.

The Partner Council contributions are based on a flat fee per participating Council plus a payment of 3 cents per Domestic Visitor night (based on 3 year average of the National Visitor Survey for the period ending December 2009-2012).

The annual contribution is indexed at CPI (2%) per annum.

PARTNER COUNCILS	2017-2018 \$	2018-2019 \$	2019-2020 \$	Visitors ('000) 3yr Avg (YE Dec 2009-12)
Albury City Council	45,454	46,363	47,290	1,231
Berrigan Shire Council	14,103	14,385	14,673	267
Campaspe Shire Council	42,364	43,211	44,076	1,136
Federation Council	16,185	16,509	16,839	331
Edward River Council	11,111	11,334	11,560	175
Gannawarra Shire Council	14,981	15,281	15,587	294
Greater Hume Shire Council	9,095	9,277	9,462	113
Mildura Rural City Council	46,234	47,159	48,102	1,255
Moira Shire Council	31,828	32,464	33,113	812
Murray River Council	18,233	18,598	18,970	225
Swan Hill Rural City Council	24,738	25,232	25,737	594
Wodonga City Council	16,249	16,574	16,906	333
Wentworth Shire Council	9,843	10,039	10,240	136

Murray Regional Tourism Board
AGREEMENT

SCHEDULE B.

B. Agreed Obligations

To achieve its Purpose, Murray Regional Tourism Board agrees to:

- Maintain, implement and review a Strategic Plan which clearly outlines strategic goals and quantified success measures for each goal.
- As part of its Strategic Plan, facilitate access to state and federal government funding for tourism in the region.
- As part of its Strategic Plan, facilitate operator investment and reinvestment in new or existing products and facilities.
- Develop and implement annual plans which align with the Strategic Plan and its success measures.
- Consult with Partner Councils and representative stakeholders in the development and review of the Strategic Plan and annual business plans.
- Provide Partner Councils with the Strategic Plan and annual business plans.
- Annually report on its performance against the quantified success measures from the annual business plans (which align with the Strategic Plan) to Partner Councils and other key stakeholders.
- Provide to Partner Councils and key stakeholders detailed quarterly visitation research data for the region as a whole and key sub-destinations.
- Provide to Partner Councils and key stakeholders quarterly reports on key issues and activities for the region as a whole and for key sub-destinations.
- Undertake a formal Murray Regional Tourism Board performance review in 2019.

Partner Councils agree to:

- Facilitate, where relevant, the involvement of Partner Council personnel in Murray Regional Tourism Board activities.
- Work with Murray Regional Tourism Board to determine the relevance of specific activities;
- Integrate Murray Regional Tourism Board initiatives into the annual work plans of Partner Council personnel.
- Advocate Murray Regional Tourism Board to industry and government, as appropriate.
- Allocate, where agreed, funding for partnering on projects and programs.
- Make available opportunities for Murray Regional Tourism Board representatives to present to, and engage with, Partner Councils.
- Include, where relevant, Murray Regional Tourism Board in key industry programs and strategic developments.
- Partner with Murray Regional Tourism Board in the sharing of necessary information relevant to the development of the regional tourism industry.
- Partner with Murray Regional Tourism Board for visits and forums within Partner Council areas.

SCHEDULE C.

C. Review Process

1. An independent review will be undertaken by the Murray Regional Tourism Board. An independent contractor will be appointed by the Murray Regional Tourism Board to conduct the review.
2. The independent review of Murray Regional Tourism Board will be undertaken in the period July – September 2019 to determine the effectiveness of the delivery of the strategic goals and success measures set out in the Strategic Plan.
3. The reviewer will provide a report with findings and recommendations to the Murray Regional Tourism Board, Partner Councils and major stakeholders by 30 September 2019.
4. The reviewer will consider the:
 - performance of the Murray Regional Tourism Board against its role as set out in Clause 3.2 and its agreed obligations (Schedule B);
 - governance and management of the Murray Regional Tourism Board;
 - level of stakeholder satisfaction with the Murray Regional Tourism Board.

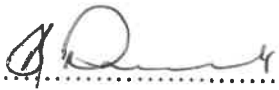
Murray Regional Tourism Board
AGREEMENT

The Greater Hume Shire Council agrees to contribute:

- \$9,095 for 2017-18 Financial Year
- \$9,277 for 2018-19 Financial Year
- \$9,462 for 2019-20 Financial Year

to the operations of Murray River Region Tourism Limited and to be a signatory to this Agreement.

Signed on behalf of the **Greater Hume Shire Council**


.....

Name: STEVEN PINNUCK

Title: GENERAL MANAGER

In the presence of:


.....

Name: KERRIE WISE

Dated: 22 March 2017.

Reference: A2355952

Mr Andrew Kotzur
Managing Director
Kotzur Pty. Ltd.
60 Commercial Street
Walla Walla NSW 2659

Dear Mr Kotzur

I would like to thank you for your recent meeting with Multicultural NSW and the NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet. I apologise that I was not able to attend but have been informed that the meeting highlighted significant opportunities for refugee settlement in Walla Walla.

As the NSW Coordinator General for Refugee Resettlement, one of my key priorities is to make sure that newly arrived refugees get the best possible start to their new life in New South Wales. It is my firm belief that regional and rural towns can offer a very attractive lifestyle to refugees. In 2016/17, NSW settled over 11,000 refugees. While refugee settlement has been concentrated in Western Sydney, I have met with a number of community leaders who have expressed their community members' interest in relocating to regional areas, particularly where there are employment opportunities. My objective is to help more refugees take advantage of the opportunities that exist outside of our major cities.

As Coordinator General, I have overseen the development of an evidence base of good practice, which demonstrates that regional refugee attraction strategies are most successful when there is strong support from the local regional community. A supportive and welcoming community should come hand in hand with affordable accommodation, good schools, support services and importantly, sustainable employment opportunities.

I commend Walla Walla's initiative to explore a refugee attraction strategy to your town. I strongly believe that if planned well, regional refugee settlement can be win-win for refugees and regional communities alike. I have been told that Walla Walla is a supportive and inclusive community with many opportunities for growth and a proud history of immigration.

