

A Vision for RV Road Tourism – Queensland

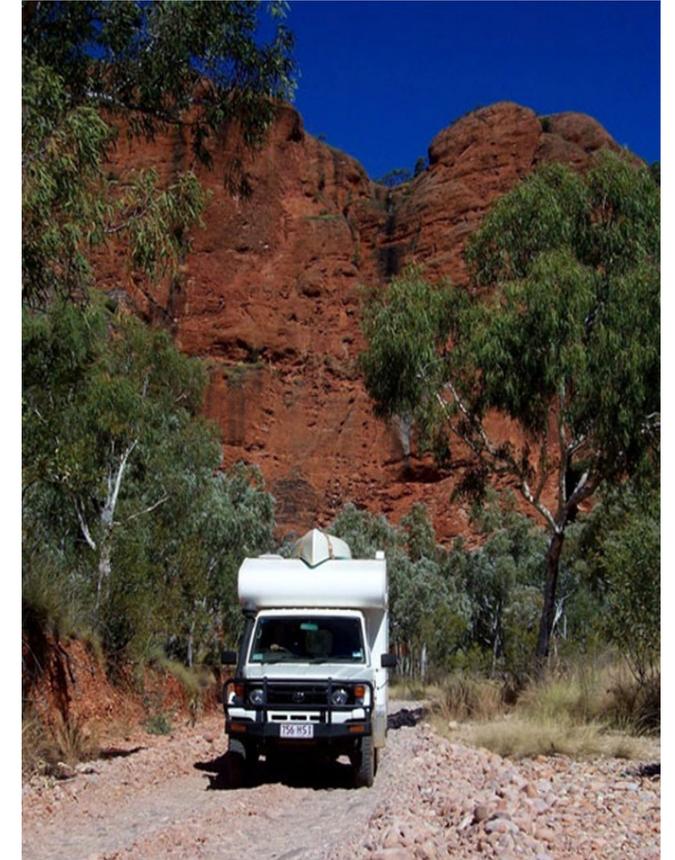


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12 August 2019

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RV Travel – A Growing Regional Tourism Player

- By end 2019 over 700,00 RVs will be registered in Australia
- Older vehicles, mostly caravans with no self-containment features will continue to be taken off the road
- More than 150,000 RVs will be sold in Australia between 2015 and 2019 – driven largely by baby boomers moving into retirement (baby boomers are responsible holds 52% of the nation's wealth)
- RV travel disperses travellers into regional Queensland like no other tourism segment
- It involves long duration stays
- RV's provide 'motel rooms' in towns without motels; a mobile workforce for regional towns; affordable accommodation from backpackers to family holidaymakers to 'grey nomads'.



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Technology Drives Self-Sufficiency

Caravans of yesteryear were not constructed with lightweight composite, highly insulated panels, streamlined design. They were not equipped with:

- toilets or showers;
- energy efficient hot water systems;
- 12 volt and LPG refrigerators;
- Independent, energy efficient LED lighting systems;
- Independent, quiet and highly efficient power generation and storage (solar, wind, fuel cells, lithium ion batteries, low decibel inverter generators);
- affordable, emergency locator beacons enabling safer travel to remote areas; and
- mobile internet almost anywhere in Australia.

Similarly, **towing vehicles** of yesteryear were not equipped with:

- reversing cameras for ease of hitching;
- 4WD capability (with rare exceptions);
- GPS navigation; and
- telecommunications.



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RV Travellers Demand More

The corresponding **evolution of caravan parks** has been slow. The basic configuration has remained the same for decades focusing on:

- optimizing space by aligning caravans side by side;
- shared toilet, shower and laundry facilities;
- locations near services or attractions; and
- reticulated power, potable water and grey water collection.

Evolution has largely been restricted to the **inclusion of cabins, villas and recreational facilities aimed at families** and the emergence of caravan park chains and centralised booking systems.

Despite the massive growth in RV's on the roads, the overall number of caravan parks however is declining - with as few as 1300 remaining nationally – and many prime RV suitable sites have been converted to cabins.

Rarely will you find a caravan park in a completely rural or natural setting.



