

TOURISM FUTURES

ACTION PLAN

2019-2020

CENTRAL WEST QUEENSLAND



Foreword

From the Chief Executive Officer



David Arnold

In recent years RAPAD has proudly led the Central West Queensland region in planning, prioritising and identifying opportunities to realise our untapped tourism potential. Through the robust input of industry, key stakeholders and regional leaders during the 2018 Tourism Futures Forum and other consultation, a number of key opportunities have been identified and progressed.

This Action Plan follows through on the Tourism Futures White Paper and outlines how, through collaborative partnerships with industry and the community, we can leverage our existing tourism assets, investment and skills to make the most of the opportunities that lie ahead of us. By implementing this Action Plan and committing to revising and renewing it as we achieve each milestone, together we will enable the RAPAD region to become the prosperous, globally recognised, authentic outback tourism destination we all believe it to be.



About Us

The Way We Work



RAPAD is the peak regional economic development body for the Central West Queensland region. We are a highly credible and respected local government representative body that proactively leads advocacy on all regional matters affecting its members and their communities.

RAPAD aims to foster, facilitate and promote the sustainable growth and development of our Central Western Queensland region through range of policy priorities, programs and strategic initiatives.



Our Region

The Context

The Outback Queensland region stretches far and wide, almost all the way across the western two thirds of Queensland. Spanning from Mt Isa in the north to the New South Wales border in the south it epitomises the quintessential Australian experience of wide-open spaces and natural untouched beauty.

The Central Western Queensland region lies in the heart of Outback Queensland. It is a well traversed tourism destination, visited by many for its authentic feel and array of cultural, heritage and natural experiences as well as unique and historically significant sites.

The Central Western Queensland (CWQ) region has one of the most dispersed populations in Australia. Spanning an area of more than 320,000 square kilometres, it includes seven local government areas and is home to just under 10,500 people (ABS, 3218.0, 2017).

Agriculture has long-been the base industry driving economic growth and employment in the region however the past six years of drought has resulted in severe economic hardship for both landholders and townspeople alike.

Whilst these uncertain times have been difficult, they have resulted in a more concerted effort by community leaders, industry and government to broaden the economic base and diversify the local economy in an effort to retain talent, maintain employment, enable community resilience and drive new economic growth.

Tourism has long been identified as a growth industry and Central Western Queensland is well positioned to take advantage of that growth.



Tourism Futures

A Collaborative Approach

In early August 2018, RAPAD hosted the inaugural Tourism Futures Forum which saw industry, key stakeholders and regional leaders come together for a robust discussion on tourism development across the RAPAD region.

From the forum, a Tourism Futures White Paper was produced which has been endorsed by a number of the RAPAD member councils and supported by industry. As a result of its robust input and broad acceptance, the White Paper has contributed to a range of activities and supported further investment in tourism infrastructure, products and businesses in the region.

As a follow-up, RAPAD hosted a planning workshop on 12 February 2019 to build on the many issues and recommendations raised at the forum. The aim of the planning workshop was to collectively review and validate the White Paper and galvanise members, partners and local industry to prioritise and advance the key recommendations.

The outcome of the planning workshop was the creation of this Tourism Futures Action Plan which contains a strategic framework and required action to advance tourism development in the Central West Queensland region.



Central Western Queensland's Progress

Since the Tourism Futures White Paper was produced, there have been a number of developments on the key activities and projects.



Outback Aussies Tours has attracted **\$1 million** in funding from the Queensland State Government to further investigate and develop the business case for the **“Outback Rail Adventure”**.



The **“Australian Age of Dinosaurs Museum”** has received **funding** from the Queensland State Government for upgrade projects.



Tourism and Events Queensland has **secured funding** to create a sustainable **succession plan** for the **Schools Program**.



A **new tourism operator** has established a **car-hire business** in Barcaldine with two cars available for hire to address an identified gap in the market.



BRC have committed \$800k towards three **Freedom of Choice Parks** for Jericho, Aramac and Muttaborra to **encourage travellers to stay** in smaller communities across the region.



A **minimum viable product** has been developed for a digital content exchange hub for the RAPAD region with the future application of the **digital infrastructure** to be determined.



Outback Queensland Tourism Association is progressing with developing a **data analytics strategy** to address the **tourism data gap**.



Longreach Regional Council and Winton Shire Council are working together on a **collaborative cross-regional tourism plan**.



BTRC and BRC are furthering talks with all major political parties to fund the access roads into **Blacks Palace**.



