



AUSTRALIAN TOURISM INDUSTRY COUNCIL (ATIC)

COVID SAFE PLAN COORDINATION

FOR AUSTRALIAN TOURISM ENTERPRISES

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY of SERVICE AGREEMENT – COVID Safe Plan Coordination

The Australian Tourism Industry Council, the nation's largest tourism representative member body, is proposing a **Service Agreement** with the Commonwealth (through Austrade or Tourism Australia) supporting COVID safe business restart activities specific to the tourism industry, directly aligning to economic COVID recovery and retention and re-growth of tourism jobs.

We believe ATIC provides strong industry capability (with a successful existing working model) to effectively deliver on **COVID Safe Plan Coordination**, which if adopted, both supports Australia's economic COVID recovery effort and retention and re-growth of jobs, specifically amongst direct tourism businesses engaged in interstate and international tourism, visitor and customer attraction (such as accommodation, experiences, attractions, tours and tourism transport).

Whilst Tourism Research Australia recognise over 300,000 businesses that benefit from tourism in Australia, those that inspire experiential travel are the accommodation, recreation and travel/tour/transport operators. There are approximately 40,000 of these firms in number. ATIC's already installed COVID Clean program to the many thousands of signatories, specifically supports such businesses to be **'COVID safe'** and **drive future demand for destination visitation**. The **COVID Clean Practising Business module** is the only known program that is tourism specific, individualised, free of charge to any business, easily accessible and focusses on the business.

It is strongly argued these programs will also help to drive sustainable demand for future interstate travel once domestic borders properly reopen, through the assurance that such interstate tourism businesses (and their offering) have good protocols in place to take customers and guests less familiar than an intrastate (or day trip) scenario offering. To this point with Australian tourism in only the earliest stages of economic recovery (and overwhelmingly still intrastate travel) that has dramatically shrunk our visitor economy to around \$80 billion.

ATIC's **COVID Clean Practising Business** module develops business systems specific to the management of combating the spread of COVID-19 and adhering to respective State/Territory health regulations depending on the business location. This Program has an associated landmark available to businesses upon successful module completion, enabling the travelling public and prospective future customers to easily identify those undertaking COVID safe business practices.

ATIC is proposing a partnership with the Commonwealth via a 2-year, \$4M Service Agreement and Marketing Partnership, which will see up to 15,000 Australian small and medium enterprises recognised as a COVID Clean Practising Business through access, participation and completion of the COVID Clean Practising Business module.

The Program will specifically appeal to consumers and travellers alike, **in particular future interstate visitors (as well as future returning international travellers)** to confidently access tourism businesses and their product offering (such as accommodation, experiences, attractions,

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tours and tourism transport), which are at the heart of our domestic and international tourism deliveries that will greatly hinge on being a COVID safe and assured offering.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY – ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND

As part of the **2-year Service Agreement**, we propose a **\$1.5M Marketing allocation** to effectively market the benefits to Australian businesses, creation of business collateral as well as some digital promotion, point-of-sale, venue branding and a call to action for travel wholesalers and consumers. This makes the total allocation of **\$4M** for the Service Agreement over the Partnership's 2-year implementation (**\$2.5M** in Program Delivery and **\$1.5M** in Marketing) in addition to ATIC's significant co-investment in the COVID-Safe plan coordination delivery.

Furthermore, the Service Agreement will see up to 1000 businesses access direct mentoring by ATIC for the development of their recovery plan over the life of the Agreement.

ATIC and COVID Safe Plan & Program Coordination

ATIC has developed **two programs** to support businesses in developing their response to restarting in the wake of the devastating business and market interruptions, internationally and domestically, caused by COVID-19. These **two** programs are delivered as 'modules' with the **Quality Tourism Framework (QTF)**, ATIC's long-standing national accreditation and online-delivered program, which today has over 10,000 tourism businesses engaged with one of its suite of module offerings or that have achieved and maintain full accreditation.

ATIC's **COVID Tourism Recovery Plan** takes the tourism business owner on a pathway of critical thinking to establish plans to open and develop their product offering throughout the various stages of business restrictions and post COVID economy.

ATIC's **COVID Clean Practising Business module** develops business systems specific to the management of combating the spread of COVID-19 and adhering to respective State/Territory health regulations depending on the business location. This Program has an associated landmark available to businesses upon successful completion of the module, enabling the general public, government departments, regulators and agencies to **easily** identify those that are undertaking COVID safe business practices.

ATIC is proposing a **partnership** with the Commonwealth via a \$2.5M Service Agreement (over two years) which will see up to 15,000 businesses recognised as a COVID Clean Practising Business through access, participation and completion of the COVID Clean Practising Business module. Up to 1000 firms will be able to access direct mentoring.