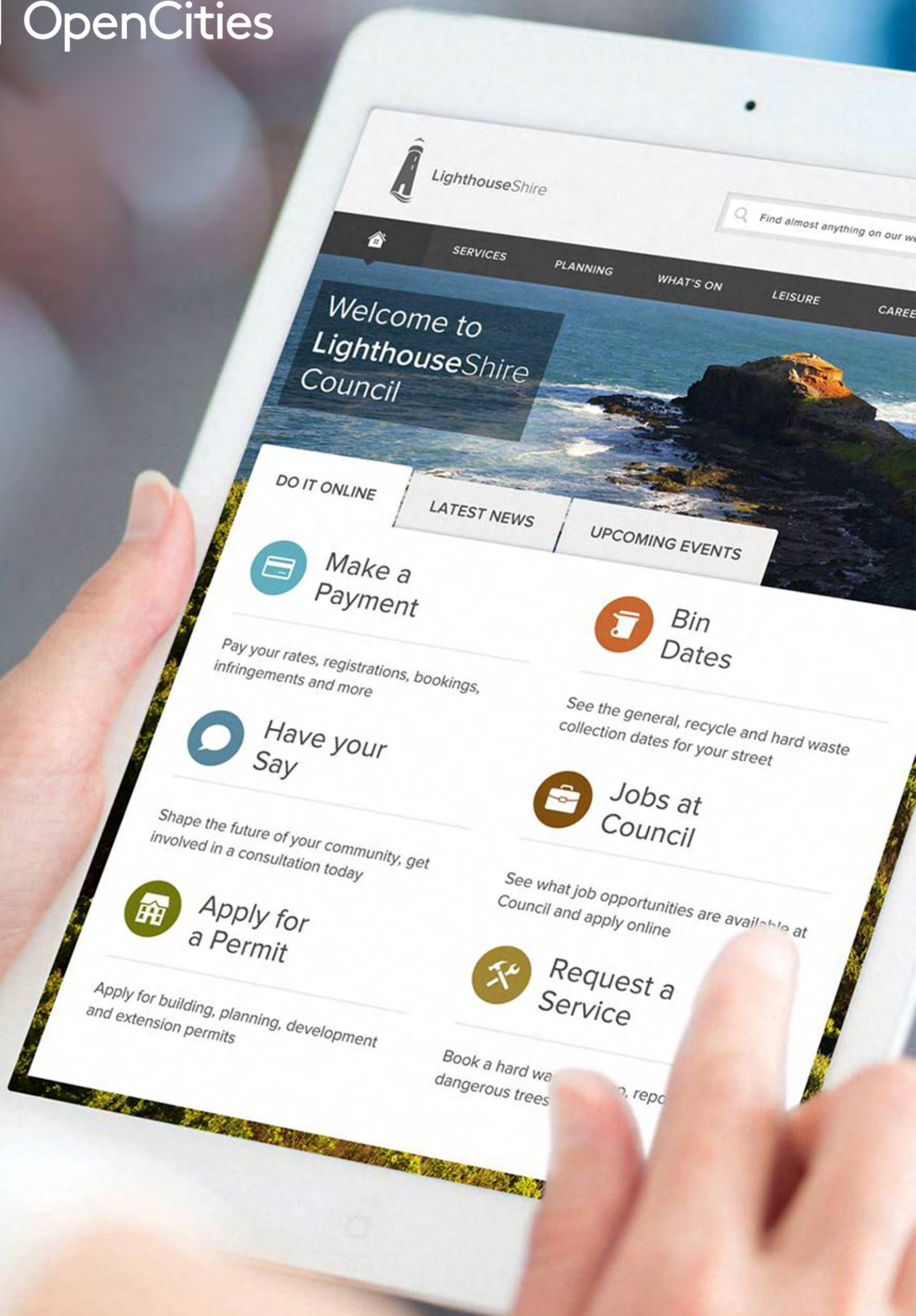
The refugee settlement team at Multicultural NSW will continue to support you as your community discussions and planning progress. When the time comes, they can also assist you to connect with interested refugees in Sydney. I look forward to continuing to support your initiative in the future.

Yours sincerely



Professor Peter Shergold AC
NSW Coordinator General for Refugee Resettlement

12/12/2017



Today, a Councils website has become the digital front door to all Council resources and departments.

OpenCities makes it simpler than ever before to setup council website portals that empower citizens to easily access information, communications and online services, across any device.

Built with local government, for local government

Our joint research with 47 councils across Australia demonstrate that most residents visit their council website a handful of times a year, to complete a specific task, normally related to twelve key topic areas (such as building, planning & development, waste, jobs and more).

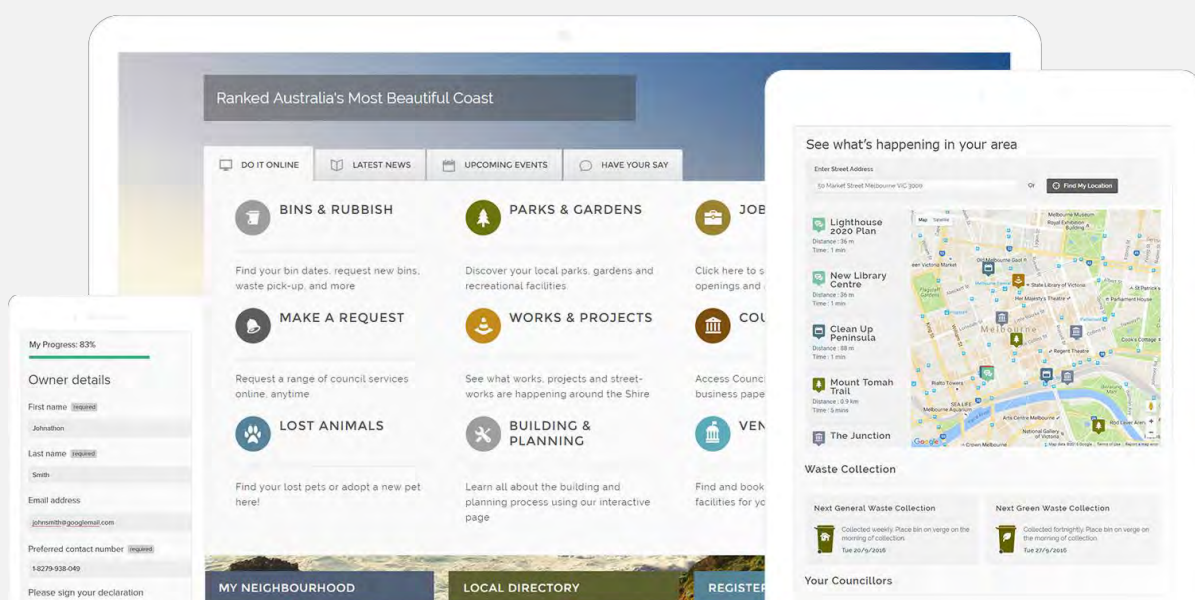
These findings drive our vision – to make it easy for people of all abilities to access their council services, when its convenient for them, across any device, without needing to understand the language of government.

OpenCities features a library of council specific modules focused on helping councils improve their digital content, communication, engagement and service delivery. The modules have been built in conjunction with councils, and refined through years of resident interactions.

More than just mobile friendly

OpenCities works beautifully across all popular tablet and mobile devices. More than simply adjusting to different screen sizes, OpenCities can prioritise information based on the most common usage patterns of desktop visitors as compared to mobile visitors – improving the user experience and helping to connect people to the information and services they are after faster.

