

# TOURISM IN MACARTHUR FORUM



Macarthur Regional Organisation of Councils  
Camden, Campbelltown, Wollondilly

**Date:** 10 May 2006: 5.45pm – 8pm  
**Venue:** Camden Valley Inn,  
Old Hume Highway,  
Camden South

Prepared by

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## TOURISM IN MACARTHUR FORUM

### 1. Welcome

*by Lindy Babb, MACROC Executive Officer*

Lindy welcomed everyone to the seminar. She indicated that as part of MACROC's role in supporting economic development across the three Council areas, tourism was recognised as an important economic sector. Tonight's forum was being provided by MACROC to give industry the opportunity to come together and identify issues and opportunities for future growth.

### 2. Local Government Responses to Tourism Promotion and Growth in Macarthur

*by Philip Costa, President of MACROC and Mayor of Wollondilly Shire Council*

- ❖ Philip provided a historical context to regional tourism in Macarthur. He highlighted the considerable efforts and achievements resulting from a regional approach to tourism that commenced over 10 years ago. The three Councils now all have tourism plans, tourism managers and visitor information centres as a result of the greater awareness of the benefits of tourism.
- ❖ Philip highlighted, however, Councils limitations on the provision of resources for tourism and emphasized that industry must work together to lead the development of the industry.
- ❖ Philip indicated that MACROC was here to support the industry and where possible assist industry to achieve the opportunities identified tonight.

### 3. Marketing Macarthur

*by Imam Ali, MACROC Economic Development Officer*

- ❖ Imam highlighted MACROC's role in facilitating economic development across the Macarthur region. He indicated the importance of industries working together to promote the region in the market place.
- ❖ He launched the new MACROC audio visual CD presentation that promotes the many and varied national and world competitive industries located in Macarthur region. The presentation highlights the benefits of basing a business in the Macarthur region.

#### 4. Recent Trends in Tourism Markets - International, National, State and Regional

by Liz Clarke, Greater Sydney Development Coordinator Destination Services  
Sydney Tourism NSW

(see attached power point presentation, Appendix A)

- ❖ Liz provided three parts to her presentation: tourism research including the Macarthur area; identified target markets and how Tourism NSW works with the Macarthur area and recent achievements.
- ❖ The research highlighted the variables effecting tourism and the importance of the holiday (42%) and the visiting friends and relatives (32%) visitor segments to domestic tourism in NSW. International visitors number over 5m per annum with over 60% being repeat visitors.
- ❖ Tourism Sydney research of 774 adults on the SE Australian Seaboard (note: excluding Sydney), indicated the strongest consumer associates with the Macarthur region were:
  - Historic buildings (12%)
  - Rural/farm/sheep (6%)
  - New residential (2.7%)
- ❖ A *Leisurescope* study found that on average 30,000 Sydneysiders visited Macarthur region in any one month during 2003. The profile of visitors was broadly reflective of the Sydney population.
- ❖ Tourism NSW commenced promoting Macarthur as a precinct in 1998. The positioning statement it uses is “*Rich in adventure, colonial history and outdoor experiences*”. The positioning statement ensures a consistent message in the market place. The key themes are: farm experience, wineries, events, soft adventure, heritage and nature.
- ❖ The identified target markets and associated key promotions are:
  - Business Tourism Market (MICE) - Sydney on Sale and Micetrap, Sydney wide conferences
  - Group Tours (seniors) Seniors Lifestyle and Retirement Expo ,Trade & Travel Expo, Bus & Coach Association
  - Day trip market out of Sydney - Sydney Weekender, BYO Kids Travel Website and the Sydney/NSW website
  - Visiting Friends and Relatives - Discover Greater Sydney publication, Macarthur Living, Macarthur Advertiser, Check This Out Feature
  - Education - School Excursion Resource Register
  - Drive market - Destinations TV program.