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Role of Austrade and Tourism Australia

Through partnering and working with **Austrade or Tourism Australia**, this would enable ATIC to effectively leverage the marketing and promotion of the Program to Australian tourism businesses, travel wholesalers and the travelling public.

Due to the critical drivers of **safety** and **security** in underpinning both Australia's international (as well as interstate domestic) tourism offering, we particularly envisage working with these Federal organisations during the Partnership to most effectively target and engage international market facing tourism enterprises to access the Program (by example this could include Aussie Specialist sellers of Australian travel and tourism through Tourism Australia's network).

These Programs will be offered complimentary to eligible tourism business enterprises with a skew towards small to medium sized organisations and of particular relevance to accommodation and experiential and transport tourism providers such as physical tourism experiences and activities (land and on-water), live attractions and staged tourism events, tours and tourism transport operations that include land, off-road and on-water.

Under the **Service Agreement**, ATIC would be responsible for the Programs' operation and governance and would undertake consistent and regular reporting to a nominated Federal Department or Commonwealth Agency.

ABOUT ATIC

The **Australian Tourism Industry Council (ATIC)** is the national representative body of Australia's state and territory tourism industry councils (TIC) covering all states and territories. Together, ATIC members represent 10,000 tourism operators across the nation from Broome to Bruny Island and Port Lincoln to Port Douglas and the majority of which are small to medium sized enterprises. This is holistically reflective of the true make-up of our greater industry where tourism product and experiences are overwhelmingly delivered by small businesses.

ATIC is the largest and most diverse representation of tourism enterprises across Australia which operate in our once \$150 billion visitor economy (prior to the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic). As well understood by the Australian Government, until the onset of COVID-19, tourism had been one of Australia's fastest growing industries over a long period and had become an established economic pillar. As an individual sector it is amongst the largest within many of Australia's regional and rural economies.

ATIC and its members deliver the **Quality Tourism Framework**, which incorporates three national, industry driven tourism program streams that support quality Australian tourism businesses in their continued development, to review and to benchmark:

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- **The Quality Tourism Accreditation programs**
- **The Australian Tourism Awards; and**
- **Star Ratings Australia Program.**

ATIC is a not for profit, independent organisation supported wholly by industry. Our Board is made up of the Chief Executives of each state and territory Tourism Industry Council or an accredited body. The six Australian states and two territories are represented. ATIC's members are:

- Victorian Tourism Industry Council (VTIC)
- NSW Tourism Industry Council (NSW Business Chamber)
- Queensland Tourism Industry Council (QTIC)
- Tourism Industry Council South Australia (TicSA)
- Tourism Industry Council Western Australia (TIC WA)
- Tourism Industry Council Tasmania (TICT)
- Tourism Top End (Northern Territory)
- Canberra Regional Tourism Industry Council (ACT)

The Chair of ATIC is Evan Hall (CEO - Tourism Council WA). Our Executive Director is the former senior tourism and aviation executive, Simon Westaway and General Manager is Erin McLeod, an experienced tourism industry leader with direct managerial responsibility for our major programs.

COVID-19 TOURISM IMPACT OVERVIEW

Economic effect & tourism enterprises

During this pandemic, ATIC has been prominent in national debate and consistently proactive in our advocacy and engagement around the impact of COVID-19 and the necessary public health led response to the virus' effective control and containment in Australia. This has of course come at great economic and financial cost. Arguably no other industry has been as hardest hit as tourism and our poor circumstances followed straight after the horrendous impact of the summer bushfire storms across a number of States and Territories in late 2019 and early 2020.

At the commencement of 2020, our industry supported 1 million Australians in employment – representing 1 in 13 jobs, through 300,000 businesses (as outlined by Tourism Research Australia). But notably the core delivers that help inspire experiential travel and generate pure tourism outcomes are amongst accommodation, recreation and travel/tour/transport operators. These make-up approximately 40,000 Australian firms.

The vast majority of these, and wider tourism-associated businesses, are considered small or micro businesses comprising 5 or less employees. 95% of all Australian tourism businesses have 20 employees or less. Whilst still difficult to measure, at the conclusion of this pandemic, our industry will have far less firms (at least an estimated 20%) and far less people employed within them until full recovery returns. Resilience and sustainability for remaining enterprises is paramount.

ATIC had outlined from the earliest period of COVID-19 from late January 2020, that there would be genuine economic and social impacts, and which would indelibly scar our industry for years to come. Regrettably this situation has transpired, delivering the worst-ever trading

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conditions for our industry, with the subsequent full closure of our international border, hard domestic border closures by the majority of States and Territories, cessation of events and public health initiative which have greatly restricted travel, business and social activity and gatherings.

