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Office of the CEO

Moreton Bay
Regional Council

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A/Research Director
 Mr Alistair Maclennan
 Economic Development Committee
 Parliament House
 George Street
 BRISBANE QLD 4000



Dear Mr Maclennan

MORETON BAY REGIONAL COUNCIL SUBMISSION – INQUIRY INTO DEVELOPING QUEENSLAND’S RURAL AND REGIONAL COMMUNITIES THROUGH GREY NOMAD TOURISM

I refer to your letter dated 15 April 2010 addressed to Mayor Sutherland. The Mayor has asked me to respond on his behalf.

Please find below Moreton Bay Regional Council's submission to the above Inquiry.

Comments on the Terms of Reference

Local investigation in the Moreton Bay region was conducted using feedback from caravan park managers, daily statistics from council visitor information centres and officer's knowledge of the tourism industry that has revealed the following points:

1. Role of grey nomad tourism in developing Queensland's rural and regional communities.

Local response	Global response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fill the low seasonal troughs experienced in tourism visitation. • Excellent word of mouth positive promotion can be gained when this market exchanges stories at each camping stop. • No particular time frame for moving on (avg stay Moreton Bay region is 1 week – 1 month). • Local experience of self funded retirees giving up roaming the country due to Global Financial Crisis & joining Centrelink volunteering schemes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research on this market segment is out of date & the results are questionable. • Some quote \$80 daily spend. • Outback encouraging this market in endeavour to replace 'domestic' decline. • Need to consider flow on effect of global financial crisis.

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2. Infrastructure requirements of grey nomads.

Local response	Global response
<p>Anecdotal evidence reveals that this market have few specific needs however they do seek:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drive in van sites • Black water dump points • Clean toilets, showers & laundry facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MRD could plan upgrades to rest areas in more remote areas. • Future need for more internet connection opportunities (although majority of grey nomads are wanting to escape daily communication of TV & computer)

3. Marketing and promotion of Queensland to potential grey nomad visitors.

Local response	Global response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is the role of Tourism Queensland & Regional Tourism Organisations to encourage interstate visitation. Local government can & does participate in these campaigns. • Local caravan parks admit this is a significant market segment for them and are keen to attract more. • There are 2 distinct groupings within this market – those who participate in club outings and those who are the independent traveller. • Word of mouth promotion is a powerful tool and is used extensively by travellers using caravan parks. • Individual advertising by caravan park managers should occur as all local park managers indicate this is a market they wish to strongly encourage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Numerous grey nomad specific web sites are already available giving advice on destinations and where to stay. • Some pundits are saying that this market is turning to cruises to combat rising fuel prices. • There is a trend for developers to buy up prime caravan park sites and turn into apartments. • Rising land tax is encouraging the sale of prime caravan sites. • There appears to be a zero rate of establishment of new parks.

4. The role of government in facilitating grey nomad tourism in Queensland.

Local response	Global response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local government should provide dump points throughout the region. • Provision of free sites Motorhome travellers could be at the detriment of established caravan parks. • Provision of dedicated RV areas should be at a cost so as not to disadvantage established caravan parks. • Intel suggests they resist sharing caravan parks with permanents and hence look for free sites in parks/showgrounds. • Local government could encourage employers to advertise casual vacancies that would suit grey nomads. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some local governments providing specific Motorhome sites • While there are claims this is a lucrative market, actual spend is still in question. Some claim that \$450 is spent on vehicle repairs alone in each town.

5. *The utilisation of grey nomad skills and labour in rural and regional Queensland.*

Local response	Global response
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Local employment specifically aimed at this segment appears low. Possibly due to significant local casual job seeker base.• Feedback indicates these visitors are not seeking work here.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Specific programs are in place in rural communities where there is limited access to casual worker base.• There are a number of web sites in existence specifically advertising employment for this market segment.

Conclusion

In the local region, the grey nomad market is sought after by the caravan park managers as they incur very little maintenance as guests and have the potential to fill the seasonal troughs experienced in tourism.

Should you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact Scott Templeman, Manager Economic Development on (07) 3205 0555 or via email scott.templeman@moretonbay.qld.gov.au

Yours sincerely



John Rauber
Chief Executive Officer

cc: Scott Templeman, Manager Economic Development