Strategic Framework

OUR VISION

The RAPAD region will be a prosperous globally recognised authentic outback tourism destination.

OUR OBJECTIVES

Collaborative region with a commitment to action
 Increase insights and understanding
 Increase visitor numbers
 Increase visitor expenditure
 Enhance products and experiences on offer
 Attract public and private investment

WHAT CAN WE INFLUENCE

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES	ENABLING INFRASTRUCTURE	AUTHENTIC PRODUCT & EXPERIENCE	LOCAL CAPABILITY	ADVOCACY & POLICY	MAJOR PROJECTS
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HOW CAN WE INFLUENCE THE DESIRED OUTCOMES

CATALYST PROJECTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enabling Infrastructure Audit Digital infrastructure Tourism Data Exchange 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Single authentic brand with mature products and experiences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leverage major events and industry partnerships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Qantas Year of the Outback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Black's Palace upgrade Australian Age of Dinosaurs Museum upgrade Central Western Train Experience Schools Program expansion Regional Car Hire Program
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ACTION PLAN



Governance

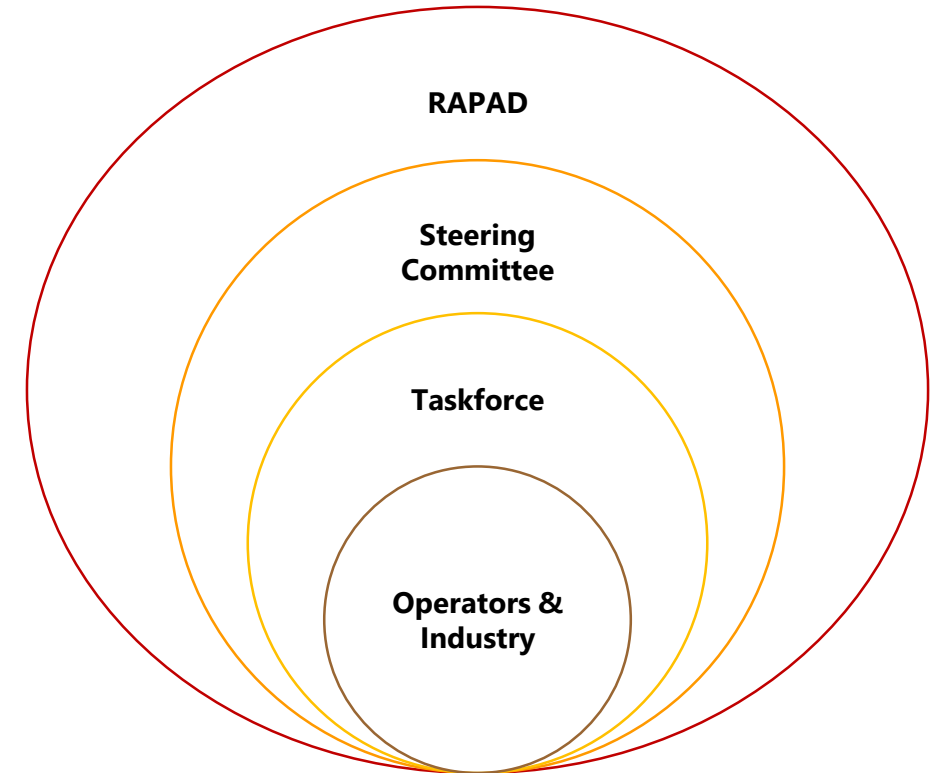
In developing the Tourism Futures White Paper it was recognised that there is a greater need to more effectively leverage existing tourism assets and resources. In order to progress this Action Plan, a governance framework has been developed to establish the roles and responsibilities of each of the key stakeholders.

The identified stakeholders are:

- Operators
- Industry (including networks, groups, organisations)
- Regional/ Local Tourism Organisations
- Local Government
- State Government
- Federal Government

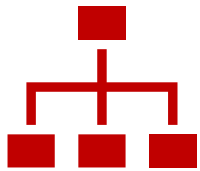
The Action Plan has largely been developed by RAPAD stakeholders and partners to inform the role of RAPAD and its member councils. As a result, this Action Plan largely focuses on the role of local government but considers their various responsibilities as leaders, enablers, partners, supporters etc.

The core focus for councils continues to be on enabling infrastructure, while industry focuses on adaptive strategies to revive, rebuild and develop bookable tourism products. These two should however come together more collaboratively on delivering destination marketing and visitor information services (including digital) across the RAPAD region.



