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Tourism WA File: CMR/0086



The Secretary  
Senate Standing Committee on Economics  
PO Box 6100  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

2 Mill Street  
PERTH WA 6000  
GPO Box X2261  
PERTH WA 6847  
info@westernaustralia.com  
Tel: 08 9262 1700  
Fax: 08 9262 1702  
westernaustralia.com

Email: [economics.sen@aph.gov.au](mailto:economics.sen@aph.gov.au)

Dear Mr Hawkins

Thank you for your correspondence dated 2 September 2008, seeking submissions to the inquiry into the matters relating to the gas explosion at Varanus Island, Western Australia.

For the purpose of this submission, Tourism Western Australia (Tourism WA) will address terms of reference (b)-1 in relation to the agency's response to the Western Australian gas incident.

The main impact on the tourism industry centred on the availability of fresh linen supplies, particularly to Perth and the South West of the State. Prime Laundry and Drycleaning (Prime) supplies linen for up to 85% of Perth's major hotel establishments and some 55 major accommodation properties in the South West. Prime experienced reduced gas availability for a period of time which resulted in reduced processing ability and ultimately reduced linen supply.

Tourism WA took a leadership role in assisting the tourism industry to identify and manage the challenges that resulted during the reduced gas environment. Activities undertaken included:

- o Established a Gas Incident Tourism Communications Group which comprised of tourism industry leaders including, but not limited to, the Tourism Council Western Australia, Australian Tourism Export Council, Australian Hotels Association (AHA), a Regional Tourism Organisation, major hotel and restaurant representatives.
- o Distributed and analysed an on-line survey to monitor the affect of the gas incident on the tourism industry.
- o Established a web page for the tourism industry providing tips for each industry sector (hotels, tour operators, etc) on how to reduce energy demand.
- o Regular communication updates to the industry via Tourism WA's Talking Tourism enewsletter.
- o In partnership with the (AHA), produced guest advice flyers and posters for hotel rooms to educate guests on what they can do to minimise energy and linen consumption. Additional guest advice flyers where also made available to non AHA members.
- o In consultation with Prime and Consultant WHK Horwath, developed a contingency plan to manage the gas impact on the provision of linen to the tourism and hospitality sector.



- o Spotless, the other main laundry operator affected was offered similar assistance but declined.
- o Provided ongoing advice to the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, Office of Energy, Alinta on impacts to the tourism and hospitality industry.
- o Maintained regular contact with Prime to monitor gas allocations and linen supply.
- o Maintained regular contact with the tourism industry to monitor impacts and to assist Prime in the distribution of the linen service to those most affected.
- o Representative on the Department of Premier and Cabinet's, Gas Supply Disruption Recovery Committee.
- o Attended regular meetings of the Chamber of Commerce and Industries Gas Supply Coordination Committee.

I trust you will find this information of assistance. Should you require further advice, please contact Jennifer Duffecy, Executive Director Industry Development via telephone (08) 9262 1700.

Yours sincerely



RICHARD MUIRHEAD  
Chief Executive Officer

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