Impact of COVID-19

Over six months on since COVID-19, these terrible conditions prevail in many parts of Australia, despite some positive pockets of intrastate tourism activity. In a recent briefing to key industry representatives, Austrade have estimated the nation's visitor economy has effectively halved from \$150 billion to below \$80 billion since the outbreak of COVID-19 and continues to freefall.

There however remains pockets of resistance and commercial enterprise resilience and this must be built upon, including strategic partnerships and alignment between government and business, to stabilise and slowly rebuild our industry as public health and border restrictions may ease over time. This includes fundamental areas supporting tourism such as the medium term maintenance of JobKeeper, sustainable aviation, support for tourism-related infrastructure, effective marketing activity including the strategic role of Tourism Australia and ensuring a commitment to COVID-clean tourism, its application and promotion through the entire supply chain.

At the small tourism enterprise level, the fundamental aspect of ATICs **Quality Tourism Framework** is for sustainable enterprises to structurally build into business operations resistance and supporting activities that enable them to be best placed to meet the demands of the future market. National accreditation in these programs is subsequently achieved upon completion.

The Problem of confidence for returning interstate travel and tourism

Whilst a number of intrastate markets across Australia (notably self-drive, day trip destinations out of low COVID-19 community transition population centres and/or few travel restrictions such as Perth, Adelaide and parts of Queensland and NSW), have shown a level of confidence in returning to travel), there is significant work that needs to be done to entice most Australians presently not travelling (including within Victoria) and the major issue of non-existent interstate travel and tourism. Latest Federal Government department and agency data reaffirms this point.

Tourism Australia (August 2020)

According to Tourism Australia's latest released visitor insights, Health concerns are now cited as the main barrier for people to not travel, whilst Safety and Security elements remain core to the future visitor proposition. The three elements of Safety, Security and Health now effectively align around what potential levels of future tourism destination and visitor demand could be, as well as a propensity for interstate and international travel. Tourism Australia have estimated at least 50% of Australians have no interest in returning to travel for between 6 months and 2-years.

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BITRE (Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Economics)

A further clear example that travellers and consumers want is to be reassured about safe and accessible travel, Australia's once 7th largest domestic aviation market by global measure (as measured by seats), and largest on a per capita basis, has been majorly impacted.

June 2020 BITRE Domestic Aviation figures (Source: *Domestic Aviation Activity – June 2020*) show Australian domestic air passenger travel has fallen by 92 per cent in June 2020 vs June 2019 and numerically the overall annualised numbers vs. prior year will continue to worsen by double digits. Many Australians love to fly - and fly often. But as a nation once of travellers we are genuinely apprehensive about returning to at least interstate travel. It is of course acknowledged there is the major impact of many closed domestic borders but this is driven by public health concerns.

Addressing a COVID recovery 'gap'

Australian tourism simply cannot rely solely on the retail and hospitality sectors which are the main activities undertaken by intrastate travellers (and by further example drive tourism wine regions).

The attractions, tour and transport and accommodation sectors are fundamental to the longevity of a destination, particularly one supported by interstate (and future international visitors). But without visitation from those markets that are external to those within close proximity, these sectors will surely fade or not allow Australia's tourism and visitor economy to experience post COVID recovery and underpin employment in our sector, which TRA states delivers 1 in 13 jobs.

Presenting a business, and destination, as COVID safe, will bring visitation from broader markets by providing an 'assurance' that appropriate protocols are in place and help address confidence. As confidence in destinations grow, we will also see confidence in opening borders by states and territories, providing further opportunities for domestic travel. But consumer confidence needs to be underwritten.

In the area of COVID safe activity ATIC quickly identified a **critical 'gap' filling area** around future recovery, and this was the ability for tourism SMEs to be effectively informed, become equipped, navigate regulations and increasing red tape and be able to efficiently deliver consistent and fully compliant COVID Clean tourism and travel experiences which are not to the detriment of their commercial operations.

THE QUALITY TOURISM FRAMEWORK AND A COVID SAFE INDUSTRY IN RECOVERY

<https://qualitytourismaustralia.com/home/accreditation/>

The **Quality Tourism Framework (QTF)** is an online program that provides a business pathway to support the continuous growth and development of an Australian tourism business.

The objective of the Quality Tourism Framework is to enhance the image, competitiveness, marketability, profitability and sustainability of tourism in Australia by improving the quality of tourism products and experiences and thereby improving the industry's ability to maintain its market position on a global level.

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Through this pandemic crisis the QTF has remained fit-for-purpose and has further evolved as a business resilience, sustainability and development tool for both our member enterprises and increasingly outside tourism businesses.

