

RV Road Tourism Forum

Welcome

On behalf of CMCA, I would like to welcome the great cross section of industry and consumer sectors to this important forum.

We have over 70 people attending, representing Government, commercial and consumer sectors of the industry.

CMCA is a not for profit organisation with 70,000 members Australia wide. Predominantly, our membership is driven by our members on the Eastern seaboard – New South Wales and Queensland - with many travelling to Queensland in the winter months to avoid the cooler conditions down south. This has proved to be a significant benefit to Queensland.

With different planning laws across every state and territory, we recognise that we have a problem throughout Australia- which can only be described as ridiculous.

We need a simple transparent system that suits a changing model. The current model, as advised by town planners in many councils, is unworkable - now is the time and need for change.

The purpose of this forum is to provide information on how Queensland can lead Australia in the fastest growing sector- Road-Based Tourism.

CMCA's key message- giving consumers 'Freedom of Choice' - is currently being restricted by bureaucracy and sometimes protectionism. This needs to change.

Purpose

The purpose of bringing this important document to the Government's attention is to highlight that change has occurred over the last 10 years. However, the planning laws and permissible use of community or state-owned land has not.

As the industry continues to evolve through new technology, design and innovation, so too does the consumer demand. In the 60s, 70s and 80s, the need for a commercial park was paramount. This is not the case today.

Look at the developments taking place in the manufacturing sector alone, driven by consumers, especially in the area of self-containment.

The current legislative environment is not consistent. The model – ‘one size fits all’ – does not apply today.

During 2009, the QLD government developed a policy in consultation with certain parts of the industry and local Government. Despite what was perceived as a consultation period, much of the comments - particularly from local Government and consumer groups - were ignored in favour of a certain commercial sector. Especially regarding the Caravan Parks Policy and the Secondary Use of Trust Land. Both documents have become unworkable and prohibitive towards significant development in this area.

The amount of new commercial parks or campgrounds developed in Queensland has been very limited. This could be as the conversion into lifestyle villages has been significant in recent years. Out of the 1,400 caravan parks across Australia, currently only 350 of these are in Queensland. The number of parks has declined Australia wide.

How do we grow the market? How do we encourage investment? Other than those companies stepping into the lifestyle market? We need to look at what opportunities we have locally within the community and what can come from outside.

For example, many showgrounds and sporting and community clubs across Australia have parcels of land that are possibly only being used seasonally. Furthermore, they struggle to maintain these areas and are often seeking government and community grants to assist. If we allowed these not for profits organisations to capture this new market, it would open a new revenue stream to help keep them sustainable.

It leads to new development, enhancements and improvements for the entire community, for little outlay. It is catering for a growing market. Government needs to respond to a community need, it's not about competing with the commercial sector, i.e. not a competition policy issue. If anything, it is a protection issue to stop market forces from operating freely.

CMCA has developed several low-cost RV parks around Australia, and through spending our own money to lease or purchase parcels of land, we have now established 6 parks across the country, including four in Queensland.

Our model is a simple one, self-contained vehicles only. If you are not self-contained, you need to go to a commercial park or campground.

The parks have basic infrastructure including potable water, black water disposal point, one powered site for a custodian (caretaker) and we install a storage shed, shelter shed, signage and fence off the perimeter.

At the end of today's presentation, we have a vision for Queensland. We believe the potential is enormous for the state to lead the way into the next 10 to 20 years. However, change is imperative for this to occur. This will also allow all players in the industry to be winners. The more visitors to the state, the more the economy will grow.