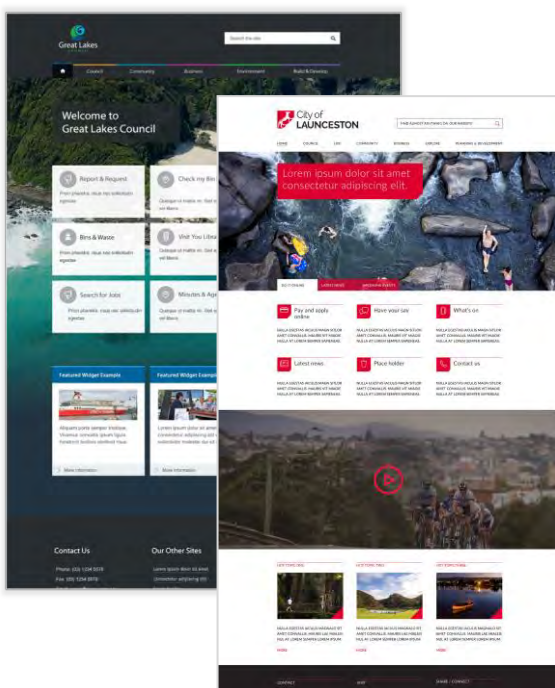
Tapping into the location of the user, OpenCities can also display location based content such as Council events, parks & facilities, works and projects closest to the resident.



'AA' Accessibility compliant

People with disabilities rely on cities to provide them with an accessible website experience regardless of developmental abilities or physical impairments - such as partial or complete blindness. Not only is it a legal requirement to make government websites accessible, it improves the quality of the website for everyone.

OpenCities is built with WCAG 2.0 'AA' accessibility standard in mind, and are independently audited by peak web accessibility bodies every 12 months to ensure cities are meeting their legal accessibility requirements.



Rapid deployment

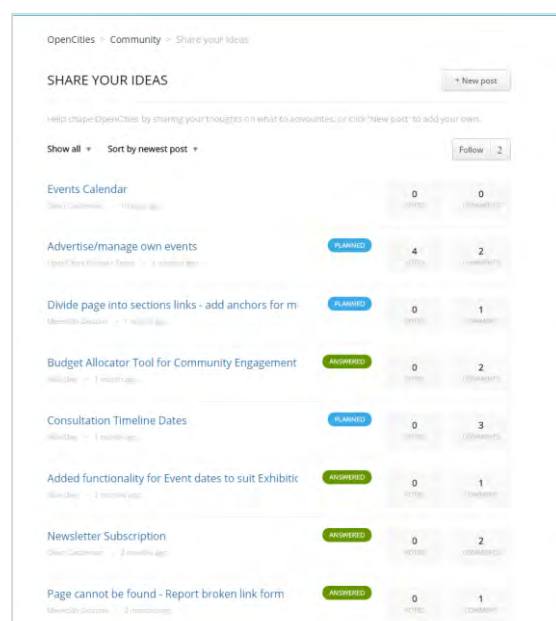
Because OpenCities has all the key functions you need out-of-the-box, a typical OpenCities website can be setup in under one month without any custom development. During the setup process, we work with you to apply your visual branding and imagery, and localise OpenCities functionality to reflect the needs and priorities of your council and community.

Once this is done, we provide you with training, and hand over to you for content entry and launch.

Designed with cities, for cities

Unlike a traditional website lifecycle where your website starts to get old and diminish in value from the moment of launch, OpenCities evolves and increases in value over time.

By providing a platform for our Cities share their ideas and suggestions, we are able to regularly create new features and functions that extend your Cities digital capability and keep your website fresh and modern. OpenCities is a platform you can never outgrow.





A platform for all digital content

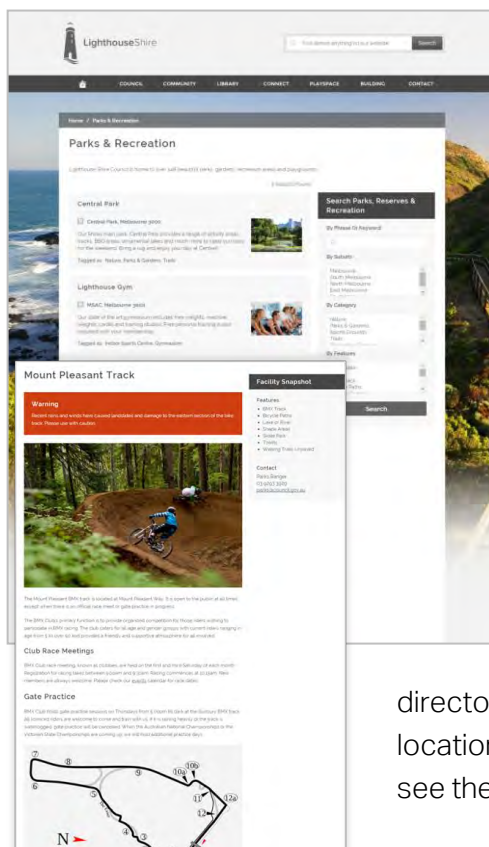
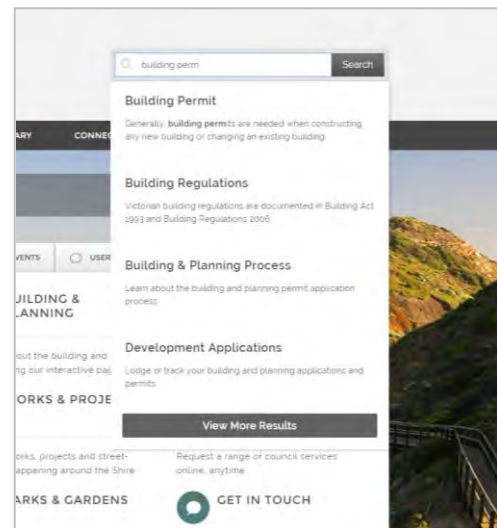
OpenCities streamlines how councils present their digital content, making it quick and easy for residents to find what exactly what they're looking for.

Smart search

OpenCities provides a powerful search experience that suggests information and services to a user as they are typing.

Rather than relying on a traditional navigation menu, visitors can now simply type what they are looking for, and be connected to the right information or online form without leaving the homepage.

The search experience is also smart enough to support the differences between how council labels its content (i.e. waste transfer station), and the words used by Residents to find that content (i.e. rubbish tip), vastly improving the discovery of information and services, without needing to know exact terminology or council departmental structure.



Interactive directories

OpenCities provides interactive directories that streamline how you publish and maintain common content such as parks, facilities, minutes & agendas, and much more.

For example, help residents discover local parks, gardens and recreational areas using the parks directory. Visitors can simply browse listings, or if they are looking for something specific – they can search by keywords, location, type of listing (such as sports grounds, trails, parks) and features (accessibility friendly, BBQ area, dog-friendly).

Or promote halls and venues for hire using the facilities directory. Customers can narrow down facilities by keywords, location, suitability and capacity to find just what they need, see the features of the facility, and enquire about availability.