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Legislation & Policy is Suppressing Road Tourism Growth

- When public reserves were established, government was responding to the community needs of the times. Unsurprisingly over the last 140 years community needs have changed.
- Policy and planning guidelines need to be reformed to realign with both local and global community trends in RV market development and reflect international best practice.
- Specifically, policies and guidelines such as the Caravan Parks Policy PUX/901/102 V3.04 2013, the Secondary Use of Trust Land PUX/901/209 V4 2008, and the 2014 Guide for Local Government in Developing Camping Options overtly limit options to use community facilities on State-owned land for RV use (e.g. limiting access to 3 nights in most circumstances).



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- The 2014 Guide for Local Government in Developing Camping Options is out of date, process heavy, deals only with non-commercial opportunities, and provides caravan park operators with a significant voice at the expense of the broader business community and the RV traveller; and is pre-occupied with arguments of competitive neutrality.
- As a result of Government legislation and policy the diversification of RV travel is being suppressed and suppressing consumer demand is never effective in the end.
- RVers will simply travel to and spend in alternative destinations that offer more interesting and diverse experiences to the detriment of regional Queensland.



(Photo Courtesy Tourism and Events Queensland)

RV Travel the Caravan Park Disrupter

- **RV travel is another 'disruptor'**
- Just as backpacking was a significant disruptor to the tourism industry in the late 80s
- Just as Uber and Air BnB are disrupters today
- Isn't it time that Queensland got on the front foot with this issue?
- Queensland has the potential to turbo charge its share of the Australian RV travel market through innovative and contemporary approaches.
- For too long the RV market has been shoehorned, figuratively and literally, into a caravan park model that evolved in the post-World War II era.
- The time has come to realise that RV travel represents a new form of tourism.



(Photo Courtesy Tourism and Events Queensland)

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Vision for RV Road Tourism



Creating a **statewide and consistent approach to future RV travel.**

Partnerships between CMCA and government to diversify RV attractions, infrastructure and services;

Support consistent branding and tourism information on RV friendly towns, dump points, attractions and services.

Marketing directed at younger RV markets in Germany, UK and France and emerging international markets (e.g. India)

Support the expansion of vehicle self-containment certification programs that can be incorporated as a tool to manage access to camping areas.

Partnerships between CMCA and community based organisations:

Develop pilot projects to broaden stopover and infrastructure options and diversify RV attractions and services.



(Photo Courtesy Tourism and Events Queensland)

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- Commercial accommodation sites providing products to match consumer demand (eg unserviced sites)
- Streamline processes to facilitate private investment in RV parks, services and experiences.
- Incorporate pet friendly sites and services.
- Providing for RVs in National Parks and State Forest recreation areas and campsites (security, volunteerism – conservation projects)



(Photo Courtesy Tourism and Events Queensland)

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- Establish a certification scheme for small scale RV parks on private lands.
- Queensland could be maximise use of public assets like showgrounds, racecourses and school grounds for RV's - taking a more progressive view on utilisation of these community assets.
- Marshall the volunteer workforce represented by grey nomads, Generation X and millennials.
- Queensland could facilitate authentic RV tourism experiences on farms across the State – supplementing agricultural income. Facilitating small scale RV parks on private lands – without the requirement for unnecessary infrastructure required for tourist and caravan parks, and recognising the self-sufficiency of RV's.
- A statewide network of RV parks operating at all scales from micro to macro.



(Photo Courtesy Tourism and Events Queensland)

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All levels of government could assist for example:

- Require major fuel service centres to integrate RV Dump points;
- Local councils could initiate placing RV dump points and potable water adjoining public toilet facilities on known RV touring routes;
- Queensland could partner with not-for-profit groups like CMCA to deliver Leave No Trace style certifications



(Photo Courtesy Tourism and Events Queensland)



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- For too long the RV market has been viewed in a polarising way - black and white arguments.
- CMCA's perspective is that Queensland's policies and plans have not reflected the dramatic changes to the RV market - at the expense of local economies and the RV traveler.
- The time is right to proactively set up for this rapidly evolving form of tourism. To bring innovation, lateral thinking and calculated risk taking to the issue.
- Queensland could lead the country and facilitate a vibrant, productive RV market that sets it up for the next century of travel rather than hanging onto constructs that were designed mid last century.



Vision for RV Road Tourism

- In an era when traditional, regionally based industries are under pressure due to a wide variety of causes, including climate change, international trading forces, de-population of regional areas, RV based tourism presents a significant opportunity to re-imagine Queensland's place in the RV tourism world.
- **Bob Bidwell is now going to step us through the mechanisms that can be used to realise this vision - in terms of state legislation**



(Photos Courtesy Tourism and Events Queensland)