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New visitor profiles help councils' tourism plans

Tourism planners in 93 regional NSW local councils now have access to comprehensive visitor profiles created by Destination NSW to aid decision making and resource allocation for their areas.

Destination NSW Chief Executive Officer, Sandra Chipchase, launched the internet-based profiles at the Local Government and Shires Association annual tourism conference in Gunnedah today.

"The visitor profiles are a useful tool for councils and regional tourism organisations and tourism businesses to use to interpret visitor characteristics in their areas and help inform strategies for the future," Ms Chipchase said.

"The profiles were created by mining data from Tourism Research Australia which was gathered over four years to September 2011.

"Where there is sufficient sample size, the profiles show the number of visitors to each council area broken into the three key source markets of domestic daytrips, domestic overnight visitors and international visitors."

The Tourism Research Australia data is collected through two continuous surveys: the International Visitor Survey which is an exit survey conducted at the international airport departure lounges, and the National Visitor Survey which is a telephone survey of Australian residents.

"These profiles supplement the Tourism Region Snapshots released quarterly for each NSW Tourism Region by Destination NSW.

"Each category has comprehensive data breakdown such as demographic and lifecycle profile, reason for travel, activities undertaken during travel, and others.

"The profiles will be useful intelligence into planning and marketing at the local level," Ms Chipchase said.

Examples of two LGAs' profiles are attached outlining a description of data that can be found in the suite of 93 profiles.

The Local Government Area Profiles are available at www.destinationnsw.com.au/localareaprofiles

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Example 1

Gunnedah Shire Council

The Gunnedah LGA profile shows that there are around 87,000 domestic overnight visitors per annum who stay on average 2.7 nights, spending around \$296 each, or \$26 million in total.

The sample of international visitors and domestic daytrip visitors to Gunnedah was too small to use to profile these markets reliably.

The most popular accommodation used by the domestic overnight visitors to Gunnedah was at “friends or relatives’ property” (40 per cent of nights), followed by a “hotel, motel or motor inn” (24 per cent of nights).

Around 15 per cent of domestic overnight visitors to Gunnedah come from Sydney, while 10 per cent come from Queensland, with regional NSW being the largest source-market.

Example 2

Tamworth Regional Council

The Tamworth Regional LGA has a large enough sample to profile all three source markets (domestic overnight, international and day-trip visitors). The profile shows that there are just over one million visitors per annum, with only one per cent coming from international markets, 41 per cent being domestic overnight visitors, and the remaining 58 per cent being day-trip visitors.

- The expenditure of domestic overnight visitors to Tamworth was approximately \$109 each per night.
- The majority (79 per cent) of day-trip visitors come from the New England North West region.
- The main sources of international visitors to Tamworth are New Zealand and the United Kingdom.

Neighbouring LGAs, Uralla and Liverpool Plains were among 22 Regional NSW Council areas that did not have enough a sufficiently large sample to prepare a profile. Narrabri and Warrumbungles have short profiles providing detail about the domestic overnight visitors only (as per Gunnedah).