A platform for unified communication



OpenCities simplifies the publishing of important communications such as news, announcements, events, works & project in your website, and across your social media channels.

Streamlined communication

OpenCities streamlines how communications staff can publish news, media releases, announcements, events, works & projects and many other types of time-based content via interactive directories.

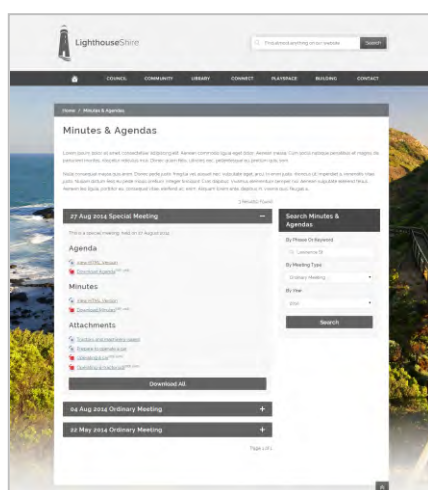
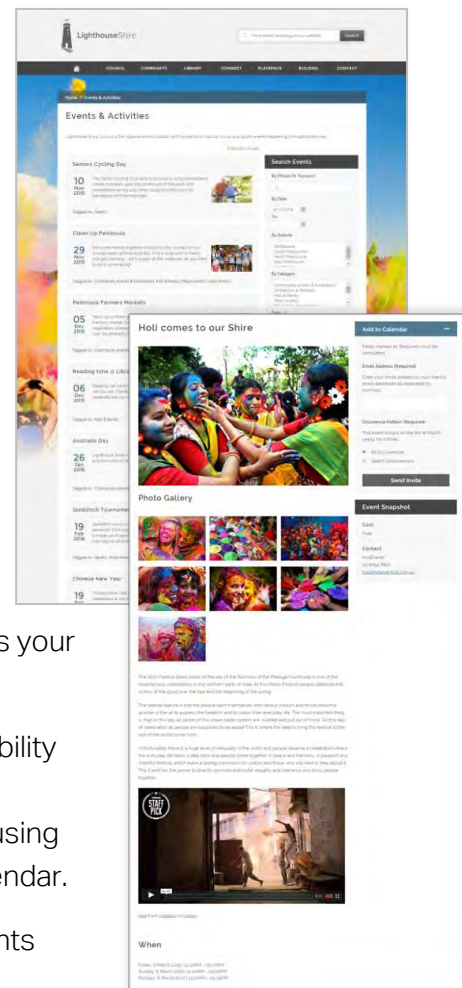
For example, a news directory allows visitors to search through historic news, and filtering by category or topic (announcements, media releases, etc).

An events directory allows visitors to discover what's happening across the municipality in an entirely new way.

From farmers markets and storytime at the local library, through to major festivals, the events and activities directory allows you to showcase what's happening across your community.

Users can find events that match their interests and availability by using a range of filters, and click through to get more information about the event, including the ability to RSVP using OpenCities forms, and add the event to their personal calendar.

Using the social media feed, you can syndicate new & events published via OpenCities with your Twitter and Facebook channel.



Meetings, minutes & agendas

A range of other directories exist to help present communication of Council business. OpenCities automatically generates the layouts and indexes each meeting. Residents can search and filter meetings on keyword, meeting type and date. Agendas, minutes and attachments are neatly presented and can be accessed individually, or customers can choose to click the 'download all' button to save a convenient zip file.



A platform for resident engagement

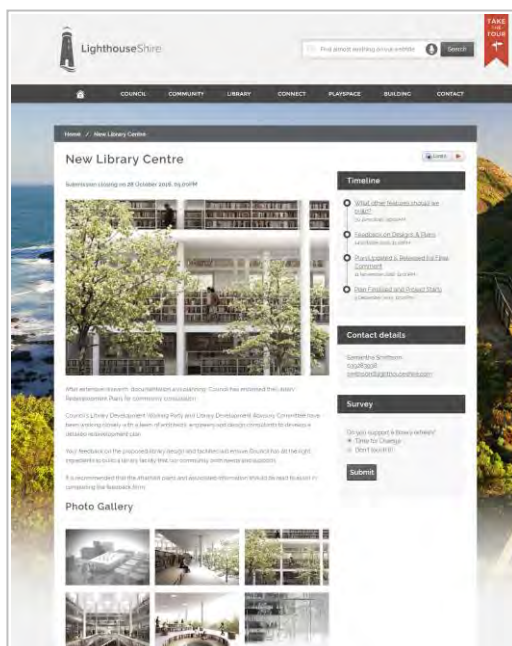
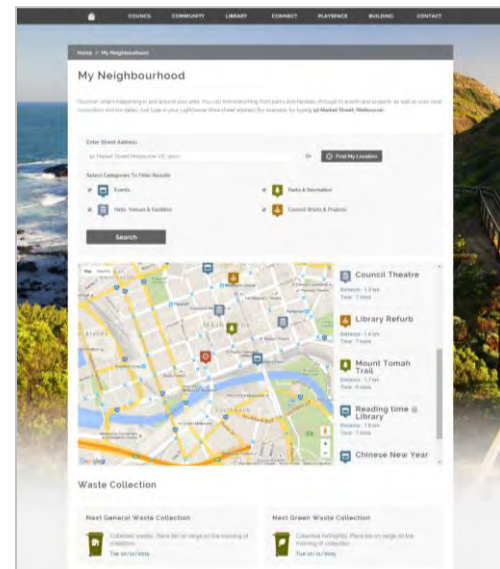
OpenCities helps residents better understand the breadth and depth of councils projects and initiatives, and better engage with their council about the things that matter most to them.

Localised information

By entering their address (or clicking the 'find my location' button) residents can discover a personalised view of their local area with nearby events, parks, facilities, major projects, consultations and more.

'My neighbourhood' can also provide residents with their specific bin dates, location based notices, and information about their elected members and ward.

As well as helping residents discover information and services that are more relevant to them, it can also help drive higher engagement via the community consultations service, and transparency about where ratepayers money is being invested in the community.



Online consultations

The OpenCities consultations hub helps you engage your community through online consultations, discussion spaces, blog posts, polls & surveys and more.

Discussion spaces can be setup to be pre or post-moderated, and to be open or closed consultations requiring registration. Consultations can be promoted on the homepage, via search and in the My Neighbourhood section to drive higher participation rates.



