



Governance of The Great Ocean Road Region Issues Paper

Lorne Business & Tourism Association Submission

The Lorne Business & Tourism Association (LBTA) supports the development and implementation of a Strategic Framework Plan as outlined in the Taskforce Issues Paper. We believe a strategic, coordinated and properly resourced approach is vital in order to establish an informed opinion on how to tackle the many challenges the Great Ocean Road (GOR) is facing.

The LBTA notes:

1. The GOR and surrounding areas require a comprehensive management plan to identify the challenges, implement a framework to achieve short, medium and long term improvements to the region and to effectively maintain this valuable asset. Improvements are required across a diverse range of priorities including economic return, visitor satisfaction, environmental sustainability, infrastructure maintenance along with managing continued growth and yield in the region.
2. The LBTA is unable to propose the best model or framework. LBTA's inability to outline a framework is, in part, due to years of deterioration and inaction that has led to a distrust, uncertainty and unaccountability amongst the relevant regions, agencies and other stakeholders.
3. In the LBTA's view, the Model/Framework must however:
 - a. Have a dedicated authority that delivers an overarching control of the GOR.
 - b. Reduce the complexities of operating in the area.
 - c. Reduce or eliminate duplication of services, bureaucracy and legislation.
 - d. Implement immediate measures to remediate or improve infrastructure that is harming the GOR's reputation i.e. parking (including inadequate long vehicle parking in towns), toilet facilities, inadequate public transport and road surface maintenance.
 - e. Develop a funding model that takes the best elements of successful models for similar high visitation regions around the world. There is no need to reinvent the wheel.
 - f. Improve the visitor experience – both Domestic and International. We cannot rely solely on the natural environment to achieve this. Private Sector investment must be encouraged and incorporated into any future planning without compromising the GOR's key assets. 'Sustainable Development' principles should be incorporated into any planning decisions.
4. The question of 'How many visitors can the Great Ocean Road sustain?' must be answered. Unchecked, visitor numbers will continue to increase however it must be determined whether continued growth in visitor numbers should be allowed without adequate controls. If implemented, how will these controls manage across peak periods and periods of lower visitation?