



Economic Development Committee

Issues Paper No. 3

April 2010

Inquiry into developing Queensland's rural and regional communities through grey nomad tourism

1.0 Aim of this paper

The committee has published this paper to stimulate debate and invite interested groups and individuals to make public submissions to this inquiry. Issues raised within this paper do not restrict the scope of submissions. Groups and individuals making submissions may comment on any matter they consider relevant to the inquiry.

2.0 Economic Development Committee

The Economic Development Committee is a select committee of the 53rd Queensland Parliament established by motion of the House on 23 April 2009. The role of this committee is to monitor and report on issues in the policy areas of employment, infrastructure, transport, trade, industry development, agriculture and tourism.

3.0 Inquiry terms of reference

The Economic Development Committee will investigate the development of Queensland's rural and regional communities through grey nomad tourism. As part of this inquiry the committee will consider:

- The role of grey nomad tourism in developing Queensland's rural and regional communities;
- Infrastructure requirements for grey nomads;
- Marketing and promotion of Queensland to potential grey nomad visitors;
- The role of government in facilitating grey nomad tourism in Queensland; and
- The utilisation of grey nomad skills and labour in rural and regional Queensland.

4.0 Inquiry program

Submissions close	28 May 2010
Public hearings	September 2010
Report to Parliament	End 2010

5.0 Grey tourism and grey nomads

Grey tourism is a specific niche market that caters towards older travellers. However, the definition of 'grey tourist', or categories of grey tourists such as 'grey nomad' are less clearly defined. Tourism Queensland define a grey tourist as an individual aged 60 years or over,¹ while Tourism Australia uses the definition of visitors aged 55 years or older.² A grey nomad is one type of grey tourist.

A grey nomad is a retired or semi-retired person that travels for all, or part of the year, throughout Australia. They are generally 55 years of age or older.³ Grey nomads are defined by the activities they choose to undertake, using their later years and retirement as opportunities for travel and leisure, generally driving within the Australian continent.⁴ For the purpose of this inquiry, the committee adopts these terms in their broadest sense, to include a class of older, road-bound tourists that have taken to Australian roads as part of a travelling lifestyle.

6.0 Importance of grey nomads to the Queensland economy

Tourism is an important component of the Queensland economy, with Queensland's tourism services valued at \$8.4 billion in 2008. Interstate tourism (\$4.8 billion) was worth slightly more than overseas tourism (\$3.6 billion).⁵ To reduce the negative effects of a fall in international tourists due to circumstances beyond individual, business or government control, tourist operators can diversify and target domestic niche markets such as grey tourism.⁶ Encouraging grey nomads to travel in Queensland will benefit the state's economy by diversifying the potential pool of tourists.

Domestic grey tourists staying overnight in Australia spend similar amounts of money to younger domestic tourists. However, domestic grey tourists spend a greater proportion of their nights in regional areas when compared with younger tourists.⁷ Most

¹ Tourism Queensland, nd, *Grey Tourism (Seniors)*, Tourism Queensland, Brisbane, downloaded on 21 January 2010 from www.tq.com.au, p. 1.

² Tourism Research Australia, 2009, *Mature Age Visitors in Australia 2008*, Tourism Australia, Canberra, downloaded on 6 April 2010 from www.tra.australia.com, p. 1.

³ Obst, P., Brayley, N. & King, M. 2008, Grey nomads: Road safety impacts and risk management, *2008 Australasian Road Safety Research, Policing and Education Conference*, 10-12 November, Adelaide, p. 3.

⁴ Higgs, P. & Quirk, F. 2007, 'Grey Nomads' in Australia: Are they are good model for successful aging and health?, *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, 1114, p. 251.

⁵ Office of Economic and Statistical Research, 2009, *Queensland Economic Review*, July, Queensland Treasury, Brisbane, downloaded on 21 January 2010 from www.oesr.qld.gov.au, p.4.

⁶ Bates, L. 2004, *The Value of Grey Tourism: Maximising the Benefits for Queensland*, Research Brief 2004/04, Queensland Parliamentary Library, Brisbane, p. 3.