## 5. Developing Macarthur's Tourism Potential – Current Situation and What's Required to Create Productive Regional Tourism

*by Colin Bransgrove, Tourism Destination Management (TDM) Pty Ltd*  
(see attached power point presentation, Appendix B)

- ❖ Colin provided a summary of tourism in Macarthur based on his analysis from development of the Wollondilly and Camden Tourism plans, and from more recent data from MACROC. He indicated there are good foundations in place at the local level (plans, tourism managers and information centres), and that the Macarthur Operator Network is providing cooperative activities in the region. The regions capacity to tap into State and Federal programs remains hamstrung in part due to its 'on the border' location.
- ❖ Specific issues identified by Macarthur industry from 2004 and 2005 forums and workshops include lack of:
  - Market research
  - Coordinated regional approach
  - Regional marketing strategy
  - Product development
  - Business skills and networks
  - Partnerships and alliances
- ❖ What industry identified as opportunities were:
  - Developing a coordinated regional approach
  - Creating a Macarthur non membership based network
  - Developing a Regional Marketing Strategy
  - Increasing good regional research
  - Developing the experiences: product development, packaging
  - Developing business skills and networks
  - Strengthening partnerships and alliances
- ❖ Colin indicated that, from his extensive experience and analysis of regional tourism, the keys to success for effective regional tourism are: capacity to value add, compatibility with visitor markets, regional commitment by both industry and local government; the regions alignment with Tourism NSW and Tourism Australia strategies; regional leadership; and agreed vision and strategy and measurable actions.  
Effective management (inc. structure), accountability and results are the underpinning factors for successful regional tourism.

## TOURISM IN MACARTHUR FORUM

### 6. Open Forum

*facilitated by Colin Bransgrove, Tourism Destination Management (TDM) Pty Ltd*

- ❖ The Forum broke into 5 groups to identify key tourism issues and opportunities for the Macarthur region. Each group focused on one of the following areas:
  - Marketing
  - Product and attractions development
  - Tourism infrastructure
  - Business capacity development
  - Partnerships, networks and leverage
  
- ❖ A spokesperson from each group then presented their findings back to the Forum. The following tables summarize the collective tabling of issues and solutions/opportunities identified.

<b>Issues</b>	<b>Number of times identified</b>
Lack of co-ordination across the regional industry	3
Major attractions closed on weekend	3
Lack of communication overall	2
Need to define product/sectors of tourism industry	2
Lack of commitment	
Getting people in the door	
Signage	
Overnight accommodation	
Chambers of Commerce need to be united	
Need essential business skills training	
Location of visitor information centres	
Correct use of promotional activities	
Transport – fuel costs	
The untapped weekend break market	
Untapped seniors market	
Need to define region	

## TOURISM IN MACARTHUR FORUM

### 6. Open Forum (continued..)

<b>Solutions to issues</b>	<b>Number of times identified</b>
Joint marketing – cross referral/promotional material	5
Networking	3
Need more money and resources	2
Better communication	2
Should capitalize on closeness to Sydney	2
All advertising forms – print, media	2
Relevance to region	
Need newsletters	
Regular Forums	
Web Page	
Industry visitations from each other	
Stop re-inventing the wheel	
Strong leadership	
Time frames and clear outcomes	
Common goals	
Liaise with local government compliance	
Use local resources and Councils	
Collate research	

## 7. Conclusion - Way Forward

*by Colin Bransgrove, Tourism Destination Management (TDM) Pty Ltd*

- ❖ Colin indicated there was a clear consensus coming from the Forum for a strengthening of cooperation and communication across the regions tourism industry. The level of formality in achieving a more cooperative effort was then considered.
- ❖ Colin outlined what would be required should industry seek to adopt a traditionally formal regional approach. It would comprise:
  - An agreed vision – owned by the industry
- ❖ The building blocks to achieve it were identified as:
  - marketing
  - product and infrastructure development
  - business capacity development,
  - regional advocacy, partnerships and leverage
- ❖ The operational strategies to make it happen were identified as:
  - knowing the issues & opportunities
  - strategies and actions (who, when, how much(\$)) and outcomes)
- ❖ Three approaches were considered:
  - Do nothing
  - Strengthen existing networks
  - Develop a formal approach to regional tourism
- ❖ The Forum then expressed a near unanimous view that the strengthening of existing networks was the way forward including increasing unity between groups. It was further agreed that there was the opportunity to bring together the three local tourism plans to create an agreed path for improved cooperation and communication.