ATIC has developed **two**, important and complimentary program modules within the QTF for the benefit of industry, to **address gaps** in support and be of real value as sustainable tourism enterprises try to move from survival to a genuine recovery phase. These are a **COVID Tourism Recovery Plan module** and **COVID Clean Practising Business module**.

1. COVID TOURISM RECOVERY PLAN MODULE OVERVIEW

A recently introduced feature to the Quality Tourism Framework is the **COVID-19 Tourism Recovery Plan** module. This was implemented in early 2020 with the onset and subsequent significant impact to industry of the Coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19).

The **COVID-19 Tourism Recovery Plan** tool helps accredited tourism enterprises through a process of critical thinking and assessment to support their response and operational and planning activities associated with the impacts of a major health event such as COVID-19.

The module is also applicable to any tourism business type and is offered free of charge within the QTF Program.

The module assists a wide range of areas including response and recovery, provision of a cashflow management template, asset management, staffing and workplace relations, product management and positioning, marketing and communications (external and internal). All are assessed against the direct and interrelated impacts to enterprise and anticipated customer behaviour and demand. The module is also specifically designed in the present to prepare enterprise users around the process of recovery, restructure and business repositioning when there is a pathway to recovery.

This module has been designed to enable the business to update and review on an as needs basis. As this is a tool to support operational planning, not to set a standard for business to meet, there is no associated landmark provided to businesses who complete the program.

2. COVID CLEAN PRACTICING BUSINESS MODULE OVERVIEW

The **COVID-19 Clean Practising Business program** is a complimentary module offered via the **Quality Tourism Framework** and is available to any Australian business engaged in tourism. This includes non-members as well as existing members of State and Territory Tourism Industry Councils. The Program was introduced during May 2020 and has been immediately successful with many thousands of initial business enterprise engagements already leading to over 1000 full completions of the Program by beginning of August.

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The COVID-19 Clean Practicing Business Program focusses on 5-key areas:

- **Staff management**
- **Resource ready**
- **Business and customer operations**
- **COVID-19 clean checklist (for both everyday cleaning and in the event of contamination)**
- **Risk assessment**

Businesses who successfully complete the module are able to demonstrate to visitors and customers that they are practising safe hygiene measures by displaying the COVID Clean mark.

The COVID Clean Practicing Business program supports tourism businesses to develop and adopt systems to support their efforts to stop the spread of COVID-19. This gives customers, industry and Government an assurance that every effort is being made to operate to the highest health and well-being standards.

BREAKDOWN OF COVID CLEAN PROGRAM

The COVID Clean Practicing Business program is based on five focus areas which support the tourism business (or enterprise operating within the 'visitor' economy) in getting the necessary systems in place to support a COVID clean workplace.

Staff Management

The business commits to having staff management systems in place, specific to COVID-19, which include:

- Staff training covering cleaning and hygiene methods and screening of customers
- Workplace protocols for unwell staff
- Workplace signage (with links to Local, State and Federal Government resources as well as samples provided in a final report)
- Staff hygiene measures are enforced
- Resources are available to enable the staff management systems adopted for COVID-19.

Resource Ready

The business commits to having the necessary resources available to administer their COVID-19 cleaning processes as well as advise on how to thoroughly clean with respect to the virus.

Business and Customer Operations

The business commits to having appropriate systems in place including; specific compliance with separate State/Territory health regulations based on jurisdiction, overarching compliance and alignment with Safe Work Australia outlines, steps to provide appropriate advice to customers on their health and hygiene expectations upon engagement with the business, appropriate cancellation policies, appropriate records are kept, supply chain compliance and that customer screening is undertaken.

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Cleaning Checklist

This area of the program creates that customised cleaning checklists for a business to adopt to provide a COVID Clean workplace.

A business will nominate from a pre-determined list the areas that are within their business e.g. office space, accommodation rooms, company or customer transport vehicles and shared equipment. They are then asked to nominate if a specific item within each area is frequently or infrequently touched or if not applicable.

Example: Noting that most SMEs will only have 2-3 areas of focus e.g. a Visitor Information Centre may have a Retail/Visitor space, public bathroom and entry/exit area.

This information is then populated into an individualised COVID-19 cleaning procedures document which will outline the daily, weekly and monthly/annual cleaning that must take place. In addition, it lists the actions that must be taken in the event of a suspected COVID-19 contamination to the workplace.

Risk Register

To ensure the ongoing health and safety of staff and customers, the business completes a risk register in which they identify hazards associated with COVID-19 and assess the likelihood, level of risk and controls associated.

ASSESSMENT

Upon completion of the COVID Clean module the business will submit their responses. Their State/Territory Quality Tourism Advisor (overseen by ATIC managerial oversight) is alerted through the online program and will review the responses made and determine if the business has introduced appropriate systems to potentially address or minimise spread of COVID-19.