⁷ Tourism Research Australia, 2009, *Mature Age Visitors in Australia 2008*, Tourism Australia, Canberra, downloaded on 6 April 2010 from www.tra.australia.com, p. 2.

grey tourists within Australia are travelling domestically for the purposes of a holiday or visiting family and friends.⁸

In 2006, tourists coming to Queensland, between the ages of 45 and 64, constituted 36 per cent of visitors utilising camping and caravan parks, whilst those above 65 years made up 16 per cent.⁹ In Queensland's regional areas, tourists staying in caravan parks or camping grounds constituted up to 27 per cent of accommodation nights.¹⁰ This suggests that grey nomads are important to the commercial camping and caravan park industry in Queensland, and that grey nomads play a particularly important role in regional tourism in Queensland.

Issues for comment:

1. What economic contribution do grey nomads make to rural and regional areas of Queensland?
2. Are the available statistics on grey nomads in Queensland useful, current and accessible?

7.0 Infrastructure requirements

Governments can play a role in encouraging grey nomads to travel by providing appropriate infrastructure. Government provided infrastructure may include a safe road network, adequate road and attraction signage, and tourist information.¹¹ Certain subsections of the grey nomad tourist market, such as campervan and motorhome tourists, also have specific requirements, such as long-vehicle parking access close to shopping centres, access to potable water, and access to rubbish and grey-water disposal points.¹²

A key infrastructure requirement for this demographic is access to adequate health services. Grey nomad tourism involves large numbers of older tourists visiting regional and remote areas, utilising the health services in these communities. A study undertaken to review the health issues of grey nomads visiting the Kimberley region of Western Australia highlighted a need for adequate health resources. Of the study participants, the average age was 61.3 years; the most prevalent health concern was hypertension; and the majority of participants were taking regular medication, only half of which had enough medication to last the length of their trip.¹³ Many of these participants did not carry personal health summaries, lists of prescribed medication,

⁸ Tourism Research Australia, 2009, *Mature Age Visitors in Australia 2008*, Tourism Australia, Canberra, downloaded on 6 April 2010 from www.tra.australia.com, pp. 1-2.

⁹ Tourism Queensland, nd, *Caravan Parks and Commercial Camping Industry: Year ended December 2006*, Tourism Queensland, Brisbane, downloaded on 6 April 2010 from www.tq.com.au, p. 2.

¹⁰ Tourism Queensland, nd, *Queensland Data Sheet - Domestic visitors to Queensland's regions: Year ended December 2009*, Tourism Queensland, Brisbane, downloaded on 6 April 2010 from www.tq.com.au, p. 1.

¹¹ Hardy, A. 2003, An investigation into the key factors necessary for the development of iconic touring routes, *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 9(4), p. 316.

¹² Campervan and Motorhome Club of Australia, nd, *CMCA and Government*, Campervan and Motorhome Club of Australia, Wickham, downloaded on 7 April 2010 from www.cmca.net.au, p.1.

¹³ Tate, J., Mein, J., Freeman, H. & Maguire, G. 2006, Grey nomads: Health and health preparation of older travellers in remote Australia, *Australian Family Physician*, 35(1/2) January/February, 2006, pp. 70-72.

and the survey group had a lower influenza vaccination rate than the national average.¹⁴

Issues for comment:

3. What are the public infrastructure requirements of grey nomads including health services, waste disposal sites and signage?
4. Is the current infrastructure for grey nomads in Queensland adequate? What additional infrastructure is required?

