

Respondent No: 34

Submitted Date: 2018-04-18 20:45:49

Member Username: [REDACTED]

Member Postcode: 3227

Member Email: [REDACTED]

1. What is your interest in the Great Ocean Road Region?

Primary residence

Local business owner/operator

Regular visitor

Attend/participate in an event

Tourist

2. Are you completing this survey on behalf of an organisation?

No

3. How many times did you travel along the Great Ocean Road (any section between Torquay and Allansford) in the last 6 months?

5 - 10 times

4. What do you love most about the Great Ocean Road and its landscapes?

The natural landscapes and unhindered views.

5. What aspect of the Great Ocean Road and its landscapes would you most like to see protected?

The native trees and vegetation and the skylines/horizonlines.

6. What aspect of the Great Ocean Road and its landscapes would you most like to see changed?

I don't seek major change to either the road or the landscape.

I fully support the current cliff reinforcement and road improvements, however I would not like significant change to the landscapes.

I accept that tourism development is necessary and inevitable, however any future development should be sympathetic to the landscape, the wider environment and non-obtrusive on the skyline.

People come to see the natural environment along the road; not development.

7. Do you work for, own or operate a business, or are you a member of a community organisation, that benefits from visitors to the Great Ocean Road Region?

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

8. Is there any critical issue or opportunity that we have missed (in chapter 3 of the Issues Paper)?

YES.

Your issues paper concentrates primarily on governance and infrastructure. You almost totally fail to address the culture of the communities along the road and its hinterland, especially as to how that culture can impact the tourism economy.

By way of explanation, my wife and I recently went on a road trip through south-east South Australia, including the wine region of the Coonawarra and the coastal areas of Victor Harbour, Robe, the Coorong and a host of associated coastal or inland towns.

On returning to Victoria we then toured along the entire length of the Great Ocean Road.

The comparison between the attentive, friendly, helpful and efficient attitude of the tourism sector in South Australia could not have contrasted more starkly with the don't care and you are a bother to serve attitude experienced along the Great Ocean Road.

Of course I am generalising in this observation, however a difference in attitude definitely exists and reflects badly on Victoria and the Great Ocean Road.

We encountered retail staff in Apollo Bay who frankly were rude and clearly didn't care to serve visitors. We spoke with European visitors who were purposely sent on a wild goose chase in the opposite/wrong direction deep into the hinterland by a local, when simply asking for directions to their accommodation in Apollo Bay. They finally arrived at their accommodation late into the night. We observed Asian visitors who were left standing at a shop counter when locals, who were more recent arrivals to the shop, were served first. These were not the only examples. It was evident on several other occasions that overseas visitors were made feel unwelcome by some locals.

By crossing the border from SA to Victoria we felt we had stepped backwards in time by several decades in terms of attitude to tourism. SA understands the value of tourism; some people in towns along the GOR don't.

Looking at the GOR taskforce's terms-of-reference it seems the taskforce only has scope to recommend to the government on governance and infrastructure matters. The issues paper is therefore largely confined to those topics.

I urge the government and the taskforce to broaden the scope beyond the issues paper to include considering and recommending on the need for cultural change.

Having spent the best part of 20 years managing diverse high-profile government information and education campaigns aimed at community and organisation attitudinal change, I can with certainty advise that the Great Ocean Road is crying out for such a campaign.

It needs to be well-researched, well-funded and long-term. Cultural change does not happen over night. The campaign must be multi-level; that is, it must target the employees, the employers, those who govern and make decision locally and the broader community. It must especially impact youth (who will potentially be the region's next service providers) and retirees (who will potentially be the most cynical and resistant to change).

The campaign must be more than a few posters and and info sessions.

Investing hundreds of millions of dollars in infrastructure upgrades will be wasted, or at best of limited value, without the community being on board. The community needs to be positive, welcoming visitors to the Great Ocean Road and understanding that their local economy depends to a large extent on tourism.

I strongly urge the taskforce and government to include reference to and recommendations about cultural change in responses to the issues paper, as a priority issue.

9. Do you have any suggested changes to the overarching policy, goals and principles (pages 40 - 41) in the Issues Paper?

See my response to Q 8.

10. What elements would you like to see covered in a Strategic Framework Plan for the Great Ocean Road Region?

See my response to Q 8.

11. What are your thoughts about establishing a new organisation to oversee the development, and coordinate implementation, of a Strategic Framework Plan for the Great Ocean Road Region?

I fully support the establishment of an authority to undertaken strategic planning for the GOR region. However, any such organisation must have clearly defined and strong legislated powers. It is essential to avoid any ambiguity between the roles of the authority, local government and other government agencies within the region.

12. What current constraints need to be addressed in the future governance arrangements?

Current governance is confused and mitigates against new development, even when the development is carefully planned to be visually and environmentally friendly. Local councillors appear unprepared or unable to approve any major new tourism development, no matter how much attention has been given to its environmental qualities. Such developments should not longer be the responsibility of councils.

13. Are there any other management models /options we should consider?

See my answer to Q 11.

14. What key criteria should the Taskforce use to evaluate the management model options?

I have no views, other than to say the taskforce consists of experience people who are surely qualified to determine evaluation criteria.

What is your age range?

██████

Please provide your country of residence if you are not an Australian resident

I agree to the privacy statement

yes