



Cosy Deal with Airbnb Thumbs Its Nose at Regional NSW

A cosy deal between Airbnb and the NSW Government for weak regulation of short-term letting will cost jobs in regional areas and compromise consumer safety, according to the accommodation industry.

Speaking on behalf of the industry, the Accommodation Association of Australia said it will allow quasi-hotels to flourish in Sydney and place even greater pressure on housing affordability.

“This is a very disappointing outcome for the accommodation industry, particularly the way it seemingly thumbs its nose at operators of accommodation businesses in regional NSW,” said the Chief Executive Officer of the Accommodation Association of Australia, Richard Munro.

“On the surface, it appears a cosy deal has been struck between the Minister for Innovation/Better Regulation and Airbnb, with little or no input from our members.

“Airbnb and other online platforms that promote illegal use of residential buildings employ virtually no-one in Australia, yet the Minister claims these platforms contribute \$31 billion to the Australian economy, which indicates he has completely swallowed Airbnb’s PR blitz.

“The Minister’s claims about wide consultation are also false, as far as we are concerned. On behalf of our hundreds of members in NSW, we wrote to him on 11 May last year requesting a meeting to discuss regulation of short-term letting and this request was never granted.

“If it was, the Minister would have found out Tasmania has a more stringent regime for regulating short-term letting, which makes a mockery of claims the new framework is the toughest in the country.

“While we are still to see the detail of what’s been announced, there appears to be no requirement for Airbnb properties to meet standards relating to building fire safety, insurance and disability access that our members have invested millions on.

“The 180-day cap for short-term letting in greater Sydney is nowhere near enough to minimise the incidence of residential apartment blocks quietly becoming quasi-hotels – and the reality is any consumer who stays in such properties faces a much higher safety risk because of the lower standards which are in place. Our industry is supportive of a 30-day cap.

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“Of major concern to our industry is the jobs this dodgy deal will cost in regional areas as a result of there being virtually no cap on the amount of time short-term letting can take place outside greater Sydney.

“The Accommodation Association has been on the public record for some time saying the negative impact of Airbnb on our industry has been far more pronounced in regional and rural areas because there are fewer guests seeking accommodation in these locations than Sydney, so even a minor drop in the number of guests staying at traditional hotels or motels results in job losses.”

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