Governance

Guiding Principles



Coordination

Coordination should manifest as engagement with key stakeholders across public and private sectors and artificial boundaries to ensure the best outcome for the region.



Collaboration

Collaboration embraces establishing effective mechanisms to ensure effective, timely, whole-of-region responses to opportunities and issues as they emerge.



Co-responsibility

Co-responsibility espouses an explicit shared responsibility for key strategic issues and providing leadership in establishing the right culture to drive outcomes from the process, for the benefit of the region.



Transparency

Transparency ensures that all decisions and activities are observable to outsiders and enables trust to be built between institutions and the broader community/ industry.



Accountability

Accountability embraces ownership of the Tourism Futures strategic pillars and actions required to reach the overarching vision.



Governance

Roles & Responsibilities



RAPAD Board

As the peak economic development body for the region, RAPAD continues to drive collaboration and strategic leadership across member organisations for the ultimate benefit of the RAPAD region.

The RAPAD Board is responsible for monitoring the progress of the Action Plan and reviewing progress quarterly.

RAPAD is also responsible for organising the annual Industry Forum to bring together key stakeholders.



Tourism Futures Steering Committee

The Tourism Futures Steering Committee will be responsible for implementing the Action Plan, reporting back to the RAPAD Board on progress and identifying industry development and collaboration opportunities as they emerge.

The Steering Committee will specifically focus on collaboration at an executive/ operational level between local governments within the RAPAD (and where relative neighbouring) regions.



Tourism Futures Taskforce

The Tourism Futures Taskforce is responsible for delivering actions and activities delegated by the Steering Committee.

The Taskforce is action-orientated and provide an opportunity for the 'doers' to network, identify synergies and also consider how best to maximise limited resources.

The taskforce includes tourism industry development practitioners/ subject matter experts to support implementation plans and processes.



Tourism Futures Industry Forum

The Industry Forum brings together industry, local leaders, LG officers and key stakeholders. The forum provides a platform annually for ongoing dialogue between all stakeholders to assess the current state, identify emerging opportunities and determine priorities for the coming year.

A major outcome of the forum is an action plan (update) that enhances collaboration and maximises tourism development across the public and private sectors for the RAPAD region.



Governance

Convene & Reporting



RAPAD Board

Purpose:
Collaboration at an elected representative level.

Membership:
RAPAD Board and Executive.

Convene:
RAPAD Board Meetings.

Reporting:
Quarterly Review.



Tourism Futures Steering Committee

Purpose:
Strategic leadership at an operational executive decision making level.

Membership:
Local Government CEO/ GM's.

Convene:
Quarterly (via teleconference).

Reporting:
Monthly Taskforce Update (via email)
Quarterly Review and report to RAPAD Board.



Tourism Futures Taskforce

Purpose:
Collaboration at an officer/ implementation level.

Membership:
Tourism and Events/ Economic Development Officers.

Convene:
RAPAD Board Meetings.

Reporting:
Monthly (via teleconference) and face-to-face every quarter.



Tourism Futures Industry Forum

Purpose:
Public-private sector collaboration and industry development.

Attendance:
Elected representatives, local government executive and officers, industry leaders, and other key stakeholders.

Convene:
Annual Forum/ Planning Workshop.



Action Plan

Refer Appendix A

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The Tourism Futures Forum & Action Plan was facilitated and developed in partnership with GWI.

GWI is a national team of specialists who empower our clients to solve real business problems and create value through their information and data assets. Our Civic Innovation practice focuses on creating public value by solving today's complex community problems through people-centred design and data-driven decisions.

