



## **NATIONAL CAPITAL ATTRACTIONS ASSOCIATION RESPONSE REPORT ON THE REVIEW OF ACT GOVERNMENT FESTIVAL AND EVENTS**

The National Capital Attractions Association (NCAA) would like to make the following response to the Report on the Review of ACT Government Events and Festivals (the Loxton Review).

### **BACKGROUND**

The National Capital Attractions Association Inc. (NCAA) is the industry association representing tourist attractions within Canberra and the surrounding region. The Association has over 45 members. The NCAA's mission is to promote the National Capital's attractions, to work collaboratively as the peak body for Canberra attractions and to increase visitation to the attractions, the National Capital and the region.

The Association is active in lobbying for the attractions sector with Government and other bodies, as well as promoting the national attractions through events, marketing, and publications. The NCAA has an Executive Committee representing a wide cross section of attractions.

### **EVENTS AND FESTIVALS IN THE ACT**

The NCAA recognises the importance of events and festivals to both the tourism and community wellbeing of the ACT. The NCAA supports the continued investment by the ACT Government into these activities and would like to encourage this support to continue in a more substantial and strategic manner. However, the NCAA believes that there is a vital distinction between tourism events and festivals and community events and festivals.

**In respect of this, the NCAA strongly believes and recommends that events that are tourism focused and affect tourism visitation to the region should be managed separately to local community events and festivals, including the allocation of separate funding.**

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The NCAA offers the following rationale as a basis for this recommendation:

### **1. Tourism Events and Festivals**

The NCAA believes that the expertise required to oversee tourism events and festivals in the ACT is vastly different to that of community events. Tourism events and festivals have a different focus and target market and have a clear impact on the ACT's economy. These events require the attention of tourism specialists and involve consultation from the tourism sector.

There are a number of current events and festivals in the ACT that have a significant effect on local tourism. These include both Government funded events such as Floriade and those provided with Government support such as Summernats and the National Folk Festival. The tourism success of these events and festivals is evident in their recognition Australia wide and therefore should be viewed as part of the ACT's overall tourism strategy.

#### **Increase in ACT Government investment**

The NCAA would also like to take this opportunity to raise its concern over the level of current support for tourism events and festivals and encourage more strategic and financial investment in the future of these vital elements to the tourism industry.

### **2. Community events and Festivals**

The NCAA sees the importance of local events and festivals in creating a vibrant and social city in which Australians can enjoy living. This is an entirely different focus to that of a tourism event or festival and therefore should be provided with its own specialised strategy.

The NCAA is concerned that tourism needs will suffer because of the split focus needed if a combined system of management was responsible for both tourism and community events. There is a risk that tourism focused activities will suffer if the ACT Government decides to build up community activities, particularly in the lead up to 2013. Similarly there is potential for the larger events (those which have a broad tourism and economic benefit to the ACT) to overshadow these community activities and attract more substantial financial support if funding is provided from one allocation within the ACT Government's budget.

The NCAA also believe that some local festivals and events can become more tourism focused over time but need to be first nurtured with more development support from event/festival experts within the ACT Government.

## **FURTHER RECOMMENDATION**

### **Events and exhibition fund**

The NCAA would like to urge the ACT Government to make available a fund that can be used to assist attractions in the region to support bids for major exhibitions and events. The ACT Government's support of the Masterpieces of Paris exhibition at the National Gallery of Australia contributed to ensuring the overall success of the event and the impact it had on tourism in the ACT.

The NCAA believes that a fund of \$1million could allow other attractions to source similar exhibitions and events that will further position the ACT as a destination for world class cultural and tourism events.

## **CONCLUSION**

The NCAA is committed to working towards the sustainable growth of the ACT through tourism and support of community development. This response to the Review on ACT Government Events and Festival contributes to this ultimate goal and outlines the concerns and opinions of the attraction sector of the ACT.

Should an outcome of this review be the establishment of an ACT Events Advisory Committee (EAC), the NCAA requests representation on the committee to continue the work already underway with the Events Assistance group on which we have a seat.

If you wish to discuss this response further please contact Ms Heather Millard, President of the National Capital Attractions Association at [heather.millard@nfsa.gov.au](mailto:heather.millard@nfsa.gov.au)