Once approved, the business will be able to access their customised COVID-19 Business Policy and Procedures document. See sample document in attachment (A).

The business will also be able to access the COVID Clean landmark (supplied to them electronically) to start their promotion of meeting COVID Clean Practising requirements.

Assessment of its 'marketability' is an individual decision of each business and also based on strategic advice.

STATE/TERRITORY HEALTH REQUIREMENTS AND ADAPTABILITY

The Program has been developed to include, where required, any State/Territory specific requirements for a business to adhere to.

These specific questions only appear for those businesses that are registered within the respective State/Territory.

As Federal and State/Territory Governments respond and develop further business requirements the COVID Clean module can and is easily updated centrally within a short time frame, enabling

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the Program to be responsive to change. The formal changes would be registered with the appropriate State / Territory Health Department and/or Authority.

ATIC presently regular assesses the Module from a Federal as well as individual State and Territory basis and is responsive as new directives are announced. This is undertaken at least monthly. Participants in the Program are communicated on the basis of a new directive or change.

BRANDMARK

Once submitted and approved by the Quality Tourism Advisor, the COVID Clean Practising Business logo can then be used by the business to demonstrate to visitors that they are taking extra measure to be COVID Clean.



This provides an opportunity to gain confidence by the public when making travel decisions, thus increasing the likelihood of visitation.

COUNTER PARTY COMMITMENT

ATIC would consider future engagement with State and Territory Health and Safety regulators around the ability to discuss how COVID Safe Plans can be expanded as widely as practicable across the tourism, hospitality and other sectors. This could include the ability to access registers of companies with COVID Safe arrangements.

Prioritisation of the Program is with tourism enterprises but we believe there is scope to build the module through many channels and in time other sectors of the economy where demand arose. We would look to advice from the Commonwealth as to the approach.

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ATIC and AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIP PROPOSAL

A two-year Service Agreement to support a critical business restart initiative within the tourism industry through a 'free' COVID Tourism Recovery Plan module and COVID Clean Practising Business module delivered via the Quality Tourism Framework. The existing success of both Program elements provides the elements for successful COVID Safe Plan Coordination for Australian tourism enterprises.

ATIC is proposing a partnership with the Commonwealth via a \$2.5M service agreement (over two years) which see will up to 15,000 businesses recognised as a COVID Clean Practising Business through access, participation and completion of the COVID Clean Practising Business module.

An additional \$1.5M Marketing allocation over two-years is outlined to effectively market the benefits to Australian businesses as well as creating digital and point-of-sale and venue branding and call to action for visitors and consumers. Up to 1000 businesses will be directly mentored.

This makes the total allocation of \$4M over 2-years of the Partnership.

ATIC has consistently outlined to the Australian Government how a new Partnership between it and small business tourism can build upon a strong and existing national, 100% industry funded and driven program that develops better quality tourism and greater capacity building at the enterprise level.

This is ATIC's long-established and national **Quality Tourism Framework (QTF)**. Its core feature is ATIC's **Quality Tourism Accreditation Program** which includes alignment to quality tourism deliverables found within the prestigious and annually held **Australian Tourism Awards**.

A Quality Tourism Framework Partnership between ATIC and the Federal Government can help underpin a critical COVID recovery for Australian tourism enterprises around both interstate tourism (and future international tourism) and genuinely help support the reopening of sustainable businesses, in particular areas such as accommodation, experiences, attractions, tours and tourism transport).

Safety and Security have historically been amongst the strongest drivers for both domestic and international travel within and to Australia. Our nation is viewed as a safe, friendly and a personally secure destination across a range of fundamental areas which influence the decision to travel to and through our country.

These core attributes have only been strengthened with the outbreak of COVID-19 (as evidenced by Tourism Australia's latest released visitor insights to industry), health concerns are now cited as the main barrier for people to not travel, whilst Safety and Security elements remain core to the future visitor proposition. The three elements of **Safety**, **Security** and **Health** now effectively align around potential levels of future tourism destination and visitor demand, as well as a propensity to travel whether as a domestic or international traveller.

COVID Clean Plans, and their existing delivery by ATIC through its QTF platform, are practical, easy to use and understand Programs, which we also believe are a genuine enabler to provide the general public with the sense of comfort to mitigate concerns and to start to participate in travel

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and again frequent tourism sites and assets. This has relevance for both domestic and international tourism participation.

The proposed **Service Agreement** would see a major uptake of the **ATIC COVID Clean Practising Business module** by tourism enterprises across Australia providing an assurance to Government and the general public that businesses are undertaking appropriate measures and adopting a best-practice approach to combat and mitigate the spread of COVID-19 within tourism operations. This Program will also importantly assist in educating the wider tourism sector on what their responsibilities are, and how to develop safe, sustainable and resilient business systems at no more critical time for the Australian tourism industry.

