

Strengthening Tourism for Alice Springs and the Red Centre

SHARED TOURISM VISION AND
DESTINATION ACTION PLAN 2009

This document contains the updated Action Plan section
June 2011



Northern Territory Government



TOURISM NT
NORTHERN TERRITORY
AUSTRALIA

Background

This Action Plan commenced on 25 February 2009. As actions are completed or progressed to core business they are included at the end of the document. The original document may be viewed on www.tourismnt.com.au

Enhancing Social Harmony

The Implementation Team recognises the importance of social and alcohol issues being dealt with in the town by the appropriate organisations to minimise the negative impacts to tourism. The Implementation Team also recognises that economic and social development are intrinsically linked and therefore that progress on action items contained within this plan will positively assist that process.

1. Developing Unique Experiences

Action Item	Lead Agency	Secondary Agencies	Priority	Update and Comments
1.1 Establish nature-based experiences unique to Central Australia. i. Conduct an audit of NT owned Parks and Reserves to identify attributes that would appeal to an <i>experiential traveller</i> , and sites to develop commercial opportunities, tourism accommodation, walking trails etc. ii Benchmark examples around the world to provide ideas for application within the Territory context (eg; standing camps that can be dismantled and moved cost effectively with minimal impact on the environment).	NRETAS TNT	TNT NRETAS	H	i. This process has commenced within Parks NT and a Visitor Experience Strategy will be prepared by next financial year. ii Tourism NT has identified best case, world examples and is actively pursuing infrastructure attraction with potential investors. An Experiences Development Strategy is required to be undertaken as Australia's Red Centre National Landscape. 2011 will see this progress.
1.4 Develop a National Centre for Indigenous Culture in Alice Springs with international prominence. i. Articulate conceptual overview ii. Seek support and agreement of key influences iii. Develop business case for funding iv. Develop a concept plan	DCM	TNT TCA ASTC CCNT DBE NRETAS	H	Tourism NT has developed a concept plan. DCM undertaken to have it progressed, This is seen as a highly desirable project for Alice Springs
1.10 Expand wellness or spa type experiences which may incorporate traditional practices amongst the landscape.	Industry / TNT	TCA		Plans for Lasseter's Casino include a day spa area. Wellness sector is growing. A signature lodge, if developed in Alice Springs could include traditional wellness.
1.12 Develop the Centre as a great place for mountain biking. i. Identify trails that visitors could use ii Identify steps required to open some of these areas to public use on a trial basis iii Promotion of trails and activity option eg the Anaconda Race	TCA	TNT NRETAS DLP ASTC	M	Team is progressing regarding land usage / public liability/ maintenance and infrastructure requirements. ASTC considering further how to support.

2. Enhancing Access and Infrastructure Investment

Action Item	Lead Agency	Possible Secondary	Priority	Update and Comments
<p>2.2 to 2.5 combined</p> <p>Tourism Infrastructure is developed and maintained as a high priority</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Support the Alice Springs CBD and Mall Revitalisation project to ensure plan is consistent with tourism industry priorities. ii Alice Springs built environment guidelines and Red Centre Branding Guidelines enable the local atmosphere and desert context to be maintained and enhanced in all new building projects in the Red Centre. iii. Develop additional oasis areas within Alice Springs and the Red Centre for visitors to relax and experience the local flora and fauna. iv Prioritise Alice Springs' maintenance activities to ensure signage, public seating and other public amenities are kept at an acceptable standard. 	ASTC/ DLP	TNT TCA NRETAS	H	\$5M has been committed by the NT Government for 2011-2012. DLP currently funding consultants and expect plans to be show to the community by June 2011.

