

Admin, LACO

Subject: FW: Inquiry into short stay accommodation.

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From: Ken Fairfield

Sent: Tuesday, 18 December 2018 8:59 PM

To: Committee, Economics & Industry Standing

Subject: Inquiry into short stay accommodation.

Dear Committee Members,

You have been given the unenviable task of balancing a number of needs so as to reach a position of maximum benefit and minimum disadvantage to a number of interested parties in the short-stay accommodation industry. I wish you well.

Many jurisdictions overseas and some in Australia have addressed this same issue and arrived at a number of different positions. Some recommendations have been adopted in some instances and merely noted in others. I am sure your researchers will provide you with some of the recommendations and the outcomes thereof. I have read the decisions reached by a number of jurisdictions and, while there is some commonality, each pertains to the particular country, region, city or town. This is an expected and responsible outcome as each locality represents a slightly different situation. A 'one size fits all' solution is not an effective or efficient solution.

I am sure you have identified the many different parties in the short stay accommodation equation and I hope that you have put the customer/ the lodger/ the client/ the guest at the top of your list. If that person does not exist, the whole industry and the contentious issue does not exist. My belief is that the two most important matters for you to address are (1) the customers' needs and aspirations, and (2) what problems exist currently in the short stay accommodation field that must be rectified.

You have sought submissions which is commendable. However, most of the information that will, in my opinion, best inform your decision making will not come from submissions but will come from gathered evidence. The evidence which I believe you need will come primarily from guests, hosts, food/ beverage/entertainment providers in tourist areas, and local authorities. I realize the obtaining of views and opinions from guests will not be easy. However, if hosts operating in different accommodation segments were asked to seek approval from guests to provide your committee with merely a contact number and a Christian name to allow your researchers to speak to them and seek information on matters such as what influenced their accommodation decision, level of satisfaction with accommodation provider, problems encountered, in the absence of Airbnb/Staz would they have used hotel/motel accommodation, then I believe you would have most useful information. Just like a police investigation, the outcome will only be as reliable as the evidence available. And like a police investigation, the evidence will most likely not come to you, you will have to diligently seek it.

I am sure local authorities will make submissions. My view is that local authorities will always seek to impose additional regulations on anything they can. Their aim is not so much to ensure a safe and satisfactory accommodation situation for visitors, but to raise money. That will always be their primary aim.

Finally, I wish you the wisdom of Solomon. Please keep in mind that your recommendations need to be seen as supportive of communities wherever they may be.

Thank you for your time.

Ken Fairfield