

We own the management rights to the Broome Beach Resort (4 ½ star rating) which we purchased for \$1.1 million dollars in 2006. The property was built in 1998. When you buy your business like that, consisting of 34 units, you believe you will always have those units available to run your business. We now have 20 units left – some to Air BNB and others just run by owners themselves. How are we going to be able to recoup the money we have paid for this business when it comes time to sell? Every time someone leaves the pool our investment reduces as does our income and our occupancy levels.

NEGATIVES : One of the most negative things about Air BNB is the money all goes back to America. It is not even an Australian owned business so the revenue is not here to be used in other ways for the people. The govt was very remiss in just allowing them to set up shop and thereby encroaching on legitimate businesses such as ours. The same happened with Uber and, once again, the money goes out of the country. I do believe some taxi drivers have been compensated. Will we be compensated? I think not.

CLEANING : we used to have up to 6 cleaners working the peak times and now we can mostly get by with 3. This cuts down on the jobs available and robs our workers of their income. Air bnb properties are probably not even aware of the bed lice that can be carried from one property to another.

ASSOCIATED COSTS : we pay higher insurance along with other charges, higher shire fees, fire and safety etc – all to run our business. We are subject to rules and regulations that air bnb types are not. Air bnb owners can have cleaners cleaning their premises and if they are injured in any way, they are not liable when in fact they should be paying workers compensation just like we are. We have occupation health and safety rules with which we have to comply, gst etc. You can be sure air bnb are not paying gst in the majority of situations. We have to provide parking and a lot of air bnbs do not have parking. The more rules you put in place for the air bnbs, the more chance there is that they will shut down and not continue.

TAXATION : we know a lot of the air bnb's are pocketing cash money and not paying their fair share as far as income tax goes. People like to brag about these things thinking you agree with them. Every air bnb should have to be registered for taxation and be given a special taxation record # that guarantees they are compliant with all insurances and costs we have to pay. The number they are given should have to be displayed on their site by Air BNB in America so the ATO can check up at that they are doing the right thing and paying their fair share. If the # is not displayed, air bnb cannot let them be "live".

RELIANCE : our business has many contractors relying on us to provide work for them – electricians, air con repairs and replacements, fridges, washing machines, door locks, fly screens, security doors, gardeners – so many I cannot remember them all.

BROOME : as Broome is a remote destination, we rely on the numbers coming through here to make our business viable. As it is now, there are approximately 180 air bnbs in Broome seriously encroaching on our ability to run our business profitably. We have heard a number of neighbours of these bnbs are quite upset at the noise emanating from these premises with, seemingly, no one in charge to keep control.

RATES : we are pushed into the unprofitable position of having to lower our rates to break even points to stay alive. Air bnbs can and do offer even lower rates as they have very few overheads.

GUESTS : guests quite often mention they use air bnb on a regular basis thinking we think it is a great idea – wrong !!

F&B – we are fortunate in that we do not provide food and beverage at our resort. If we did, I can see the way things are heading that we would be looking to shut it down, thereby putting more people out of work.

DUTIES : as a registered business, it is our responsibility to govern noise levels, make sure guests are not being annoyed by others, guests are not running riot doing what they wish. Nobody can rent our units and have an all in party – everyone invited – as can be done with air bnbs. Numbers at the resort are restricted to guests only. Air bnb properties are quite often let by people not even living at the premises they are letting and thereby allowing open slather with no rules for people staying there. I believe there is supposed to be a “host” in attendance at the property.

REFURBISHMENT : as an older property, we have a duty to the premises to keep it up to date as best we can. With the reduction in units available to us to use now, that is becoming a harder and harder proposition every year because the income cannot justify the necessary upgrade.

LANDLORDS ETC : if an air bnb does not have someone in attendance at all times and is causing a nuisance, the neighbours, co-tenants and landlords for the premises must be able to have the offending air bnb property shut down – and it should not take a whole lot of red tape to do so. Time is always of the essence.

SUPPORT : We support the AHA’s Five Point Plan to address unregulated short stay accommodation :

1. Home sharing properties must be registered with a VERY BIG fee payable to fund compliance monitoring;
2. Only a host’s primary residence may be listed for sharing;
3. Short stay accommodation must meet fire, safety, building and insurance requirements appropriate to short term rentals;
4. Require peer to peer platforms to stop listing illegal and non-compliant rentals and share relevant data with authorities;
5. Neighbours, co-tenants and landlords much be empowered and allowed to have a say.