The Forum concluded at 8.10pm

## **Appendix A. Tourism NSW Presentation**

### **MACROC PRESENTATION**

Liz Clarke  
Greater Sydney Development Coordinator  
Destination Services, Sydney  
Tourism NSW

#### **Presentation Overview**

- **Tourism Research snapshot – Macarthur area**
- **Identified target markets**
- **How Tourism NSW works with the Macarthur area and recent achievements**

#### **Tourism Demand**

**Visitor arrivals and expenditure are dependent upon many variables:**

- **economic conditions**
- **consumer sentiment and competing products**
- **access**
- **marketing by competing destinations**

#### **Breakdown of NSW Domestic Visitation**

- **Holiday travel (42%)**
- **VFR travel (34%)**
- **Business Travel (19%)**
- **These figures haven't altered all that much over the last 3 years**

#### **International Visitors to Australia**

- **5 million in 2005**
  - **52% came to Sydney during their trip**
  - **Remaining 44% entered Australia through Sydney**
- For more information on international visitation to NSW and domestic trends visit:**  
[www.tourism.nsw.gov.au/corporate/research](http://www.tourism.nsw.gov.au/corporate/research)

**Research – Understanding your precinct and the consumer**

Roy Morgan, Leisurescope

**Unprompted experiences associated with Macarthur of those surveyed Leisurescope**

- 40% of visitors to Macarthur come from Macarthur.
- 6% of Sydneysiders made at least of leisure visit to the LGAs in the time period
- Slight bias towards females, 25-34 and 60+ households

Jan 04 results

**WORKING WITH MACARTHUR**

- Tourism NSW commenced promoting Macarthur as a precinct in 1998.
  - Positioning statement.
- “**Rich in adventure, colonial history and outdoor experiences**”
- By having a positioning statement we ensure a consistent message in the market place
  - Key Themes – Farm experience, wineries, events, soft adventure, heritage, nature

**Identified Target Markets**

- Business Tourism Market (MICE)**
  - Sydney on Sale and Micetrap, Sydney Wide Conferences
- Group Tours (seniors)**
  - Seniors Lifestyle and Retirement Expo ,Trade Travel Expo, Bus and Coach Association
- Day trip market out of Sydney**
  - Sydney Weekender, BYO Kids Travel Website, STDW
- VFR**
  - Discover Greater Sydney Publication, Macarthur Living, Macarthur Advertiser, Check This Out Feature
- Education**
  - School Excursion Resource Register
- Drive market**
  - Destinations TV program,

**QUESTIONS?**

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## Appendix B. TDM Presentation

### ***TOURISM IN MACARTHUR Developing the potential***

#### ***Current Situation***

- ***Tourism an important industry sector in Macarthur***
- ***Marketing primarily at the operator & local level – 3 local plans in place***
- ***Cooperation led by tourism managers at Macarthur level (see hand out) & limited industry initiatives***
- ***Limited leverage from State or Fed tourism programs***

#### ***What's needed for productive regional tourism***

- ***Capacity to value add***
- ***Compatibility with visitor markets***
- ***Regional commitment: industry & local govt***
- ***Regions alignment with TNSW & TA strategy***
- ***Regional leadership***
- ***Agreed vision & strategy***
- ***Measurable actions***
- ***Management***
  - ***Skills***
  - ***Plans***
  - ***Coordination***
  - ***Time***
  - ***Resources***
  - ***Communication***
  - ***Structure***
- ***Accountability***
- ***Results!!!!***

#### ***Current situation cont***

- ***Issues identified by industry from 2004 & 2005 inc. lack of.....***
  - ***market research***
  - ***Coordinated regional approach***
  - ***Regional marketing strategy***
  - ***Product development***
  - ***Business skills and networks***
  - ***Partnerships and alliances***

#### ***What's wanted according to 2004/05 industry meetings***

- ***Develop a coordinated regional approach***
- ***A Macarthur non membership based network***
- ***Develop a Regional Marketing Strategy***
- ***Increase good regional research***
- ***Develop the experiences: product development, packaging***

## TOURISM IN MACARTHUR FORUM

- Develop business skills and networks*
- Strengthen partnerships and alliances*

### *Open Forum*

- *Test issues & what's wanted*
- *Not here to reinvent the wheel!*
- *The building blocks*
  - Marketing*
  - Product development*
  - Attractions and infrastructure development*
  - Business development*

### *Open forum process*

- *Work groups*
  - Marketing*
  - Product development*
  - Attractions and infrastructure development*
  - Business development*
- *Scribe, time keeper, spokesperson*

### *Where do you want to get to?*

#### *What's the regional tourism vision?*

- *Build Macarthur (brand) awareness or destinations (eg Picton) awareness?*
- *Economic growth & employment!*
- *Focus on visitor growth and or yield?*
- *Which market segments?*
  - Meetings, golf, short breaks, adventure, weddings, events, schools, inbound etc etc*