3. Improving Skills and Industry Standards

Action Item	Lead Agency	Possible Secondary	Priority	Update and Comments
<p>3.2 Establish a young people (18-30 years old) in tourism group for those new to the industry.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Establish group with a projected meeting frequency 	DKA	CCNT TNT VIC	M	TCA has added a young achieved award to the yearly TCA awards event. DKA's Network Development Officer, who is employed by CCNT, has undertaken as a project in December 2010
3.3 Locally based Aboriginal staff training and coaching in the Red Centre.	TCA / TNT	NRETAS	H	ILC has purchased Ayers Rock Resort with 1\$M funding for an Indigenous Training Centre.
3.6 Establish a working group of all organisations working with Indigenous people interested in tourism opportunities to regularly meet and share information and project updates.	TNT	TCA CLC Lhere	M	CAE Hub developed.

Action Item	Lead Agency	Possible Secondary	Priority	Update and Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. All groups invited to an initial meeting during which the action items with direct relevance to this group will be highlighted and discussed. ii. Mechanisms to gain input and support from these organisations discussed and agreed upon. 		Artepe		
3.10 Facilitation and moderation training for key people in industry, associations and government agencies for more effective meetings.	CC		L	Chamber will canvas interest and then investigate training program with CDU and other training organisations.
3.11 Train town and regional welcome ambassadors to demonstrate sense of community and connectedness.	TCA		L	This idea arose out of a desire to see Aboriginal people employed as part of the towns welcoming crew and ambassadors. TCA continues to encourage Indigenous participation in TCA's tourism Volunteers program.

4. Marketing and Promoting the Experiences

Action Item	Lead Agency	Possible Secondary	Priority	Update and Comments
4.8 Promotions to bus and taxi drivers to ensure visitors are given accurate information about things to see and do. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Develop introductory pack for drivers ii. Distribute to and train drivers iii. Develop cost effective update mechanism 	TCA	ASTC Taxi and Bus Companies DLP CCNT	M	A local company has developed a training package for taxi drivers, waiting on formal accreditation of training package. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DLP working with Service Provider, CPV Forum and DET to provide training. • TCA will be involved in delivery of information • Tourism awards has a category to recognise excellent customer service, taxi driver of the year award. Taxi drivers will be encouraged to 'like' TCAs Facebook page. Visitor Guides will be handed out to taxis at the airport and outside of the visitor centre. TCA to prepare the 'FAQ' factsheet for the Taxi Industry.
4.10 Continuous refinement of the unique experiences which underpin the positioning of Alice Springs and the Red Centre. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Review communication programs annually to ensure the vision for the Red Centre is being communicated 	TNT	TCA	M	An Experience Development Strategy is planned to be prepared for Australia's Red Centre as part of the National Landscapes program.

Action Item	Lead Agency	Possible Secondary	Priority	Update and Comments
4.14 Operators develop and implement their stories online and in other promotional materials in line with the "Share Our Story" branding.	TNT/Industry		M	Some operators have started to incorporate on their websites. Tourism NT conducts workshops, audits etc to assist with the progress of industry adopting digital marketing expertise and uptake.

5. Enhancing Environmental Sustainability

Action Item	Lead Agency	Possible Secondary	Priority	Update and Comments
5.1 Encourage the development of a local recycling program in Alice Springs, similar to programs that operate in other cities. i Tourism industry works in conjunction with the town council. ii While community wide options are considered TCA may be able to identify discrete recycling options for operators for specific types of waste (e.g. worm farms for food wastes at Convention Centre and hotels)	ASTC	CCNT TCA DCM	H	ASTC have implemented highly successful and much applauded recycling measures for drinking cans and bottles. So far there has been 13M cans and bottles handed in. ASTC have launched their 'Glass Crushers' club for the bigger consumers of glass. Regional Development Fund will invest \$5M in local landfill to increase recycling.
5.2 Encourage environmentally sustainable practices including renewable energy use in the upgrading of existing tourism businesses and all new tourism developments.	TCA	ASTC DCM DKA TNT	H	The Solar City project provides information and assistance, and consideration is currently underway for what happens after Solar City funding finishes.
5.4 Monitor government policies or draft legislation that may create or encourage environmentally unsustainable or damaging practices.	DCM	TCA TNT DHF	L	Ongoing
5.5 Encourage operators to develop a local water reduction program	TNT	ASTC DCM DKA TCA	M	Poster to be prepared detailing information about the source of water in Alice Springs. Placed at VIC, train station and airport. Visitors to appreciate the quality of the water, its 'story' so as to reduce purchase of water bottles. Fact sheet to be produced for Desert Guides.

