

SOUTHERN GREAT BARRIER REEF ROADSHOW 2023

March 20 -24 2023

Post Event Report



Overview

For the first time in 6 years, a collective of tourism trade ready representatives from the Southern Great Barrier Reef (SGBR) destination took part in an exciting five-day, three-city trade mission, providing an opportunity for Australian travel professionals to reconnect, establish and build strong knowledge and relationships with our beautiful section of the iconic Great Barrier Reef.

The Roadshow was made a reality through the Export Marketing Development Grant (EMDG) funding and co-contribution from attending operators.

In the wake of COVID-19, it was expected to take two or more years for international visitation to return to 'normal'. With international borders now reopen and bearing minimal restriction, it is essential to keep the destination front of mind for new and existing trade partners.

The mission started in Brisbane with a standalone Southern Great Barrier Reef trade event inviting tourism buyers for a day of business appointments and concluded with a networking function. The event was attended by 24 inbound, wholesale and retail agents from Brisbane and the Gold Coast

Heading further south to Sydney, the Southern Great Barrier Reef roadshow partnered with the Australian Tourism Export Council to join their Explore Australia's East Coast Trade Engagement Event, incorporating 50 B2B (Business to Business) workshop appointments and two (2) networking events. The Southern Great Barrier Reef had the largest representation of any destination and was the only reef product in attendance.

Wrapping up in Sydney, the roadshow completed its final leg in Melbourne with 2 half days of sales appointments and meals with leading tourism buyers.

Key Take Outs

- Many buyers inbound and domestic are struggling to keep up with enquiries. They're being selective with their business to ensure they can deliver on their client's expectations.
- Buyers are aware they need to change their programs; it is difficult with staff shortages and training, and it will take time.
- Flight availability and price are still barriers to international travel, some buyers saying December it will be better.
- Domestic will remain strong for another 6-12 months, depending on Australian economy.
- More travel buyers are seeking out partners who are sustainably responsible businesses as part of their own ethical business decisions.
- Self-contained accommodation away from cities is increasing in demand.
- Buyers are reporting a shift to luxury markets due to their propensity to spend. Luxury isn't always about 5-6 star it is about experience more than anything.

Objectives

- Support the long-term growth of the SGBR destination brand.
- Promote the SGBR trade ready product offering to international and domestic tourism buyers.
- Increase awareness of the SGBR destination offering in key markets
- Provide an update on developments in the region to tourism buyers and stakeholders in market such as Tourism Events Queensland (TEQ) and ATEC (ATEC)
- Identify opportunities for market exposure for the destination with key tourism buyers.
- Identify and communicate distribution opportunities for SGBR trade ready operators; and
- Re-connect, strengthen, and develop new relationships with key distribution stakeholders.

Attendance

RTO Representatives:

- Bundaberg Tourism
 - Loni Hammond, Trade & Industry Development Executive
 - Katherine Reid, CEO (Brisbane only)
- Capricorn Enterprise - Eloise Chaffers, Marketing/Tourism Contractor (Melbourne only)

Operators:

- 1770 LARC! Tours - Jess Cooke, Skipper, and Marketing Assistant
- Central Apartment Group - Craig Gosling, Group Sales and Marketing Manager
- Mantra Gladstone - Craig Conley, General Manager
- Heron Island/Wilson Island - Karen Sweeney, Sales Manager
- Lady Elliot Island Eco Resort - Vicki Mullins, Marketing Manager
- Lady Musgrave Experience - Steve Pulvrenti, Master Reef Guide
- Macadamias Australia - Charlie Irvine, AgriTourism Manager
- Queensland Rail Travel - Peter Brown, Business Development Associate

Logistical Management

Bundaberg Tourism led the delivery of the Roadshow with support from GAPDL and CE. It is estimated to have taken approximately 280 hours across seven (7) months.

Key Deliverables

- Roadshow development with budget
- Proposal and EOI circulated to operators.
- Budget management
 - Procurement and invoicing
 - Co-operative investment management
 - Funding through EMDG
- Appointment management with trade partners in SEQ, Sydney and Melbourne
- Event management (full-day event and networking function in Brisbane)
- Attendance at Sydney ATEC event (including negotiation of pricing for ATEC non-member product)
- Appointment research
- Group logistical management (transfers, itineraries)
- Pre-Roadshow briefing and itinerary management for operators and RTOs.

- RTO attendance across all events, appointments, and meetings
- Delivery of updated whole-of-destination update for trade partners
- Appointment follow up (destination-specific)
- Operator support throughout follow up period.

Collateral

The destination and operators were represented across a suite of SGBR destination-first experience collateral including:

- 2 power point presentations; 1 destination introduction and overview and a destination update presentation including emerging product, destination news and data.
- the *How to Do the SGBR* promotional video.
- SGBR Trade Manual 2022/2023 made available to all agents and contacts via QR code.
- Updated SGBR trade resources on the SGBR website
- Island Accessibility Map and table flyer with QR Code