A platform that anyone can use

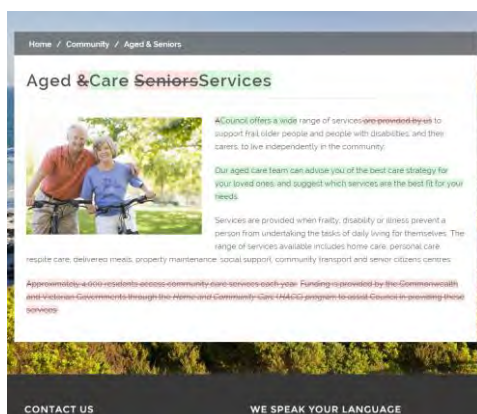
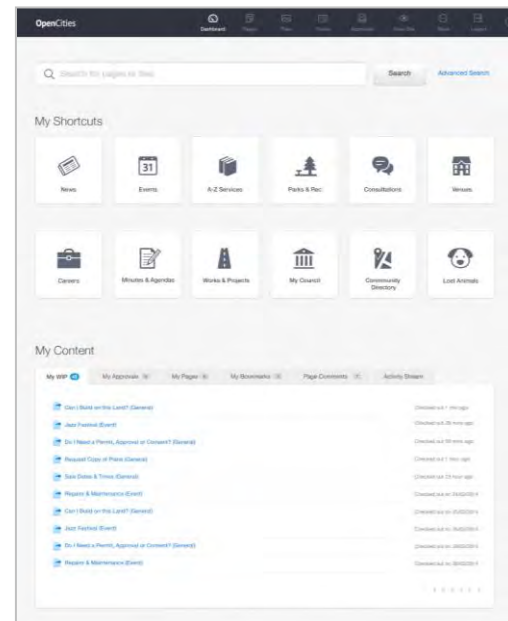
OpenCities makes it easy for council workers and departments to take ownership and improve the quality of their website content.

Simplifying website management

By providing a beautifully simple interface and a highly structured publishing process, OpenCities makes it easier for non-technical people to take ownership of their website content, and allows council to decentralise publishing to more people and departments.

Once publishers enter their content, OpenCities handles the layout, styling and publishing of that content to all the right destinations without any extra work for the publisher.

This in turn can reduce website management effort, which means more regular website updates and the website becoming a more useful asset for council and its community.



Better digital content

OpenCities provides the ability for content publishers to easily create, update and publish their website content. To ensure quality of content, OpenCities also allows publishers to collaborate on pages together before publishing to the website, and incorporates an approvals workflow process to ensure that all content being published is reviewed and approved by the appropriate people before it appears on the website.

Collaboration doesn't stop there. Once the page is published, website visitors can provide feedback on the page – empowering content publishers to continually improve their pages and deliver more value to website users. Site managers can also access website analytics to track how the website is being used by the community and adjust services and top tasks to continually improve the overall website experience.



Records Management Policy

Document Control

Document Name	Document Register Number	Review Date
Records Management Policy	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter a date.
Date Adopted	Minute Number	Summary of Changes
		Revised

Purpose

This policy determines the requirements for managing all records for Greater Hume **Shire** Council in both electronic and hardcopy formats in accordance with relevant legislation, standards and codes of best practice approved by **the** State Records **NSW** **Authority**.

Scope

All Greater Hume **Shire** Council **Councillors**, employees and contractors.

Definitions

Nil, as at date adopted.

Policy Content

As a public agency, Greater Hume **Shire** Council is bound by the regulations and requirements of the State Records Act 1998. The Act sets out codes of best practice to which Council must comply. Failure to do so could leave Council open to criticism in an investigation – whether by a Minister, a Royal Commission, an auditor or a law enforcement body. State Records legislation requires Greater Hume **Shire** Council to make and keep records that fully and accurately document operations and administration.

Why we need ‘full and accurate’ records:

- Facilitate action by employees at any level, and by their successors;
- Make possible a proper scrutiny of the conduct of business by anyone authorised to undertake such scrutiny, and,
- Protect the financial, legal and other rights of the organisation, its clients and any other people affected by its actions and decisions.
- To comply with all external requirements relating to record keeping practices.

To be a ‘full and accurate’ record the Australian Standards, **requires that records possess the following attributes**, **AS ISO 15489.1-2002 Records Management – Part 1: General and AS ISO 15489.2-2002, Records Management – Part 2: Guidelines**, **requires Councils records to conform with the following attributes:**

Attribute	Explanation of attribute
Compliant	Complying with the recordkeeping requirements from the regulatory environment in which the organisation operates
Adequate	For the purposes for which they are kept
Complete	Containing not only the content, but also the structural and contextual information necessary to document a transaction, as discussed above
Meaningful	With links to other records documenting a sequence of transactions
Comprehensive	Documenting the complete range of the organisation’s business
Accurate	Reflecting accurately the transaction that they document
Authentic	Enabling proof that they are what they purport to be and their purported creators indeed created them
Inviolate	Securely maintained to prevent unauthorised access, alteration or removal

Records Management Policy

Records are a vital ingredient in the support of Council's ongoing business activities. Effective management and preservation of Council's corporate memory is intrinsic to both the decision making process and productivity within Council.

Disposal of Records

Records must be protected, maintained, findable, and useable for their entire retention period, as outlined in the General Authority 39 (GA 39), Local Government Records.

Records cannot be disposed of other than in accordance with the State Records Act 1998, GA 39 and Greater Hume **Shire** Council, Disposal Procedures. Records cannot be disposed of without the concurrence of the Manager Corporate Services.

The State Records Act 1998 (NSW) requires public officers to 'make and keep full and accurate records' of their business activities.

Poor recordkeeping practices within the public sector contribute to inefficiencies and poor decision making. Poor recordkeeping means that evidence may not even exist or may not be adequate to meet council requirements for accountability. Records are vital for ongoing business and for internal and public accountability.

The NSW Public Sector Code of Conduct requires that public officials should 'maintain adequate documentation to support any decision made' in the performance of their duties.

As a Council employee or contractor you have a number of basic obligations regarding records:

- i. **Make records to support the conduct of your business activities.**
- ii. **Create records that would not otherwise be created eg. meetings, telephone discussions, conference and oral decisions must be documented.**
- iii. **Register records into either paper or electronic recordkeeping systems.**
- iv. **Learn how and where records are kept within Council.**
- v. **Do not destroy council records without the authority to do so from your records unit.**
- vi. **Do not lose records.**
- vii. **Be aware of records management procedures.**
- viii. **Council will support staff by including Record's Management training in induction programs and by providing training in the use of the Electronic Document Management System, InfoXpert.**

Accountability Requirements

Councillors

The Mayor and Councillors are responsible for the adoption of and compliance with the requirements of the Records Management Policy in their conduct of official business for Council. Official business includes business relevant to the performance of the function and duties of the office of Councillor.

General Manager

The General Manager has a duty to ensure that Greater Hume Council complies with the requirements of the NSW State Records Act 1998.

Records Management Policy

Corporate Services

The Manager Corporate Services is responsible for the management, protection and disposal of Council records in accordance with the State Records Act 1998.

Directors and Managers

Each Director and Manager are responsible for ensuring:

- That their staff respond to correspondence and action requests in a timely manner and that this information is also recorded in the Electronic Document Management Records System (EDRMS).
- Their staff comply with Council's records management policy and procedures. They will ensure their staff receive training on records management and use of Council's EDRMS (Infoxpert).
- Their staff respond to correspondence and actions requests within the determined time frames, and that this information is captured into the EDRMS, in accordance with the Records Management Procedures and guidelines for the use of Infoxpert.
- That their staff who have access to information of a confidential nature, are instructed as to their rights and obligations when dealing with such matters.

