



25 January 2019

Ms. Jessica Shaw MLA, Chair
Economics and Industry Standing Committee
Legislative Assembly
Parliament House, 4 Harvest Terrace
West Perth, WA 6005

Dear Madam Chair,

Please find attached Submission in relation to the review into Short Stay Accommodation Providers.

Tourism Rockingham is a not for profit association representing some 90 businesses covering all aspects of the Tourism Industry including accommodation providers - from major corporates including Quest, Hotel/Motel accommodation, self-contained apartments and beachfront houses right down to small family owned bed and breakfast facilities.

Feedback has shown that unregulated, non-compliant short stay accommodation providers such as Airbnb, are having a major impact on the smaller family run businesses. These impacts have caused some businesses to close and others having to have a family member return to full time work to stave off bankruptcy.

Whilst our submission is brief it makes very clear the obvious salient points. We are simply looking for a 'Fair Go' to bring all parties concerned onto a level playing field.

We are available to meet and address the Standing Committee if required, and remain

Yours faithfully

Stacey P Graham

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SUBMISSION TO THE ECONOMICS AND INDUSTRY STANDING COMMITTEE OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE PARLIAMENT OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA INQUIRY INTO SHORT-STAY ACCOMMODATION

Introduction

Tourism Rockingham Inc. is a Member Based Association that has been operating since 1970.

Of the Tourism Rockingham members some 20 are Registered Bed and Breakfast businesses; hotel accommodation or private Short Stay Rental providers.

These Members meet compliance with legislative requirements of the Health Act; the Food Act; the Local Government Act and the Planning and Development Act.

They pay all necessary fees required to the Local and State Authorities.

They are all being severely and adversely affected by the influx of Airbnb's throughout Rockingham.

Term of Reference

- 1. The forms and regulatory status of short-stay accommodation providers in regional and metropolitan Western Australia, including existing powers available to local government authorities.**

Tourism Rockingham understands that the local Council ie: the City of Rockingham, manages the legislation requirements of the relevant Acts with Compliance Officers employed to monitor and check all Providers are meeting such requirements/laws.

These requirements are NOT monitored or controlled by Council when it comes to Airbnb providers in Rockingham.

It is believed that approximately 240 Airbnb operators are non-compliant and operating "illegally" Rockingham with NO requirements to meet any of the Acts/Fees including:

- Obtaining Planning Approval (non-refundable fee of \$147)
- Disclosing facility Operation (No. of guests; size of rooms etc.)
- Meeting Parking guidelines with onsite parking
- Meeting Health Regulations as per the Health Act 1911 which incorporates good Hygiene
- Having Fire Control/Lighting/Rubbish Collection and Recycling practices in place
- Monitoring Noise/Nuisance control for consideration of neighbouring properties
- Meeting Building Approvals and Disability Access provisions
- No Community Consultation/ Approval for a Short Stay Accommodation facility to operate

Terms of Reference

2. The changing market and social dynamics in the short-stay accommodation sector.

3. Issues in the short-stay accommodation sector, particularly associated with emerging business models utilising online booking platforms.

Tourism Rockingham has been advised that Airbnbs operating in Rockingham are having a significant impact on the operations of Registered Short Stay Accommodation Members.

Airbnbs do not contributing to local Employment or Economic growth and monies collected by Airbnb and other online Booking operators goes off shore with little, if any, funds expended in Rockingham.

There is also considered to be a MAJOR safety factor in place with the majority of Airbnb having absent Landlords and in many cases, no Public Liability or Occupational Health and Safety regulations are in place thus putting Guests at risk and the City at risk should an accident occur.

Without Insurance coverage, Guests could look at the City of Rockingham for compensation because they did not ensure Airbnbs were Compliant.

There have been reported issues in Rockingham where Airbnb Providers have ended up with out of control parties being held and excessive damage, disruption and disturbance to nearby residents/businesses has occurred by questionable and inappropriate Guests.

Terms of Reference

4. Approaches within Australian and international jurisdictions to ensure the appropriate regulation of short-stay accommodation.

All AirBnbs should be required to meet *exactly* the same requirements as Registered Short Stay Accommodation members must adhere to and should not have an advantage in the Market inasmuch as they (Airbnbs) can advertise heavily reduced rates as opposed to member Registered Providers whose rates have to incorporate outgoings from fees/payments made to Local and State Governments to become Compliant. It is questionable as to whether Trade Practice laws are being met by Airbnb providers.

With Airbnbs overtaking the Short Stay Accommodation Providers world-wide - many Countries and major Cities are now taking firm action to bring Airbnbs in line with regulation/laws that are in place for Short Stay accommodation providers. Introduced heavy penalties for non-compliance has resulted in a massive reduction in Airbnb providers as Hosts are not able to meet health, safety and welfare requirements.

Tourism Rockingham strongly supports legislation being put in place so that Airbnbs in Rockingham and WA are legally required to meet all regulations/laws that our member Registered Short Stay Accommodation Providers currently meet.