Outcomes/Achievements

1. Developing Unique Experiences

- 1.6 Implementation of a welcoming program at the railway station and airport achieved with the Tourism Volunteers Program by Tourism Central Australia.
- 1.2 Evening activities have increased in the mall. The Alice Springs Town Council have implemented the Todd River Tucker nights on the lawns by the river near the Totem Theatre. The ASTC has also installed a large TV screen to showcase events and visitor information.

The Chamber of Commerce has initiated a process to alert retailers when conference delegates or event goers may be in the mall out of opening hours.

- 1.3 Tourism Industry is providing tours that give both Indigenous and non-Indigenous stories for the Red Centre. Success stories from industry include:
- Wayoutback
 - Alice Wanderer
 - Trek Larapinta
 - Into the Blue
 - The Desert Guides Initiatives
 - Tourism training for indigenous tour guides
 - Indigenous tourism walkabouts
 - UKTNP Tour Guide Training initiative
 - Central Aboriginal Enterprises initiative
- 1.5 A number of industry members are innovating and expand tour itineraries and experiences eg Voluntourism, walking trails, community visiting. Tourism NT regularly conducts forums, workshops and market intelligence reporting.
- 1.8 Committee decided that at this stage there are higher priorities for capital expenditure than for a dedicated sunset viewing area. Recent infrastructure improvements included Tailormade's Quarry site, the Desert Parks courtyard area and there are considerations in the Telegraph Station's Joint Management Draft Plan for further development work.
- 1.9 An Events Sector group has been established with TCA. The committee has already achieved some successful results such as working with CCNT to engage local retailers to work with conferences by delivering extended trading hours as per above.

TCA has introduced a service at certain conferences using its volunteer program to promote the town and its services.

2. Enhancing Access and Infrastructure Investment

- 2.1 In terms of improving Aviation access to the Centre, DCM now represents Central Australia on the Aviation Committee. Tourism NT has appointed an Aviation Director who has a liaison role with whole of Government and is working with all stakeholders.

In 2010 a new Aviation Futures document was released. It is a five year strategy to grow airline services into the NT.

Tiger continues to fly to Alice from Melbourne and July 2010 saw the arrival of Virgin Blue into Uluru with daily flights from Sydney and marketing support from Tourism NT and Voyages Resorts.

- 2.6 DLP increased local bus services to cover Desert Knowledge precinct and Road Transport hall of fame in July 2010 which has enhanced transport options for independent travellers particularly between attractions.

3. Improving Skills and Industry Standards

- 3.12 TCA has implemented a training program for incoming TCA executive members, also with a view to succession planning.
- 3.12 Sector meetings have been established by Tourism Central Australia and are industry lead.
- 3.1 Alice Springs Town Council's Festival and Events development and marketing officer works with small and medium sized events and is an active member of the ASTC Marketing, Events and Promotions sub-committee.
- 3.3 A pilot Indigenous tour guide training program was delivered in early 2008 by the Lhere Artepe Aboriginal Corporation, Alice Springs Desert Park and Tourism NT. This training continues as the need and numbers arise.
- 3.4 Skills development workshops are constantly being offered to the industry to enhance operator skills particularly using websites to communicate effectively, integrating the NT's brand into tourism business, waste reduction techniques, discovering consumer insights, etc. Presentations and Factsheets are regularly provided.
- 3.7 R U Looking for work launched and being taken up by other destinations eg WA. The Chamber/Regional Development/ ASTC working together on Workforce for Alice to encourage people to come and work.