Learn more about our Civic Innovation practice at www.gwi.com.au



RAPAD

REMOTE AREA PLANNING &
DEVELOPMENT BOARD



RAPAD TOURISM FUTURES 2019 ACTION PLAN

PILLAR	PRIORITY ACTIONS	SCOPE/ ACTIVITIES	LEAD	PARTNERS	DUE
GOVERNANCE	Co-ordinated Tourism Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adopt a regional governance framework for advancing tourism development in the RAPAD region between LGAs i.e. including a steering committee, taskforce and industry engagement forum. 	David Arnold	RAPAD, LG's	31 Mar
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify opportunities to leverage Zoom Rooms to enhance engagement and build leadership capacity across the region i.e. through steering committee/ taskforce. 	Kristine Arnold	RAPAD	31 May
ENABLING INFRASTRUCTURE & ASSETS	Enabling Infrastructure Audit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct an audit of current enabling public infrastructure and condition across each LGA (leveraging audit framework from Longreach/ Winton). Consult with key stakeholders to identify infrastructure improvement requirements, gaps and barriers to tourism development across the CWQ region. Develop a criteria and tool to enable regional infrastructure priorities to be assessed for future regional advocacy/ investment priority. 	Sue McCosker	LGs	30 June
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review demand for shared portable infrastructure across the region and develop strategy for joint investment opportunities (link in DITID - Peter Evans). 	?	LGs	30 June
	Digital Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a MOU between OQTA and RAPAD outlining a framework for cooperation between the organisations to develop the tourism industry. The MOU should also consider roles and responsibilities in managing digital infrastructure (including future of Outback Telegraph). 	David Arnold Peter Homan	OQTA RAPAD	31 May
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and scope opportunity for RAPAD LGs to participate in collaborative approach to further roll-out Outback Wi-Fi/ connected small-cells across the region to leverage investment and maximise data collection and insights opportunities. 	Steven Boxall	OQTA + LGs	30 June
	Tourism Data Insights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate opportunities to leverage existing and develop new data sources to enhance tourism industry insights. 	Peter Homan	OQTA	31 Mar
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify opportunities to support and leverage tourism data analytics projects across LGs (i.e. through RAPAD/ OQTA projects). 	Steering Committee	OQTA + LGs	31 Aug
AUTHENTIC PRODUCT & EXPERIENCE	Product & Experience Audit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gather existing experience audit information and provide to steering committee/taskforce (for gap analysis). 	Peter Homan	OQTA, LGs	1 April
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with steering committee/taskforce to identify opportunities to close gap/ support product development and determine new packaging opportunities. 	Matt Bron	TEQ, LG's	30 June
	Industry Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a robust, ongoing industry engagement forum to bring together existing/ new operators to collaborate and provide input into LGs strategies. 	David Arnold	RAPAD, LGs	31 Aug
	Major Event Leveraging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a regional working group (industry, community and government) to develop opportunities to leverage Year of the Outback i.e. Outback Spectacular in the Real Outback. 	Steering Committee	RAPAD	1 April
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liaise with event organisers to establish a major events Economic Leveraging Taskforce for Qantas 100 to enable to region to leverage long-term benefits from the event. 	David Arnold Matt Bron Tony Martin	RAPAD, TEQ, OQTA, QTIC, LGs	1 Sept
LOCAL CAPABILITY	Leadership Champions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a framework for a formal advisory panel/ board (i.e. brains trust) of 'outside of the outback' champions to provide leadership support/ input into regional economic futures. 	Rob Chandler	RAPAD	30 June
	Industry & Business Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify knowledge gaps in industry on how to access business support, development funding opportunities across the region and address through engagement partnerships. 	Peter Homan	OQTA, TEQ, RAPAD, LGs	31 Oct
	Workforce Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify workforce development training gaps to leverage digital and emerging opportunities and develop a workforce development strategy (building on RSIS and QTIC Jobs Qld – Skills of Future Report). 	David Arnold	RAPAD QTIC	31 Oct
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with industry experts (i.e. community development officers) to identify and address workforce attraction/ retention barriers linked to liveability and feed into taskforce and steering committee. 	Jackie Laidler	WSC	1 Sept
ADVOCACY & POLICY	Funding models	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine funding gaps in existing programs/grants and advocate for alternate funding models for tourism industry development with support of key stakeholders. 	Steering Committee	RAPAD, OQTA, QTIC, LGAQ, LGs	2 Sept
	Longreach Pastoral College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine current-status, issues and options and liaise with industry and community to mobilise and expediate advocacy campaign. 	Alan Smith Russell Lowry	LRC, RAPAD	Ongoing
	Advocacy to Governments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify tourism industry investment priorities (based on infrastructure audit, experience audit and new data insights) and other key impediments (i.e. prohibitive access costs) and develop a coordinated 'one-voice' advocacy campaign. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> QTIC to provide support on policies/ funding issues/ migration issues etc. 	Alan Smith	RAPAD, LGs QTIC, OQTA	31 May
	Regional Transport Reference Panel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocate for expedited establishment of panel to address prohibitive transport issues including road, rail and air. 	Steering Committee	RAPAD, OQTA, QTIC, LGAQ	31 May
MAJOR PROJECTS	Major Projects Facilitation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop regional approach to sharing information, facilitating and supporting regional projects of significance. 	Steering Committee	RAPAD, LGs	31 May

