

**Admin, LACO**

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**Subject:** FW: Short Stay Accommodation - sub no. 33

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From: Julie Scott

Sent: Tuesday, 8 January 2019 2:34 PM

To: Committee, Economics &amp; Industry Standing

Subject: Short Stay Accommodation

Dear Committee

I wish to add my voice to the discussion around short stay accommodation options.

I have two properties in the South West which I regularly let out to guests for short stays.

One is in Binningup Beach and one is in Dunsborough.

Both properties are high end (luxury), can accommodate large groups and provide different recreational experiences.

The hoopla surrounding the advent of Airbnb and HomeAway etc and its impact on "legitimate" business, is very one sided and erroneous.

My guests are mainly multi generational extended families who love the convenience, intimacy and overall affordability of staying in one of our houses. (Have you ever tried holidaying with babies and children of varying ages in some of our accommodation in Australia?) Something they couldn't do when faced with the "legitimate" options. Both our properties provide an accommodation option which is unique and can't be provided by any other "hotel" or "resort". We all know the cost of taking the family on holiday in Australia and these platforms provide guests from Australia and Overseas with "real" choices.

I understand that an option is to throw it over to Councils to regulate but here too there is a risk of draconian rules and regulations being imposed which will again restrict access to good quality and affordable housing, usually managed by hosts who are diligent and eager to provide a first class product.

I initially explored the option of registering my Dunsborough property with the council and found that the cost and pure idiocy of compliance was mind boggling. ie installing firewalls, exit signs, handrails in all the bathrooms, ensuring the toilet wasn't too close to the bath. ( in case someone had a wheel chair). The list went on despite the fact that many other "registered" and "legitimate business" properties didn't comply either. The obvious contradictions and erratic practices were confusing and frustrating. Then let's add on the sudden influx of "consultants" charging exorbitant fees to assist in reaching compliance and "perhaps" successful registration with council.

If my houses were substandard or didn't provide what the consumer was looking for then I would have no product, however my reviews and my repeat bookings speak for themselves and let's not forget our guests vote with their pen and their wallet. The obvious success of these platforms speak for themselves. More regulation will only dilute the quality of the offering not eliminate it.

In addition to providing extra accommodation in these towns which in particular is woefully short in Dunsborough, ( I have bookings a year in advance) we provide work for many locals including, cleaning, maintenance, gardening and the economic benefits flow right through the community. I spend my money in these communities, I don't take it out of the state or country.

I also don't believe that by restricting or over regulating us the travelling community will turn back to the so called "legitimate" options. They won't, because they don't provide what people are looking for. Instead they will go to places like Bali where they have choices.

Don't throw the baby out with the bath water and allow us to be self determining. ( We do not need to be constantly micro managed or regulated) Many of us are financially independent retirees who have an opportunity to make use of our assets as well as providing a service to our communities by opening our homes and often our

hearts, which incidentally isn't without risk, to other families and peoples from all over the world, who would love to explore and spend quality time in our beautiful south west. They in turn spend their money in our communities and we all benefit. Towns like Binningup which has no other accommodation other than a caravan park and Dunsborough which is a summer holiday mecca, needs us and our homes and our and our guests contribution to the economy is immeasurable.

Please don't also just throw us to the council wolves who are often even more ignorant of all the facts( they after all won't be reading all theses submissions), influenced by vested and self interests, and full of misguided self importance than those in the AHA. No two councils are the same and some are more visionary and realistic than others. Then too there is no certainty from one council term to another as to whether the rules will change. Our fate will essentially be in the hands of local governments and we know how unreasonable and unfair that can be.

An email is not an ideal way to express all the reasons why the State Govt needs to listen to all the stakeholders, and most especially the travelling community who have voted with their wallets by validating the importance of the Airbnb and HomeAway platforms by continuing to book accommodation through these sites and by continuing to, via reviews express their satisfaction or otherwise.

I will always continue to advocate for the right to choose. We are grownups, treat us that way !

Thank you for your time and I'm more than happy to share my reviews and any info you may like.

Kind regards  
Julie Scott

Sent from my iPad