Records Officer

The Records Officer is responsible for the management of Council records (paper and electronic), all archiving services, and access to information requests. The Records Officer will assist and support all Council staff in meeting their record keeping responsibilities.

The Records Officer is responsible to the Manager Corporate Services for the efficient, accurate and timely delivery of records management services, including:

- Registration and distribution of incoming correspondence;
- Archiving and retrieval of council records;
- Access to information services;
- Provision of services to internal and external customers; and
- Monitoring and auditing of records management processes, including Council's Controlled Documents system. The Controlled Documents system incorporates Council's policies, procedures, forms and guidelines.
- Implementing new initiatives using the EDRMS, and driving organisational use of electronic records.

All Staff

Under the State Records Act 1998, all staff are required to 'make and keep full and accurate records' of their business activities. Staff are accountable to their supervisors for compliance with this policy, and with related internal policies, procedures and guidelines.

All staff are responsible for creating records that document:

- Decisions made;
- Verbal decisions and instructions or commitments given, including telephone conversations;
- Meetings;
- Other events; and
- Business activities they are involved in.

All staff shall:

- Make records that support the conduct of their business activities.
- Register records into the EDRMS in accordance with the protocols outlined in the internal procedures and guidelines for use of Infoxpert.
- Ensure all corporate emails are registered to the EDRMS.

Records Management Policy

- Handle hard copy records and information sensibly and with care, so as to avoid damage to the records.
- Not relinquish control over, damage, alter, destroy or lose records of Council.
- Access records from within the EDRMS.
- Maintain confidentiality of records they have access to, in accordance with Council's Code of Conduct, and the requirements of the Government Information (Public Access) Act, and Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act.
- Be given appropriate access levels to records and documents they require to enable them to perform their duties.
- Ensure that all paper documents received from external or internal sources relating to Council business are scanned and registered into the EDRMS.

Links to Policy

Access to Information Policy
Social Media Policy
Document Control Policy

Links to Procedure

Records Management Procedure Manual
Government Information Public Access (GIPA) Guide

References

Nil, as at date adopted

Responsibility

General Manager

Relevant Legislation

International Standard ISO15489 Records Management
General Records Disposal Schedule 2011
State Records Act 1998 and associated Standards, Principles and Codes
State Records Regulation 2015
Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009
Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998

Associated Records

Nil, as at date adopted

Education Assistance Policy

Document Control

Document Name	Document Register Number	Review Date
Education Assistance Policy	1.0.3	3 January 2022
Date Adopted	Minute Number	Summary of Changes
		Revised

Purpose

Greater Hume Shire Council ("Council") recognises that appropriate continual learning can be valuable for the development and welfare of its employees. Appropriate education can contribute to the quality and competence of employees and in turn increase further the productivity and success of Council.

The objective of this Policy is to outline the assistance Council may provide to employees who wish to undertake relevant continuing education with the Council's approval. This Policy covers both the financial assistance and assistance with working arrangements, which may be provided by Council, to assist employees balance the demands of work and further studies.

This Policy will differentiate between Council required education and employee initiated education.

Nothing in this Policy affects the application of Council scholarship programs or policies, training and development provisions of the **Local Government (State) Award 2017**.

Scope

This Policy applies to employees who wish to undertake further **tertiary** education who meet the eligibility requirements listed below. This Policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment.

Education includes but is not limited to, further part time and distance learning education courses leading to the award of a recognised academic or vocational qualification, from a recognised **tertiary** education institution.

.

Definitions

Nil, as at date adopted.

Policy Content

Council Required Education

Where it is a Council requirement to study as a condition of employment (e.g. trainee/apprentice positions), the provisions of the **Local Government (State) Award 2017 Clause 31, Training and Development** will apply. Similarly, for senior staff or other contract employees that have education assistance as part of their contract, the provision of their contract will dominate.

Employee Initiated Education

Clause 31 (v) of the Local Government (State) Award 2017 states:

"The employer may grant an employee undertaking a course consistent with the employer's training plan although not at Council's requirement, leave with pay or leave without pay to attend course requirements provided that the employee gives reasonable notice of such requirements. Where the employee is not granted such leave Council shall give preference in granting annual leave or to other accrued leave to attend course requirements provided that the employee gives reasonable notice of such requirements. Council may pay course fees at its discretion".

Education Assistance Policy

Provision of Assistance

Council may, at its absolute discretion, provide assistance to employees to complete tertiary education (having regard to resource limitations) where:

- the proposed tertiary education is relevant to Council's requirements
- the proposed tertiary education is relevant to the employee's career development with Council; and
- the employee has consistently demonstrated a satisfactory or above average job performance.

Application Process and Terms of Assistance

Employees must make a written application for educational assistance prior to enrolment in the relevant tertiary educational course.

Written applications should include where possible the following details:

- course name
- type of qualification being pursued
- the name of the educational institution with which the course will be undertaken
- the duration of the course, indicating whether it will be completed on a part time, full time or by distance learning basis
- a list of the course subjects and a summary of the contents of each course
- where the employee has already completed some components of the course, a list of the subjects already completed and evidence of the grading received for each completed subject
- an itemised list of the costs involved in completing the course (e.g. course fees and other expenses expected to be incurred such as textbooks, travel, time etc) and evidence to confirm these costs
- an explanation of how the course of study directly relates to the employee's current/prospective job description and responsibilities and how it will contribute to the employee's career development; and
- an explanation of how the course of study is relevant to the business objectives of Council.

Approval Process & Terms of Assistance

Once an application has been received, the Director of Corporate & Community Services will advise in writing, whether Council will provide educational assistance, what form the assistance will be provided, and over what period of time. For example, Council may choose to provide assistance on a semester by semester basis.

Any assistance provided is at the absolute discretion of Council and may be withdrawn at the end of the specified approved period without additional assistance being provided.

The employee will be required to incur all education costs upfront and Council will reimburse those approved expenses provided the employee has satisfied all other requirements. The provision of on-going assistance is also conditional upon the following:

- the employee passing the relevant units/subject for which assistance has been approved and provides evidence to the Council's satisfaction of this
- the employee has, during the course of study, consistently maintained a satisfactory or above standard in their work performance

Education Assistance Policy

- the employee is still employed by Council, at the completion of the relevant course units/subject for which assistance has been approved; and
- the employee agrees to repay the financial assistance provided in the circumstances listed below.

Retrospective assistance will not be granted to an employee. This means that applications for financial assistance made after the completion of a course will not be accepted. An employee must make an application in writing, notifying Council prior to enrolment in the course.