The foreign language tour guide co-operative Recruitment program was initiated by Tourism NT. Advertising in Aug/Sept via foreign language Newspapers and Facebook with a positive result of 56 applicants.

- 3.8 TCA delivers student information sessions to schools within Alice Springs.
- 3.9 Business Development activities have focussed on moving emerging businesses into the mainstream via the accreditation process which provides an excellent business development tool. With Tourism NT implementing its Accreditation Policy the Northern Territory is now the leading state/territory in regards to Operator Accreditation.

- 3.11 The TCA volunteer program has been very successful. TCA now has 25 registered Volunteers that are both accredited and insured. TCA has delivered a vehicle for the volunteers to use, allow them to deliver services in a timely manner.

4. Marketing and Promoting the Experiences

- 4.1 TCA's website has been revitalised. It contains a booking engine and the ability for operators to link products directly to the TCA website.
- 4.2 The Alice Springs Town Council has developed, launched and is currently promoting the community events on-line calendar. This requires consistent community support and everyone is encourage to participate in ensuring it is commonly used by everyone in the community.

Tourism NT has developed an online Festivals portal promoting signature events throughout the NT including Henley-on-Todd, Beanie Festival and Camel Cup.

- 4.3 In relation to co-operative marketing campaigns involving local operators, Tourism NT have developed integrated campaigns eg Yahoo7.com/getcentreed that enable direct buy-in by local stakeholders
- 4.5 A continual focus is on trade partners and national operators to ensure they have the support and encouragement to include the Red Centre in programs. For example Tourism NT and TCA conducted a major AOT famil in March 2010 with 120 agents throughout the Red Centre. Trade and media famil programs continue to include Central Australia. Two Red Centre Round-ups have been conducted, one in September 2009 and one in November 2010 to introduce Central Australian product to east coast ITO's.
- 4.6 Promotion has increased on itineraries that provide options for the Red Centre, For example, www.tourismnt.com features many itineraries that allow consumers to view the variety of options available within the Red Centre.

TCA has just completed it development of its new website, this objective will continue to be developed as the website grows. TCA has developed its Red Centre Way tear-out map and has reported a very large demand for the information.

- 4.7 The accessibility and purchase of tourism products through online initiatives has been increased. Tourism NT has established an e-enablement Unit to actively drive and develop online capacity of local operators. Forums and workshops are undertaken and one-on-one support is offered by the e-enablement team.

New TCA website with online booking facilities.

- 4.9 A portable visitor information kiosk has been delivered in the form of a trailer; tailor-made with signwriting, wifi, TV, DVD, brochure racks, all manageable by volunteers.

- 4.12 Every year opportunities are available for marketing results following the Get CeNTred campaigns with input encouraged for finetuning.
- 4.15 Intra-Territory promotions is now an integral part of the Funding Agreement between Tourism NT and Tourism Central Australia and Tourism Ambassadors are a core component of TCA's role.

5. Enhancing Environmental Sustainability

- 5.1 ASTC have implemented highly successful and much applauded recycling measures for drinking cans and bottles. ASTC have also implemented liquor litter charges for takeaway licenses.
- 5.2 Eco-tourism and Australian Regional Tourism Conferences both held in Alice Springs in late 2009, both with sustainability as key topics. For industry support, a 'green' web section has been added to www.tourismnt.com.

Grants have been issued to Red Centre businesses for environmental improvements.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ASTC	Alice Springs Town Council
CCNT	Chamber of Commerce
CDU	Charles Darwin University
CLC	Central Land Council
DBE	Department of Business and Economics
DCM	Department of the Chief Minister
DHF	Department of Health and Families
DKA	Desert Knowledge Australia
DLP	Department of Lands and Planning
NRETAS	Department of Natural Resources, Environment, the Arts and Sport
NT	Northern Territory
NTG	Northern Territory Government
TCA	Tourism Central Australia
TNT	Tourism NT
VIC	Tourism Central Australia's Visitor Information Centre