



Restaurant
& Catering

BNB Submission 136

SAVOUR
AUSTRALIA



24 January 2019

Ms Jessica Jane Shaw MLA
Chair
Economics and Industry Standing Committee

By Email: laeisc@parliament.wa.gov.au

Dear Chair,

Restaurant and Catering Industry Association (R&CA) appreciates the opportunity to provide a submission on the Committee's inquiry into the regulation of short stay accommodation in Western Australia. As the only national industry association acting on behalf of the café, restaurant and catering sector, which is responsible for annual turnover of approximately \$3.5 billion in Western Australia, R&CA supports the continued operation of the state's short stay accommodation industry and the increased flow-on economic and employment benefits to hospitality businesses. As a key industry stakeholder, R&CA has been actively involved in government consultations regarding the short stay accommodation industry across other Australian jurisdictions, including New South Wales, Tasmania, Victoria and Queensland.

In R&CA's view, the short stay accommodation industry has a significant role to play in meeting tourist demand for accommodation options which are both affordable and in proximity to key amenities such as cafés and restaurants. Given the potential growth in Western Australia's tourism industry, R&CA believes that ensuring tourists' continued access to short stay accommodation options is vital in maintaining adequate levels of supply. R&CA argues that any regulatory approach taken by the Western Australian Government in the future should not result in any significant cost, red tape or legislative burden being placed on the short stay accommodation providers. In this way, owners should continue to have the ability to let out their properties in a safe and responsible manner.

R&CA's support for the continued operation of Western Australia's short stay accommodation industry is predicated on the significant flow-on economic and employment effects for hospitality businesses such as cafés and restaurants. R&CA notes that various sharing platforms currently provide tourists with the ability to stay in and explore areas which do not otherwise attract the same type of foot traffic as other traditional tourist hotspots. In this way, the economic and employment benefits associated with Western Australia's tourism growth are more evenly dispersed amongst hospitality businesses which are located outside of more densely populated tourism areas. The flow-on benefits to hospitality and other businesses associated with the short stay accommodation industry



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are further magnified as the letting of vacant properties generates additional income for hosts who may also patronise local cafés and restaurants more regularly and further invest in their properties and the economy as a result. Affordable accommodation options, like short stay, also offer tourists more disposable spending money to invest in local experiences to add value to their stay and their tourism experience.

R&CA notes Point 4 of the Committee's Terms of Reference, referring to '*Approaches within Australian and international jurisdictions to ensure the appropriate regulation of short-stay accommodation.*' R&CA puts forward its opposition to placing onerous requirements on short-stay accommodation owners in terms of any form of licensing scheme, believing that imposing additional regulation is both unnecessary and counter-productive to growing the state's tourism industry. Further, R&CA believes that imposing undue government regulations such as an industry-wide licensing scheme would stymie the growth of the short stay accommodation industry in Western Australia. This outcome would subsequently lead to a diminution in accommodation options for both domestic and international tourists which by extension, would adversely impact the state's hospitality sector and ultimate flow on to the broader economy.

With regards to the issue of customer conduct, R&CA fully supports the ability of the Western Australian Government to put in place carefully designed measures which specifically target and seek to address anti-social behaviours compromising the amenity of owner properties. R&CA argues however that such regulations should not overly restrict the ability of people to let their residences in a respectful and responsible way. R&CA cautions against pursuing regulatory options which would actively discourage the participation of Western Australians in the short stay accommodation industry leading to the reduced availability of accommodation options for tourists and visitors. R&CA notes the approaches taken on this issue in other jurisdictions such as Victoria which has adopted the 'three-strikes-and-you're-out' legislation developed as part of amendments to the *Owners Corporation Act*.

Lastly, R&CA would also stress that any significant policy decisions affecting the short stay accommodation industry should be developed in close collaboration and consultation with major industry stakeholders to ensure that growth in the State's tourism industry is not only maintained but enhanced.

R&CA greatly appreciates the opportunity to provide feedback on the short stay accommodation industry in Western Australia. Should there be any matters raised within this submission that you wish to discuss, please do not hesitate to contact me on _____ or _____

Yours faithfully,



Juliana Payne
Chief Executive Officer
Restaurant & Catering Australia