~~Approval for educational assistance is valid for a maximum period of 12 months. Employees must re-apply at the end of the approval period, prior to re-enrolling in an education course.~~

Repayment of Educational Assistance Costs

Where the employee's services have been terminated by Council for any reason **in accordance with Clause 38 of the Local Government (State) Award 2017** while undertaking further education, or within two years of completion of further education or part thereof, for any part of which the employee has been reimbursed or had the fees otherwise paid by or on behalf of Council, the employee will be required to repay Council as a debt, whom such repayments will be made in accordance with the following scale, all relevant financial assistance provided by the Council in connection with the education course:

- up to 12 months from the date of the relevant reimbursement date – 100% of the costs reimbursed by the Council
- from 12 months to 18 months from the date of the relevant reimbursement date – 50% for the costs reimbursed by the Council
- from 18 months to 24 months from the date of the relevant reimbursement date – 25% of the costs reimbursed by the Council.

If Council, in its absolute discretion, decides to pay further education costs on behalf of an employee in advance, if the employee commences but later withdraws from further education, the employee agrees to immediately repay Council that part of the education costs which have been paid by Council as at the date of the employee's withdrawal from further education.

NOTE: For the purpose of clarity, the requirement for repayment of education assistance due to termination of employment by Council is only applicable to termination by Council under Clause 38 of the Local Government (State) Award 2017 and does not apply in cases of voluntary resignation by the employee or termination of employment under Clause 39 Workplace Change or Clause 40 Termination of Employment and Redeployment Due to Redundancy of the Local Government (State) Award 2017

Types of Assistance Available

Council aims to make continuing education more expedient and/or less costly for its employees. The following forms of assistance may be provided in Council's absolute discretion.

Financial

Fees for approved education courses are reimbursed to relevant employees (who are still in the Council's employ) at the end of each semester (or unit of study) upon provision of evidence of successful completion, including a copy of the employee's academic transcript and demonstration of satisfactory or above average work performance.



Education Assistance Policy

Other approved expenses, such as purchase of required textbooks and other required resources, may be reimbursed by the Council upon the relevant employee meeting the same requirements and in addition, by providing evidence of purchase (such as purchase receipts).

Recommended study assistance contributions are as listed below.

<u>TAFE</u>	Certificate & Advanced Certificate	<u>Up To:</u> Annual Fee \$300
<u>TAFE</u>	Associate Diploma/Diploma	Annual Fee \$700 Per Semester \$350
<u>UNIVERSITY</u>	Degree, Post Graduate Certificate, Post Graduate Diploma or Masters Degree	Per Subject \$1350 Maximum \$8000 per approved course

Employees will only be able to claim reimbursement for subjects/course units successfully completed and for reasonable expenses actually incurred.

Leave

Any absence for study (study preparation, voluntary residential schools, workshops etc) requires an application for leave (annual, LWOP, RDO or time in lieu).

Supervisors are expected to sympathetically assess these applications.

Paid study leave will be granted to attend compulsory examinations, workshops or residential schools. Application for study leave (travel to/from and the examination) should be submitted with supporting documents.

Links to Policy

Greater Hume Shire Workforce Management Plan
Equal Employment Opportunity Policy and Management Plan
Recruitment and Selection Policy
Staff Education and Training Policy

Links to Procedure

Nil, as at date adopted

References

Local Government (State) Award 2017

Responsibility

General Manager

Relevant Legislation

Nil, as at date adopted

Associated Records

Nil, as at date adopted



Recognition of Long Service Policy

Document Control

Document Name	Document Register Number	Review Date
Recognition of Long Service Policy	1.0.3	3 January 2022
Date Adopted	Minute Number	Summary of Changes
		Revised

Purpose

Greater Hume Council is committed to ensuring that the contributions of staff members to Greater Hume over a long period of time are recognised and recorded

Scope

This policy applies to employees of Council **with continuous service**.

Definitions

Nil, as at date adopted.

Policy Content

All current staff members who have worked continuously at Greater Hume for periods of 10, 15, 20, 25 and 30 years respectively are eligible **for recognition under the policy**.

Casual service will not be recognised as eligible service, except where such service has been of a continuous nature and recognised for long service leave purposes.

- **10 Years Service**

Council will present to all employees who have completed ten (10) years service with Council a framed Certificate of Service. **The certificate is to be presented by the Mayor and General Manager at the annual "All Staff" function.**

- **15 Years Service**

Council will present to all employees who have completed fifteen (15) years service with Council a framed Certificate of Service. **The certificate is to be presented by the Mayor and General Manager at the annual "All Staff" function.**

- **20 Years Service**

Council will present to all employees who have completed twenty (20) years service with Council a framed Certificate of Service. **The certificate is to be presented by the Mayor and General Manager at the annual "All Staff" function.**

- **25 Years Service**

Council will present to all employees who have completed twenty five (25) years service with Council a framed Certificate of Service. **The certificate is to be presented by the Mayor and General Manager at the annual "All Staff" function.**

Recognition of Long Service Policy

- **30+ Years Service**

Council will present to all employees who have completed thirty (30) years service with Council a framed Certificate of Service together with a gift of the employee's choosing up to the value of \$300. The certificate and gift is to be presented by the Mayor and General Manager at the annual "All Staff" function

Recognition in line with that presented at 30 years service will apply in the event of employees reaching forty (40) years service with Council.

- **Recognition of Prior Service**

For the purposes of this policy, all service with the former Councils of Hume, Culcairn or Holbrook will be deemed as being service with Greater Hume Council.

Links to Policy

Nil, as at date adopted

Links to Procedure

Nil, as at date adopted

References

Nil, as at date adopted

Responsibility

Director Corporate and Community Services

Relevant Legislation

Nil, as at date adopted

Associated Records

NSW Local Government (State) Award 2017

Document Name	Document Version Number	Review Date
Terms of Reference	1.0.1	As required
Date Adopted	Minute Number	Status
Click here to enter a date.		New Policy

Reference Group Status

Locality based Disability Inclusion and Access Reference Groups (Reference Group) shall be established to ensure Greater Hume Council (GHC) is aware of the issues which affect people with disabilities and their carers living in the Greater Hume Council Local Government Area.

The Reference Groups will also advise GHC on ways in which GHC can be a more inclusive community for people with disabilities. Members of the Reference Groups will draw on their own experience and their broader engagement with people with disability, as their carers and service providers to provide that advice.

The work of the Reference Groups will be underpinned by the Four Key Focus Areas of GHC Disability Inclusion Action Plan (Refer to attachment):

1. Attitudes and behaviours
2. Liveable communities
3. Employment
4. Systems and processes

Name of the Group

The name of the Group in each locality shall be the: **GHC Disability Inclusion and Access Reference Group (Culcairn, Henty, Holbrook, Jindera)**

Membership

The Reference Groups will comprise people with disabilities and/or carers.