### *Where do you want to get to?*

- *Infrastructure potential*
  - Branded – icon accommodation*
  - Specialised resorts – camping 'resort'*
  - Signage, roads & trails*
- *Attractions potential*
  - Adventure & themed man made attractions*
  - Delivering events to Sydney (major events)*
  - Capitalise on existing attractions*

### *Where do you want to get to?*

- *Business performance potential*
  - Strategies for year round visitation*
  - Build networks (accom, destination, themes etc)*
  - Strengthen cooperative marketing*
  - Culture of shared learning – celebrating excellence*

## TOURISM IN MACARTHUR FORUM

- **Investment**

- **Strong industry coop investment in marketing & product development**
- **Strong councils investment based on performance**
- **Strong existing & new partnerships**
- **New investment in infrastructure**

### **What's needed for productive regional tourism**

- **Capacity to value add**
- **Compatibility with visitor markets**
- **Regional commitment: industry & local govt**
- **Regions alignment with TNSW & TA strategy**
- **Regional leadership**
- **Agreed vision & strategy**
- **Measurable actions**
- **Management**
  - **Skills**
  - **Plans**
  - **Coordination**
  - **Time**
  - **Resources**
  - **Communication**
  - **Structure**
- **Accountability**
- **Results!!!!**

### **Fundamental Questions**

- **Does Macarthur Region have the ingredients for productive regional tourism?**
- **How to build on the existing predominantly tourism manager led regional cooperative base?**
- **Strengthen the foundations first through existing local tourism plans?**
- **Informal collective through tourism managers?**
- **Formal regional strategy & structure?**
- **Role of industry? Role of local govt – MACROC?**

### **The formal regional tourism plan**

- **An agreed vision – personalised/owned**
- **The building blocks to achieve it**
  - **Marketing, product & infrastructure development, business capacity development, regional advocacy, partnerships and leverage**
- **Operational Strategies to make it happen**
  - **Issues & opportunities, strategies, actions, who, when, how much(\$)& outcomes**

## TOURISM IN MACARTHUR FORUM

### ***Steps to get there***

- ***Yes to Commitment, Capacity & Sustainability***
- ***Planning & leadership***
- ***Continuous role out of actions***
  - ***What are the 'quick runs'?***
  - ***What are the long term projects?***
- ***Play the partnerships & leverage game***
- ***Keep stakeholders informed & engaged***
- ***Never lose sight of the vision***
- ***Tourism is a fun industry – celebrate the successes!***

## Appendix C. Tourism Projects Achieved



### TOURISM PROJECTS ACHIEVED AS MACARTHUR (PAST 18 MONTHS) BY THE AVIC NETWORK

- ❖ **Cartoscope Tourism Map for Macarthur**  
The first map of the entire Macarthur region.
- ❖ **Trade and Consumer Shows**  
Macarthur presence at a number of shows including Sydney on Sale and the Seniors Lifestyle and Retirement Expo.
- ❖ **Discover Greater Sydney**  
Macarthur has a four page feature in the Discover Greater Sydney Publication – the only official visitor guide for the whole of Sydney. Extensive distribution throughout every VIC in NSW as well as Sydney Airport and major regional centres Interstate.
- ❖ **School Excursion Resource Register**  
Macarthur has a two page feature in the Register as well as information on the website. The Register promotes school excursion activities and venues. The register is made available to Primary and Secondary schools Australia wide as well as Universities, Colleges and other Tertiary Institutions.
- ❖ **Sydney Weekender Magazine**  
Macarthur has a fourteen page feature in the spring edition of the Sydney Weekender magazine. This magazine feature also coincided with filming at a number of operator venues including Campbelltown Arts Centre, Quondong, Moto Cross Park, The Hermitage, Mill Ranch, Oran Park, Thirlmere Railway Centre, Menangle House and Enzo's Restaurant. (Operator support)
- ❖ **Sydney Weekender TV Program**  
The Macarthur region has featured in a number of episodes of the Sydney Weekender TV program. Venues highlighted included Campbelltown Arts Centre, Gledswood Winery, Oran Park Raceway, Mill Ranch and Vicary's Winery.

## TOURISM IN MACARTHUR FORUM

### ❖ **Trade Travel Register**

Macarthur has a half page feature in the 2006 Trade Travel Register which is a directory targeting the group tour market. In conjunction to the directory, Trade Travel organises familiarisation programs, group tour travel expos and are a major sponsor of Probus Club Australia.

