



Tasmanian Visitor Information Network Inc.

21st June 2023

2030 Visitor Economy Strategy Tourism Tasmania
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Submission in response to the 2030 Visitor Economy Strategy Key Directions Paper for Community Consultation.

We support the 8 Key Directions proposed for the 2030 Visitor Economy Strategy to grow and manage our visitor economy into the future.

We would like to suggest the addition of **Visitor Information Services** to this Strategy. We note there is no specific reference to Visitor Information Centres, we therefore seek clarification as to whether Visitor Information Centres will be seen to play a crucial role in supporting the overall strategy.

Why it is important for Visitor Information Centres to be in the 2030 Visitor Economy Strategy

We work collaboratively to promote the Tasmanian brand; Tasmanian Visitor Information Centres are a key component in the visitor servicing sector.

Visitors come to Tasmania wanting to 'live like a Tasmanian for a while'. The way they do that is to hear Tasmanian stories, interact with our heritage, our history, our natural environment, our people. When they walk into a Visitor Information Centre they are guaranteed of an interaction, they look for this opportunity, it characterises their visit, informs their choices, and determines how they feel about a place. The personalised guidance we provide in our centres helps people make informed decisions and enhances their overall experience. Every day we make new 'living and breathing Tasmanian ambassadors', who go back home and tell their friends about Tasmania. This is a powerful way to market our state, word of mouth is always preeminent over alternative forms of advertising and multiplies exponentially.

"2. We will proactively manage growth to protect and enhance Tasmania's brand, environment, and community values."

Visitor Information Services actively promote sustainable tourism practices to visitors. By providing information about eco-friendly activities, responsible travel options, and conservation efforts, these services educate and inspire travellers to make conscious choices that minimise their impact on the environment and local communities, protecting Tasmania's brand and environment.

Including Visitor Information Services in the T21 Partnership Governance Structure acknowledges the collaboration between us and the tourism industry; this promotes the development of a constructive governance structure that functions cohesively to cater for the diverse needs of travellers while respecting Tasmania's community values.

“8. We will manage our destination in harmony with community.”

Our visitor information centres are the mouthpieces for their regions, promoting local business that sustain the livelihoods of those who live there.

TVIN conducted a Business and Community Survey in 2022 to ascertain what value is placed on our visitor information centres by local businesses and their local communities. The results from this data, collected by Episteme, feed into Key Direction 2 and 8.

70% of respondents indicated their local visitor information centre is important to their business operations.

72% of respondents agree that visitor information centres are important to Tasmania’s brand strategy to feel more human, to be Tasmanian.

75% of respondents refer people to their local visitor information centre.

Nearly 80% of respondents agree that visitors to Tasmania see visitor information centres as a chance to talk with locals and that they are interested in learning more about the destination/product once they arrive.

88% see them as important for employing locals.

90% of respondents believe that the local visitor information centres are valuable to visitors.

90% indicate that visitor information centres are an important source of community pride.

95% see visitor information centres as an important symbol that visitors are welcome.

“3. We will grow the contribution that visitors make to Tasmania and maximise overall benefit to our state and regional communities.”

57% of visitors said they would spend more money in Tasmania because of their visit to a Visitor Information Centre (source: TVIN Visitor Survey, 2023).

Visitor Services are a vital element to the visitor experience. With experienced advisors in our visitor centres providing a welcoming face, we assist with regional dispersal and contribute to building economic stability. We are experts on our region, but we promote all areas of the state. We actively promote our National Parks & Reserves, partnering with Parks & Wildlife in selling Parks Passes.

Visitor Information Services highlight Tasmania’s thriving arts and culture scene, promoting local artists, events, and cultural experiences. By engaging with the community and fostering partnerships with local businesses, these services can contribute to the convivial and down-to-earth atmosphere that Tasmanian is known for. This showcases the unique character of the destination and encourages visitors to explore and engage with local offerings. Most of the buildings we operate our centres in are infrastructure assets that are highly valued by local and state government authorities.

Our value lies in the experiences we help to create; the itineraries we plan, and the insider information on local offerings, which cannot always be found online. Face to face exclusive tailored service, selling the Tasmanian brand, reiterating, and supporting Tourism Tasmania’s marketing campaigns.

Visitor Information Centres are used for specific information for those seeking current, curated, and detailed information at different stages of their journey; sought out by visitors seeking authoritative, unbiased, and comprehensive information.

44% of people visiting our centres come in to talk to a local face-to-face about their plans, and 53% come in to find out about attractions and activities in the area. Very surprisingly, 30% have not used digital technology to find out information and make bookings online (source: TVIN Visitor Survey, 2023).

A common reflection made by visitor's regarding their online research of Tasmania is that the options were endless, they had sensory overload, became confused, and they needed someone to help them 'filter' and guide them with their itinerary planning.

We provide high quality, personalised visitor servicing, connecting visitors with communities, creating memorable holiday experiences, and contributing to visitor economy yield through the delivery of seamless, integrated visitor services and engagement.

We promote and reiterate the Tourism Tasmania brand strategy initiatives on the ground, in person. We reinforce and facilitate visitor interest in the attractions, products, and experiences on offer, in alignment with brand marketing.

We interface with the public to cross-sell, up-sell and on-sell the Tasmanian brand. The strategies to effectively market and capitalise on the visitor interest in a region is continually being assessed and upgraded to keep pace with technological advances.

In Visitor Information Centres across Australia the integration of interactive and digital technologies is transforming the way travellers access information and plan their trips. By leveraging virtual reality, interactive screens, and online concierge services, visitors can have more engaging and personalised experiences. Visitor Information Centres are adopting digital platforms where travellers can create and update their trip profiles, this allows them to specify their preferences, interests, and requirements for their visit.

Virtual reality technology is being utilised to provide visitors with sensory experiences of attractions and activities in the region. This immersive approach allows travellers to preview destinations and engage with interactive content before making their choices.

Interactive and intuitive screen displays, dedicated apps for online concierge services providing real-time advice and recommendations based on various pre-set profiles, past travel patterns, peer group preferences, and emerging behaviour while in the destination, are all aspirational goals.

The reality is, as an industry we are not there yet, however we would like to be a part of the conversation at government level to participate in the implementation of these initiatives across our centres. The new Discover Tasmania App is helping to meet this new way of travel planning. We actively promote this initiative across our network and assist the digital marketing team with updating data and content.

We have been partnered with the Tasmania Fire Service (TFS) and State Emergency Service (SES) since 2014. We have a comprehensive Emergency Preparedness Manual. Workshops sessions are conducted to educate staff based on this manual, we hold regular seasonal briefings (TFS/SES) at regional meetings, we are included in all emergency communication channels, all enabling us to deliver up to date bushfire and other emergency alerts, messages/warnings to visitors.

We contribute to the long-term prosperity of the tourism industry, while preserving the authentic charm and community vibe synonymous with Tasmania.

We suggest the 2030 Visitor Economy Strategy makes provision for the facilitation of the Tasmanian Visitor Information Network (TVIN) as vital visitor servicing providers and key partners in delivering this Strategy for the Tasmanian people and our tourism industry.

Vanessa Douglas

Executive Officer

Tasmanian Visitor Information Network