The groups will be a representative body of people who are able to draw upon valued and relevant perspectives and experience. Reference Group members may bring a range of expertise including:

- person with a disability;
- young person with a disability;
- person from an Aboriginal or Torres Strait background;
- person from a culturally and linguistically diverse background with a disability;
- people of all ages and backgrounds who are carers of people with disabilities; and/or
- knowledge of the disability service system.

Council may appoint one Councilor to a Reference Group and the Director of Corporate and Community Services or their nominated representative will convene the group.

Terms of Reference

The Reference Groups will:

- provide advice to GHC on issues affecting people with disabilities;
- guide, monitor and provide advice on the implementation of GHC's Disability Inclusion and Action Plan
- advise on, and participate in, community engagement to build an inclusive Greater Hume Shire
- foster cooperative linkages with people with disability, their families and carers, organisations, government and community;
- alert GHC to emerging issues, potential risks and opportunities related to the ongoing implementation of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS); and

- provide advice on strategies that raise community awareness of the rights of people with disability including the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the role of GHC and community in promoting these rights

Term of Office

Term of office will not be limited however it is recommended that appointments will be for a term of up to two years, with the option one further two-year term of membership.

Members may form working groups and/or sub-Reference Groups and/or co-opt individuals with expertise for particular projects or issues.

Membership is confirmed by the Director of Corporate and Community Services or their representative.

Remuneration

Members will be remunerated for respite and transport for participating in meetings.

Remuneration will be agreed in advance.

Office Bearers

The Director of Corporate and Community Services (DCS) or their nominated representative will Chair the meetings.

Role of the Chair

Facilitate orderly and constructive discussions between members on matters within the Terms of Reference.

Assist members to work together as a group by:

- facilitating discussion;
- ensuring all members have equal opportunity to contribute ideas, opinions and concerns; and
- drawing participation from all members;
- maintain a positive and constructive atmosphere at meetings by encouraging courtesy, respect and openness;
- seek to resolve conflict within the group and provide feedback as necessary to group members on expressed opinions or actions;

Liaise with the Secretariat to develop meeting agendas and ensure that any action required is appropriately assigned and progressed.

Secretariat

GHC shall provide secretariat support. The Secretariat is responsible for:

- Developing agendas in consultation with the Reference groups
- Distributing the agenda and meeting papers in appropriate formats;
- Taking minutes and distributing them to Reference Group members within five days of Reference Group meetings;
- Monitoring action items arising from Reference Group business and assisting in their implementation, including liaising between the Reference Group and GHC; and
- Arranging venues and refreshments for meetings.

Meeting Frequency and Duration of Meetings

- Organisation of the meetings shall be the responsibility of GHC and the Reference Groups
- Meetings will be held on a needs basis, at least annually, in order to achieve the agreed outcomes established by the Reference Groups.
- Meetings shall be held at a time and venue determined by the Reference Groups.
- Notices of Meetings shall be distributed to the Reference Groups and invitees at least five working days prior to the Meetings.

Recommendations Made by the Reference Group

All recommendations made by the Reference Groups shall be by those who are in attendance at the Meeting.

Distribution of Minutes

Minutes of the Reference Group's deliberations and its recommendations shall be made available to Council at the earliest opportunity after any meeting of the Reference Group. Minutes of all meetings shall be distributed to all members.

Responsibility of Reference Group Members

- Reference Group members will be required to act in accordance with Council's Code of Conduct and Work Health and Safety legislation.
- To act at all times in accordance with Council Policy and Procedures.
- Attend meetings and be punctual.
- If unable to attend a meeting send an apology.
- Raise issues and concerns, report on initiatives and issues which may be relevant to or of interest to the community.
- Participate in discussions and decision making.
- Follow up recommendations and actions as recorded in the Minutes.
- To perform other duties which may be authorised from time to time by Council.
- Requests from the Reference Groups will be forwarded to the General Manager for appropriate actions. Copies of minutes will not be deemed as correspondence.

Alteration of Terms of Reference and Operation Guidelines

The Terms of Reference may be altered or amended by the Reference Groups at an ordinary meeting provided due notice is given and only with the endorsement and approval of Greater Hume Council.

Recommendations to Council to amend or change the Terms of Reference for the Reference Groups, including the Reference Group Functions, will need to be endorsed by the majority of the Reference Group members.

Termination of Membership

Reference Group members can terminate membership at anytime.

Voluntary Workers Insurance

Reference Group members and Volunteers will have the following cover –

Voluntary workers are covered while engaged on a journey (as defined) undertaken on the Insured's business, including any Incidental Private Travel. Cover under this Policy (Business Travel and Group Personal Accident insurance) shall be whilst engaged in or on any authorised voluntary work directly or indirectly connected with or on behalf of council.

It is extremely important however that where activities other than Reference Group meetings (eg; working bees) contact is made with Council prior to the activity to ensure proper risk management practices are put in place.

Reference

GHC 2017-2021 Disability Inclusion Action Plan <http://bit.ly/2BFtbj4>.

**Disability Inclusion and Access Reference Group Meetings
January – February 2018
Jindera, Holbrook, Henty and Culcairn**

Participants:

- People with disability
- Carers, family
- Disability service providers
- Council staff
- Councillors

Summary of key issues**Council Offices**

- Low counters required in Holbrook and Henty
- Improve rear access to Jindera Hub (Door Bell)
- Unisex R/L disability toilets required in Holbrook, Henty and Culcairn
- Review availability of disability Car Parks for Council Offices
- Install hearing loops

Customer Service

- Staff to introduce themselves using their name
- Large font name tags
- Knowledge of disability services and accessible resources eg toilets etc

Council Information

- Produce in non PDF format –not able to be used by some voice over technologies
- Use Face Book where possible
- Website needs to comply with web accessibility standards
- Use accessibility guidelines for the Newsletter
- All photos to have a descriptor
- Dedicated space for inclusion and access information and resources
- All Council information to be provided in multiple formats
- Review Style Guide and update to comply with disability standards

Public Spaces

- Parks: review footpath access and access between resources eg Playground and footpaths
- Lift Change facility for Holbrook
- Install liberty Swings
- Progress to upgrade/install all accessible playgrounds
- Audit disabled toilets with a view to upgrading over time
- Pools: maintain equipment eg lift in Culcairn
- Walkway to Holbrook CTC to be upgraded

Council Events

- Undertake an accessible audit prior to all events
- Improve access and location of disability car parks

Footpaths/Crossings/Signage

- Address recommendations in the various locations
- Improve surfaces, dimensions and crossings to reduce risks and trauma for PwD¹
- Install digital signage in CBD/tourist precincts
- Review signage in Holbrook – CTC

Parking

- Audit Disability Car Parking across the Shire
- Engage PwD/Carers in decisions regarding location and dimensions
- Include various options (for side and rear access vehicles)

Transport

- Continue to lobby and advocate for improved Community Transport
- Seek options for regular community bus to – Albury- Jindera
- Refer the needs of PwD to Ability Links (Martin Clarke Intereach Albury Ph: (02) 6051 7800

¹ PwD refers to people with disability and their carers