### ❖ **Trade Travel Expo**

The Macarthur Region will be promoted at the Sydney Trade Travel Expo – an expo which targets group tour coordinators.

### ❖ **Destinations Travel Show**

The Macarthur region featured on two episodes of Destinations Travel Show – a national (WIN/NBN Network Wide) travel program that reaches 6.9 million viewers across Australia. (Operator support)

### ❖ **Macarthur Living – Tourism Feature**

In March 2004, July 2005 and March 2006, the Macarthur Chronicle coordinated a Tourism Liftout called Macarthur Living. The VICs had a half page ad in each of the features and supplied editorial and images.

### ❖ **BYO Kids Travel Website**

BYO Kids Travel Website is Australia's largest website for families looking for destinations that are kid friendly. Macarthur has a complete listing on the website which includes general information on the region, attraction listings and accommodation listings.

### ❖ **State Tourism Data Warehouse**

The State Tourism Data Warehouse is a system that feeds information into Tourism NSW and Tourism Australia's tourism websites. The Macarthur region has a complete listing on the Warehouse which includes general information on the region, attraction listings, accommodation listings, event listings and tour listings.

### ❖ **Business Tourism Project – Sydney Wide Conferences**

The aim of this project is to increase the business tourism (meetings and conferences) marketing in Western Sydney. Macarthur is a partner in this project which includes trade shows, newsletters, a website, familiarisation tours, cooperative advertising campaigns, education and networking seminars.

### ❖ **Familiarisation Tours of Macarthur**

The AVIC Network has hosted a number of industry familiarisation tours in Macarthur, each supported by local operators, tourism officers, media/press and Tourism Sydney representatives.

## TOURISM IN MACARTHUR FORUM

### ❖ **Tourism Operator Network Meetings**

The Tourism Operator Network provides a forum for local tourism operators in Macarthur to discuss ideas, projects and the future direction of tourism in the region. Established in July 2005, the network is very well supported by tourism operators within Macarthur.

### ❖ **Tourism Newsletter**

A bi-monthly tourism newsletter for Macarthur has been established for operators. This newsletter provides an update on the activities of the Tourism Operator Network, an update on cooperative projects coordinated by Council's Tourism Officers, an education component, a segment called 'Know that Face' – profile on an operator, a what's on section and a business card page.

### ❖ **Macarthur Workshop**

A workshop was recently held with Tourism Operators from Macarthur to discuss a number of timely and relevant issues, some of which included:

- Whether they prefer a 'Macarthur' approach to tourism marketing in the region
- What they want to achieve from the Operator Network Meetings
- What projects they would like Council's Tourism Officers to coordinate for the future
- Feedback on proposed strategy and branding ideas

### ❖ **Visit Macarthur Website**

A complete and comprehensive tourism website for Macarthur, [www.visitmacarthur.com.au](http://www.visitmacarthur.com.au), is currently in development. This website will list every operator within the region – free of charge.

Each listing will include the business name, address, contact phone number, and link to their website + an informative blurb on the venue.

An annual calendar of events, plus a more detailed monthly calendar, will also be featured on the website. Expected to be live by May 2006.

### ❖ **Micetrap Expo and Familiarisation Tour**

Micetrap is an expo showcasing conference venues and businesses in Greater Sydney. A two day Familiarisation Tour of Greater Sydney for PCO's has been coordinated to coincide with the expo.

### ❖ **Macarthur Bicentenary**

In 2006 the Macarthur region celebrates 200 years since John Macarthur received his land grant and first established the region. A year-long calendar of events has been developed to celebrate the Bicentenary.

## TOURISM IN MACARTHUR FORUM

A hugely successful launch of the calendar was held in January at Belgenny Farm. In attendance were media, parliamentarians, tourism operators and descendants from the Macarthur family. The event was covered in the Daily Telegraph, the local papers, C91.3, High Life Magazine, This Month from the Highlands to the Sea Magazine and In Macarthur Magazine.

Continued promotion of the events Calendar, in particular the Macarthur Open Weekend on in September and the Spirit of Macarthur Movie launch, has taken place.

### ❖ **Bus and Coach Association**

In 2005 the Macarthur region had a cooperative Advertisement in the Bus and Coach Association Publication. Packages of tourism products within the region were promoted, targeting the group travel market.