8.0 Government coordination

Government plays a central role in regulating the operation, development and licensing of the camping and caravan park industry utilised by the grey nomad tourist market. Information provided to the committee suggests that coordination and change of regulation could assist the industry, allowing for a more viable camping industry and the continued economic development of regional Queensland. Potentially contentious areas of government regulation may include the utilisation of public land for free or discount camping; the development of caravan parks and camping grounds; and the lack of a centralised set of regulations and licensing requirements that are currently overseen by 74 separate local governments.¹⁵

Issues for comment:

5. What are the major issues relating to the regulation of Queensland's camping and caravan parks?

9.0 Marketing and promotion

Governments can play a positive organising role in marketing Queensland's attractions to potential visitors.¹⁶ Queensland Tourism undertakes a wide variety of marketing and coordination for Queensland's regional destinations across a range of media. The www.queenslandholidays.com.au website, for example, provides a portal to regional accommodation, sights and attractions. Another example is Tourism Queensland's Best Job in the World campaign that promotes Queensland's Great Barrier Reef.

Governments can further encourage grey nomad tourism by introducing policies, providing travel concessions and marketing to this group.¹⁷ Research suggests that Australian domestic overnight grey tourists tend to use the internet and previous visits as their source of information for their trip.¹⁸ Additionally, up to 60 per cent of route

¹⁴ Tate, J., Mein, J., Freeman, H. & Maguire, G. 2006, Grey nomads: Health and health preparation of older travellers in remote Australia, *Australian Family Physician*, 35(1/2) January/February, 2006, pp. 70-72.

¹⁵ Caravanning Queensland, 2010, *Information provided*, Caravanning Queensland, Brisbane, 24 February.

¹⁶ Hardy, A. 2003, An investigation into the key factors necessary for the development of iconic touring routes, *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 9(4), pp. 314-330; Olsen, M. 2003, Tourism themed routes: A Queensland perspective, *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 9(4), p.331-341.

¹⁷ Ruys, H. and Wei, S. 2001, Seniors tourism, *Special Interest Tourism*, Douglas, N., and Derrett, R. (eds), John Wiley and Sons, Brisbane, p. 419.

¹⁸ Tourism Research Australia, 2009, *Mature Age Visitors in Australia 2008*, Tourism Australia, Canberra, downloaded on 6 April 2010 from www.tra.australia.com. p. 2.

planning for long-haul road holidays is undertaken before departure.¹⁹ This suggests that current government resources could be utilised to further market Queensland's attractions to the grey nomad market.

Issues for comment:

6. What is the best method of marketing Queensland's rural and regional communities to grey nomad tourists?

10.0 Utilisation of grey nomad skills in regional and rural Queensland

In Queensland, skills shortages exist for both professional and other roles including social work, nursing and engineering.²⁰ Grey nomads potentially bring extensive economic, social and human capital to isolated, outback towns that can be used to address these shortages.²¹ Grey nomads can work in either paid positions or volunteer roles.

A number of programs seek to link grey nomads with paid or volunteer positions. These programs include the Indigenous Skills Transfer and Exchange Partnership (INSTEP) managed by the National Seniors Community Foundation.²² The INSTEP program links volunteers to specific projects that Indigenous communities believe will benefit their members. In exchanges, the volunteers have an opportunity to learn about Indigenous culture and experience Australia's outback.²³

The Queensland Department of Education and Training runs the Grey Nomad Teacher Employment Strategy. This strategy encourages registered and retired teachers to undertake short term teaching opportunities in rural and regional locations throughout Queensland.²⁴ Partners of teachers participating in the program may be able to work in a paid or volunteer position in the school community while their partner is teaching.²⁵ TAFE Queensland also offers short to medium term teaching employment opportunities for grey nomads with relevant industry experience and qualifications in their chosen field.²⁶ As well as formal programs, websites such as

¹⁹ Olsen, M. 2003, Tourism themed routes: A Queensland perspective, *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 9(4), p.332.

²⁰ Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, nd, *State and Territory Skill Shortage List – Queensland*, Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, Canberra, downloaded on 7 April 2010 from www.workplace.gov.au.

²¹ Leonard, R., Onyx, J. & Maher, A. 2007, Constructing short-term episodic volunteering experiences: Matching grey nomads and the needs of small country towns, *Third Sector Review*, 13(2), p. 125.