Furthermore, mentoring support will be offered and built into the Program by ATIC and State TIC officials to facilitate businesses in developing a Tourism Recovery Plan to support business continuity. This can co-exist with the **COVID Clean Practising Business module**.

Participants to the COVID Clean and Recovery modules would be provided with access to the program/s, assessment and accreditation by ATIC (for COVID Clean), mentoring (for COVID Recovery), the right to access the trademark to use in their own marketing collateral and physical marketing collateral supplied by ATIC.

Access to additional services offered through the Quality Tourism Framework (QTF) such as additional sector modules, awards, ReviewPro and digital listings on ATIC sites would be an additional fee paid by the business.

GOVERNANCE AND CAPACITY

The Quality Tourism Framework has a successful history in the management and administration of accreditation for large volumes of tourism businesses across all corners of Australia. It is through its existing structure that ATIC is confident that the delivery of this Service Agreement can not only be successfully achieved, but effectively leveraged and strongly expanded to best support tourism enterprises.

Under ATIC's operating model, via licence agreement, the tourism representative body (or Tourism Industry Council) in each State/Territory manages the accreditation of any business registered to their jurisdiction. This model enables a State/Territory specific response and support to businesses, whilst providing greater accessibility than if we were to operate from a central national office.

Through this structure ATIC has existing access to over 40 staff members across Australia who can support the activation of the proposed Service Agreement, including underpinning its rapid expansion, whilst enabling additional resourcing.

The licence agreements in place for each State/Territory representative body ensures a consistent standard is applied across all accreditation programs and training systems for staff are already in existence, which can comfortably incorporate new additions to the Program.

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Whilst the State/Territory direct to business activities ensures that the program can be delivered on the ground, the national office of ATIC is the conduit of the program and therefore allows for a singular source of reporting to the Commonwealth and oversight of the Program's governance and performance.

Under the Service Agreement, ATIC would be responsible for the Programs' direction, operation and governance and would undertake consistent and regular reporting to a nominated Federal Department or Agency. This would include engagement with Tourism Australia in the area of marketing and promotion of the Program.

ATIC believes a regular reporting cycle and activity could include:

Activity	Frequency	Documentation
Operational Highlights Business sign-ups and operational milestones of note	Monthly	Template Email to Dept Short Written Update ATIC Executive Director (or nominee – GM)
Quarterly Activity Report By business quarter	By Business Quarter	Short Report including KPIs and Performance Update on Marketing Activity Raise Achievements Online meeting with Federal Govt Agency
Twice yearly Operational Debrief	By Half Year	Formal meeting with Federal Agency assessing performance, governance, Marketing Plan, reporting and forward direction Formal Meeting with Federal Minister or Assistant Minister
Annual	Once per year	Formal Annual Report to Federal agency Formal meeting with Federal Minister

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MARKETING

ATIC is proposing a partnership with the Commonwealth over a 2-year period which will up to 15,000 businesses be recognised as a COVID Clean Practising Business through access, participation and completion of the COVID Clean Practising Business module.

Furthermore, the Service Agreement will up to minimum 1000 businesses access direct mentoring for the development of their recovery plan over the life of the Agreement.

ATIC foresees an agreed set allocation of funds annually, over the two-years of the Partnership, go towards effective marketing of the Program. We believe a minimum additional allocation of \$1.5 million over two-years is required to effectively market the benefits to Australian businesses in addition to consumers through point-of-sale and at-venue locations.

This funding would enable ATIC to activate three key strategies:

- Marketing of the program to tourism businesses
- Generate collateral for businesses to in their own marketing activities
- Some direct to consumer marketing

It is the expectation of ATIC that a partnership with Tourism Australia would see an investment in consumer marketing by utilising their existing channels. ATIC would endeavour to both seek and work formally with Tourism Australia and/or Austrade to enable effective leveraging of marketing and promotion and to rapidly escalate reach of the Program (in areas of marketing, media buy, digital and traditional promotion).

ATIC envisages working with organisations including Tourism Australia and State Tourism Organisations utilising their existing channels to not only target domestic tourism orientated businesses, but also those international market facing tourism enterprises to access the Program in particular as borders look to or eventually open.

We envisage an agreed Marketing Plan which we would develop in unison with Tourism Australia would accompany our operational rollout with close engagement around brand alignment to Federal tourism campaigns and activities where applicable. By example this could include key supply side events such as the Australian Tourism Exchange (ATE), engagement through the Aussie Specialist Supplier Network and TA marketing partnerships and collaborations around programs such as 'Holiday Here This Year' and other activations. We believe this would be best achieved by having a senior Tourism Australia Manager have a line of engagement and reporting mechanism.

