

Modernising Business Registry Services
PO Box 6021
CANBERRA ACT 2600

6 September 2017

Re: Modernising Business Registry Services

The Queensland Tourism Industry Council (QTIC) welcomes the opportunity to respond to the discussion paper on Modernising Business Registry Services. QTIC is the state's peak body for tourism in Queensland and represents the interests of the tourism industry. QTIC is an independent membership-based organisation with in excess of 3,000 members, operating in all sectors of the tourism industry, including business operators, Regional Tourism Organisations (RTOs), sector associations and education providers.

The tourism industry in Queensland contributed \$25.0 billion to Queensland's Gross State Product (GSP), representing 7.9% of total GSP¹ and generated \$6.6 billion in exports in the year ending June 2015², making it one of the state's largest export industries .

Tourism is a key economic driver in regional Queensland, supporting employment and community growth, employing more than 225,000 people directly and indirectly, or 9.5% of all people employed in Queensland¹. This is substantially more than mining (2.5% of employment) or agriculture, forestry and fishing combined (2.5% of employment). There is a diversity of jobs within the tourism industry with 11 occupations representing the majority of workers in the industry³. Within the tourism industry, of the 52,200 businesses⁴, nine out of ten businesses are small or medium enterprises – that is approximately 46,980 small or medium sized tourism businesses across Queensland. Anecdotal evidence suggests that many of those involved in smaller tourism businesses come from diverse backgrounds, often with little or no business or tourism or small business management experience.

QTIC supports initiatives to reduce the compliance burden for operators across the industry, especially reducing complexities associated with legal and regulatory obligations. Streamlining of business registration and reporting will be of significant benefit to smaller organisations and those that are new to business management by offering processes that are easy to complete and save cost

¹ Tourism Research Australia, *State Tourism Satellite Accounts 2015-2016*

² Tourism Research Australia, *State Tourism Satellite Accounts 2014-2015*

³ Queensland Government Department of Tourism Education and Small Business (DETESB) identified occupations: Tourism Workforce profiling: Accommodation and hospitality managers; Housekeepers and Cleaners; Fast Food Cooks and Kitchen Hands; Receptionists; Waiters; Bar attendants and Baristas; Chefs; Cooks; Café workers; Travel and Tourism Advisers; Air Transport professionals

⁴ Department of Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games "State of the Industry" 2016

through administrative relief. Faster, easier and cheaper processes may also act as a stimulant for greater business growth across the economy and are a step towards fostering private-sector growth⁵.

One of the major challenges regularly identified by our members is the ability to navigate the multiple levels of government compliance. A single streamlined process will alleviate some of the challenges and barriers faced by small business, encouraging investment in new products and experiences. International organisations such as the World Bank and United Nations Commission on International Trade Law identify best practices for simplified business registration and incorporation⁶. A key element of this best practice framework is the establishing of a simple, streamlined registration process. The streamlining process will assist in reducing duplication and creating a single entry point for organisations. A one stop shop for business registration services is identified by the World Bank as facilitating business start-up twice as fast as countries without such services⁵.

QTIC members indicate that the strength of the current process is the protection and certainty that the registry services provide. It is important that any changes across the systems maintain the protection of organisations, safeguarding organisational details. The process must also remain transparent and accountable. Non-transparent and complex registration systems can generate rent-seeking opportunities for officials involved in the registration process and for intermediaries between the businesses and the registry, such as lawyers, notaries, accountants, and registration agents⁵. Drawing on international best practice and tailoring the approach to an Australian context is essential throughout this program to ensure an effective and efficient service is implemented.

Redefining the “industry classification” through this process would be beneficial to policy makers and industry bodies. Currently there is a lack of data on tourism and hospitality businesses across the state, reclassification of businesses operating in these sectors would assist in key policy decision making activities at all levels of government by creating a stronger understanding of industry growth.

For all enquiries regarding the points raised in this letter, please contact me or the QTIC Policy Team on (07) 3236 1445 or email policy@qtic.com.au.

Kind regards



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⁵ The World Bank Group. “Reforming business registration: A toolkit for practitioners”. (2013). <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/577211468155378578/pdf/840140WP0Box380usiness0Registration.pdf>

⁶ Dennis, M & Ramos, J. “Creating and enabling legal environment for micro-small and medium sized enterprises: simplified incorporation and registration”. (2016). *Arizona Journal of International and Comparative Law*. 33.1. 71-93.