



Fresh Appeal for Crackdown on Airbnb in NSW

The accommodation industry is making a fresh appeal for the NSW Government to impose tighter restrictions on Airbnb in the interests of consumer safety and promoting local jobs.

On behalf of the industry, the Accommodation Association of Australia has written to all NSW state Liberal Party and National Party members of Parliament ahead of key policy decisions which will soon be made on the future regulation of Airbnb in NSW.

“This is a critical decision because it will have a direct impact on the safety of people visiting NSW and many of the 88,800 people who work in Australia’s accommodation industry,” said the Chief Executive Officer of the Accommodation Association of Australia, Richard Munro.

“At a time when a man is before court in Melbourne accused of murdering his Airbnb guest and the risks of injury or death posed by residential properties being used for commercial purposes, the number one consideration for the NSW Government when deciding on this issue must be consumer safety.

“For the accommodation industry, it is staggering that a \$30 billion offshore giant which avoids paying tax in Australia, is lucky to employ 30 people in Australia and facilitates unlawful activity – the provision of tourism accommodation under residential standards – would receive any support from politicians and yet this is exactly what Airbnb is.

“Airbnb has caused residential apartments to become quasi-hotels in Sydney and its recent new partnership with home management company ‘Hometime’ is proof a significant percentage of properties listed on Airbnb are mass-market managed and are anything but a retiree earning additional income by renting out an empty room.

“Operators of traditional accommodation businesses pay taxes, pay higher council rates and face higher costs than residential properties for many other things, including building fire safety, insurance and disability access, among others.

“This should be recognised through the introduction of a level-playing field for the regulation of all tourism accommodation in NSW.”

The Accommodation Association is also concerned that selective consultation on this issue by the Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation, Hon Matt Kean MP, could cloud the Government’s decision-making process.

The Accommodation Association first wrote to Minister Kean in May 2017 to request a meeting to discuss future regulation of short-term letting in NSW, but the Minister has not

National Office

Suite 401, Level 4, 105 Pitt Street, Sydney NSW 2000

Contact Us

P 02 8666 9015

F 02 8666 9017

E mail@aaoa.com.au

www.aaoa.com.au

ABN 36 322 115 084

QLD Office

Suite 8, 37 Bundall Road, Surfers Paradise QLD 4217

VIC Office

Level 27, 101 Collins Street, Melbourne VIC 3000



met with the Association in the 12 months since this request was made, despite the Association having hundreds of members across NSW, including many in regional and remote parts of the state.

An example of an accommodation business in regional NSW which has been struggling against the Airbnb leviathan is Victoria's (www.victorias.net.au), a small group of guest-houses/bed-and-breakfast properties which are located in and around Byron Bay.

One of the owner-operators of Victoria's, Ms Victoria McEwen, said: "Despite us investing hundreds of thousands of dollars over many years to try to meet our compliance requirements, government and the council are so harsh on us, yet both are seemingly turning a blind eye to what goes on at many Airbnb properties.

"We employ 10 staff – all locals – pay taxes, fees and almost double the amount in council rates as residential properties which are listed on Airbnb and this just isn't fair.

"The cost to our small business of regulation and compliance is going up and up and up, but the spread of Airbnb next door, across the road and throughout the local area has resulted in us reducing what we charge guests.

"At last count, there were 2655 properties in the Byron Shire Council area which are listed on Airbnb – that's 2655 beds we're competing against, the bulk of which do not meet anywhere near the same public safety standards that we do.

"It's time the NSW Government takes steps to help ensure that for any property in NSW which is providing tourism accommodation, there is a level-playing field of regulation.

"Airbnb is having a massive negative impact on us and it's time the Government cracked down on its illegal activities."

- ENDS -

Media Contact

Richard Munro

Chief Executive Officer, Accommodation Association of Australia

02 8666 9015 | 0417 466 997

National Office

Suite 401, Level 4, 105 Pitt Street, Sydney NSW 2000

Contact Us

P 02 8666 9015

F 02 8666 9017

E mail@aaoo.com.au

www.aaoo.com.au

ABN 36 322 115 084

QLD Office

Suite 8, 37 Bundall Road, Surfers Paradise QLD 4217

VIC Office

Level 27, 101 Collins Street, Melbourne VIC 3000