²² National Seniors Australia. nd, *INSTEP*, National Seniors Australia, Brisbane, downloaded on 6 April 2010 from www.nationalseniors.com.au, p. 1.

²³ National Seniors Australia. nd, *INSTEP*, National Seniors Australia, Brisbane, downloaded on 6 April 2010 from www.nationalseniors.com.au, p. 1.

²⁴ Department of Education and Training. 2010, *Grey Nomad Teacher Employment Strategy – 2010: Fact Sheet*, Department of Education and Training, Brisbane, downloaded on 6 April 2010 from www.det.qld.gov.au, p. 1.

²⁵ Department of Education and Training. 2010, *Grey Nomad Teacher Employment Strategy – 2010: Fact Sheet*, Department of Education and Training, Brisbane, downloaded on 6 April 2010 from www.det.qld.gov.au, p. 2.

²⁶ Department of Education and Training. 2010, *Grey Nomad Teacher Employment Strategy – 2010: Fact Sheet*, Department of Education and Training, Brisbane, downloaded on 6 April 2010 from www.det.qld.gov.au, p. 2.

greynomadsemployment.com aim to link the skills, knowledge and experience of grey nomads with positions available in regional Australia.²⁷

Issues for comment:

7. How successful have existing programs been in utilising the skills of grey nomads in rural and regional Queensland?

8. What can the government do to encourage grey nomads to use their skills by undertaking work in rural and regional areas?

11.0 Making a submission

Written submissions should be sent to:

The Research Director
Economic Development Committee
Parliament House, George Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

OR by email to: edc@parliament.qld.gov.au (attach document)

OR by facsimile to 07 3406 7070

Submissions may also be lodged online at the committee's website at www.parliament.qld.gov.au/edc. Please contact the committee secretariat if you require assistance.

All submissions must include the name and contact details of the person and the capacity in which that person is making the submission (eg. individual or organisation).

Submissions close 28 May 2010

Extensions to the closing date may be given. If you need more time to make a submission, or for further information about the inquiry, contact the committee secretariat.

Form

- There is no set form for a submission to the committee. Written submissions may be in the form of a letter, a substantial paper or a short document and they may include appendices. Submissions may contain facts, opinions, arguments and recommendations for action. The committee will accept both written submissions and submissions lodged via their website.

²⁷ Grey Nomads Employment.com. 2010, *Homepage*, Grey Nomads Employment.com, Brisbane, downloaded on 1 April 2010 from www.greynomademployment.com, p. 1.

- Written submissions should be signed and dated. Those signing a submission on behalf of an organisation should indicate at what level of the organisation the submission has been authorised (e.g. sub-committee, president, chair, state branch, etc). A return address and contact number should also be provided. Typed text on A4 paper is preferable, though legible hand-written submissions are acceptable.
- Public officers may make submissions as private individuals. However, if reference is made in a submission to their official position, it should also be made clear that the submission is made in a private capacity.

Content and relevance

- A submission should be relevant to the committee's inquiry, otherwise the committee may decide not to accept it. The committee will inform you of its decision to accept your submission or otherwise.

Confidentiality

- The committee aims to conduct inquiries in an open manner and its usual procedure is to publicly release and table submissions in the Legislative Assembly.
- If you want your submission, or part of it, to be treated confidentially then you should clearly write 'confidential' on each page and, in a brief covering letter, explain why your submission should be treated confidentially. The committee will then consider your request for confidentiality.

Unauthorised release

- A submission made to the committee should not be published or disclosed to any other person in that form without the committee's written permission.
- Submissions published without the committee's permission are not protected by parliamentary privilege. The publishers of these submissions may also be in contempt of Parliament.

12.0 Email updates

If you would like to receive email updates about the committee's activities, please advise the committee secretariat.

Committee Members

Mr Evan Moorhead MP, Chair

Member for Waterford

Mrs Rosemary Menkens MP, Deputy Chair

Member for Burdekin

Ms Tracy Davis MP

Member for Aspley

Ms Jan Jarratt MP

Member for Whitsunday

Mrs Betty Kiernan MP

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