ACCESSIBILITY

Both the COVID Tourism Recovery Plan module and COVID Clean Practising Business modules are available to any Australian registered business. There is no prerequisite to be a member of a State/Territory tourism representative body, or any other organisation, making the Program accessible to all. The Programs are specifically targeted and marketed to be accessible towards all Australian tourism enterprises and those businesses which participate in the visitor economy.

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It is proposed under a Service Agreement that the COVID Tourism Recovery Plan module and COVID Clean Practising Business module be offered to tourism businesses as a complimentary program for their first year. This will enable the greatest level of participation and reach, more rapidly expanding the benefits of the program and build greater collective resilience for future sustainable tourism enterprises, whilst recognising the significant economic hardship faced by so many of them in recent times.

Future confidence in COVID clean tourism travel is in the 'now' and this Program of activity seeks to best underpin confidence that industry, like consumers, aspire to COVID safe conditions. With the progressive return of international travel, value in COVID Safe travel planning and promotion could become an important adjunct to the program, **an area that would be strategically piloted and supported by Tourism Australia in the international space.**

The Service Agreement and level of funding between ATIC and the Federal Government will enable ATIC to efficiently administer the program, as well accelerate and handle its throughput and provide the required support to business without a cost burden to those already significantly hurting. It will also underpin, and support is effective Management, governance and meet B2B and B2C marketing initiatives for its effective promotion.

Under the Service Agreement, ATIC will offer like to like contribution to that offered by the Commonwealth.

Addendum: Fulfilling the Gaps with Existing Programs

The **COVID Clean Practising Business module** is the only known program that is tourism specific, individualised, free of charge to **any** business, easily accessible and focusses on the **business**.

Existing programs that also support the reopening of business includes the Infection Control Training delivered by registered training organisations. However, this is for individual staff members to gain skills in hygiene practices, surface cleaning, hazard control and reporting and base knowledge in infection and transmission. In contrast, the COVID Clean module focusses on the development of customised business policies and procedures and delivers customised documentation via a user-friendly online system.

Furthermore, the COVID Clean module is aimed towards the SME market, which recent data demonstrates that 88% of Australian tourism businesses had none to less than five employees (<file:///C:/Users/info/Downloads/Tourism-Businesses-full-report.pdf>). They are unlikely to take up certified training as the majority of tourism business are time and resource poor, or do not have the employees to participate.

In contrast, whereas the Infection Control Training is anticipated to take 30 hours, the COVID Clean program can take as little as half an hour to complete and delivers individualised, specific and clear instructions on how the business can be COVID Clean.

Safe Work Australia has developed a series of Safe Work Guidelines to assist business to understand how they can keep their workplace safe. However, these guidelines are simply a

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series of documents that have no verification process to them, can be difficult for the business to navigate their way through to find what is relevant to them, and can seem overwhelming to a SME.

The COVID Clean module incorporates the guidelines of Safe Work Australia, but delivers them in an easy to follow system which, with minimal input from the business, creates customised COVID Clean policies and procedures for the business to adapt that are specific to their own business.

Testimonial received to date on the program has praised the simple to use process, providing clear instruction for the business to immediately adapt.

PROPOSAL

Year 1 - \$2M – During FY21 and into FY22

	ATIC Contribution	Government Contribution
Up to 2500 businesses complete COVID Clean *	\$500,000 in kind	\$500,000 in financial contribution
An additional 5000 businesses complete COVID Clean^	\$250,000 in kind	\$250,000 in financial contribution
Up to 500 businesses undertake Tourism Recovery mentoring	\$500,000 in kind	\$500,000 in financial contribution
Marketing Allocation	In kind contribution	\$750,000 in financial contribution. Plus partnership with Tourism Australia to utilize their existing channels
Online program development	\$50,000+ already committed and enabled to meet additional demand	
Program Governance	Quarterly Reporting to Federal Government / Agency	Tourism Australia (or nominated agency) strategic support & marketing

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Year 2 - \$2M – During FY22 and into FY23

	ATIC Contribution	Government Contribution
Up to 2500 businesses complete COVID Clean *	\$500,000 in kind	\$500,000 in financial contribution
An additional 5000 businesses complete COVID Clean^	\$250,000 in kind	\$250,000 in financial contribution
Up to 500 businesses undertake Tourism Recovery mentoring	\$500,000 in kind	\$500,000 in financial contribution
Online program development/updates	Up to \$50,000 in additional program development	
Marketing Allocation	In kind contribution	\$750,000 in financial contribution. Plus partnership with Tourism Australia to utilize their existing channels
Program Governance	Quarterly Reporting to Federal Government / Agency	Tourism Australia (or nominated agency) strategic support & marketing

*** This is a set cost for up to 5000 businesses, which incorporates fixed costs that will not fluctuate if business numbers grow.**

^This is based on a fee of \$100 per business where initial fixed costs have already been met.

