



MEDIA STATEMENT

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Support for short-stay accommodation critical to boost tourism industry

Western Australia cannot afford to be the only state to put onerous and unnecessary regulation on Airbnb as it will put the State's tourism at a further disadvantage.

Every other state has closed this debate and dismissed alarmist calls for onerous regulation for the simple fact that it makes accommodation more expensive and will drive tourists to other destinations. Going alone on Airbnb regulation would put the vast majority of WA tourism operators at a disadvantage.

The Chamber of Commerce and Industry WA's (CCI) submission to the State Government's *Inquiry into Short-Stay Accommodation* outlines why it would be a disaster for WA to go it alone, stifle a new accommodation option and further drive tourists to other states and other countries where they can access the accommodation they want.

Leisure travellers are price sensitive – 88 per cent of respondents to a recent Haaga-Helia University survey stated that price was a key factor when they chose their travel destination. An increase in regulation that makes it more difficult for mums and dads to list accommodation on Airbnb will decrease supply and increase prices.

WA tourism is the ultimate loser – adding to the perception that the WA market is overpriced. The average price across all accommodation in WA per night is almost 1.8 times higher than a private room from an online platform such as Airbnb¹.

More than 60,000 people wouldn't have visited WA or would have shortened their trip¹ in 2015-16 alone if it weren't for Airbnb. This is equivalent to approximately \$54 million in lost spending in the State's economy, supporting approximately 270 jobs². Increased regulation on Airbnb puts these visitors and jobs at risk.

Access to affordable accommodation increases the number of people visiting WA and extends the length of their trip so they spend more here with local businesses. In 2015-16 Airbnb guests spent 59 per cent more than the average tourist in WA per day².

We cannot afford to put our tourism sector any further behind. In the six years to June 2018, WA's international visitor numbers recorded an average year-on-year growth of just 4.2 per cent – nearly three times less than Tasmania – and visitor expenditure grew by less than one per cent over the same period – the lowest rate across all Australian jurisdictions. In 2017-18, WA was the only jurisdiction, other than the Northern Territory, to have its regional expenditure by international visitors decrease, down 10 per cent.

Airbnb will be vital to the success of the Government's 'Road Trip State' campaign. Ninety-four per cent of Airbnb's listings lie outside of Perth's major CBD hotel district¹, which means the overwhelming majority of Airbnb guests are boosting the economies of local communities and supporting regional tourism.

CCI's submission urges the Government to develop a state-wide planning framework that is aligned with other Australian jurisdictions such as South Australia, Tasmania or New South Wales. This will ensure hosts can comply with local planning policies without being burdened with unnecessary regulation, putting WA's tourism industry at a competitive disadvantage.

To read CCI's submission click [here](#).

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¹ Inside Airbnb

² Deloitte Access Economics, Tourism WA