

2 June 2015

028

Finance and Administration Committee
Parliament House
Alice and George Street
Brisbane Qld 4000

Dear Chair,

Re: Consultation into the *Work Health and Safety and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015*

The Queensland Tourism Industry Council (QTIC) welcomes the invitation from the Finance and Administration Committee to comment on the *Work Health and Safety and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015*.

QTIC supports the Governments strong ambition to improve the safety of Queenslanders at work and supports a 'risk-based' policy approach to Work Health & Safety regulation.

QTIC is the State peak body for tourism in Queensland. The voice of tourism, QTIC represents the interests of the tourism industry, including business operators, Regional Tourism Organisations (RTOs) and sector associations.

Tourism is a key economic driver in many Queensland regions, supporting regional employment and community growth, employing over 241,000 people directly and indirectly, or 9.9% of all people employed in Queensland. This is substantially more than the mining sector (79,000 direct jobs) or even agriculture, forestry and fishing combined (56,900 direct jobs). The tourism industry in Queensland contributed \$23 billion to Queensland's Gross State Product (GSP), representing 7.9% of total GSP and generated \$5.9 billion in exports in 2013, making it the second largest export earner behind coal.

QTIC's concerns with the Bill are in relation to potential unintended red-tape impacts on Queensland's tourism industry and particularly small business sector. Small businesses (less than 20 employees) account for 9 in 10 or some 55,000 tourism businesses in Queensland and red-tape is one greatest barriers to growth and productivity for small business.

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Specifically our concerns are in relation to *Clause 16* that amends the definition of 'serious injury or illness' to include an additional requirement of the employer to notify the regulator of a serious injury or illness causing a person to be absent from voluntary or paid employment for more than four days. Additionally, the introduction of *Clause 16* means that Queensland's regulation will be different from other harmonised jurisdictions.

QTIC believes the proposed amendments will create additional red-tape burden for Queensland's small businesses due to shortened reporting timeframes and jurisdictional differences between Queensland and the other states and territories.

QTIC strongly recommends a more risk-based approach be undertaken. As stated by the Productivity Commission (2013) where there is scope for increased targeting of those businesses and activities which present a higher risk and for adoption of lesser compliance cost approaches for lower risk businesses, such as less frequent inspections or less onerous reporting requirements.

We welcome the opportunity for further discussion regarding the points raised in this letter. For all enquiries, please contact QTIC Policy Team on [REDACTED]

Kind regards

[REDACTED]
Daniel Gschwind
Chief Executive