This **new Partnership** for the Quality Tourism Framework can be further scalable over time if proven successful with ATIC delivering the Program through this Services Agreement. Participation numbers will be periodically reviewed and if over-subscribed ATIC would meet with Austrade, or appropriate body to discuss if further funding is available.

Its success provides a benchmark to further expand or evolve the framework to even more tourism businesses as well as key sectors within the industry over time.

Ongoing access, past the initial year covered by the service agreement to the COVID Clean or Recovery module for businesses would be at a cost to the business.

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QTF – PUBLIC POLICY OUTCOMES, GOVERNANCE AND SUMMATION

Public Policy Outcomes

From the participant business that undertakes the QTF the public policy outcome would include:

- Develop and underpin COVID Clean activities and assessed as domestic ready competitive tourism product for a returning market
- Assure the international market that Australia has developed COVID Clean international competitive tourism product which can again attract international visitors (export earnings) and retain domestic visitors in Australia (import replacement)
- Develop a steady stream of COVID clean, accredited tourism experiences that entering into trade channels can be used by Tourism Australia, State Tourism Organisations, Inbound Tourism Operators and Travel Wholesalers to market Australian destinations and journeys
- Foster and develop regional visitor dispersal opportunities through bringing forward more quality tourism businesses from outside capital city gateways. This would help support any *Tourism2030* target for (regional visitor dispersal) which ATIC understands is being developed
- To provide high quality tourism businesses with a marketing campaign and consumer recognition as an incentive to develop quality product through the QTF
- Retain the economic value of tourism within Australia and individual tourism businesses by driving bookings direct to businesses without losing commissions to international overseas travel agents such as Booking.com, Expedia, etc
- Encourage Australians to holiday in Australia by promoting new local quality tourism experiences. COVID clean plans within tourism businesses we believe can generate greater economic value in retained travel spend.

SUMMATION

COVID clean tourism will be critical to underpin a gradual and sustainable return for Australian tourist and travel visitation over time. The Federal Government’s strategic role in its planned coordination can help drive recovery and accentuate progress.

As a high cost global tourism destination, pre COVID-19 Australia was ranked greater than 130th globally in terms of comparative destination cost by agreed world tourism research. Australia is also a tourism destination delivering high value in tourism outputs (pre COVID-19 was 7th globally for international tourism receipts and was the highest per capita when globally measured by per international tourist in-country spend).

These collective points underscore the high-value but also the critical need for COVID clean tourism to be effectively incorporated and integrated into both our domestic and international tourism offering (and levels of marketing) in order to help rebuild the sector but also continue to attract visitors and underpin value in domestic and future international travel within and to Australia. We must epitomise COVID Clean tourism and herald it in our future offering.

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For Australia to continue to effectively compete in global tourism we must also be recognised (and deliver) as a destination renowned for quality visitor experiences, which also align with our unique natural, indigenous and built heritage, as well as being focussed on COVID clean.

Future Australian small to medium sized tourism businesses must sustainably operate, but also further develop their tourism skills, business capabilities and resilience, service quality and digital expertise. The anticipated future recovery of the industry and tourism enterprises, to remain sustainable, will necessitate being COVID clean and projecting this across B2C and B2B channels.

The large cohort of small to medium tourism business enterprises moving forward will continue to deliver a significant share of our tourism product. Their collective performance will define our industry's overall future direction including in our strongest and re-emerging tourism regions.

The proposed Partnership between ATIC and the Federal Government can help underpin the COVID recovery phase for our tourism industry including the recognised gap of COVID Clean Plan Coordination and help sustainably support recovery of existing and future jobs.

Should you require further information, please do not hesitate to contact the Executive Director of ATIC, Simon Westaway, on either swestaway@qualitytourismaustralia.com or 0401 994 627.

Simon Westaway

Executive Director

Australian Tourism Industry Council

Addendum: (Can be provided on request)

ATIC COVID Clean Business Module - Policies and Procedures (see attachment)

ATIC COVID Clean Practicing Business Module - Online Sample of Module (see attachment)

ATIC COVID 19 Risk Register (see attachment)

ATIC Recent Media Statements – COVID Clean

<https://qualitytourismaustralia.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/COVID-Clean-MR-Progress-16-June-2020-FINAL.pdf>

<https://qualitytourismaustralia.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/ATIC-COVID-Clean-Statement-26-May-2020-FINAL.pdf>

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