

SUMMARY SHEET



LOCAL LEVEL DATA COLLECTION

Catalogue of initiatives across Australia + 'Know your Patch' kit

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Objectives of Study

A number of objectives were identified for this study, as follows:

- To identify sustained, robust and locally managed small area tourism data collections in Australia;
- To describe the management processes used to support these data collections;
- To develop tools to assist regional and local tourism associations to develop their own small area tourism data collections; and
- To assess the requirements for establishing standardised small area tourism data collections.

Methodology

The following methods were used throughout this study:

- A sample of local and regional tourism associations reported to be managing small area tourism data collections was derived from interviews with key informants and attendees at tourism data workshops held by the Centre for Regional Tourism Research in 2002 and 2003;
- The sample was interviewed to establish whether they did manage collections meeting the criteria of sustained, robust, and locally managed;
- Qualifying collections were reviewed using a data quality assessment framework; and
- Managers of good quality collections were interviewed about their management practices and experiences.



Hunter Valley Wine Country

Key Findings

The following issues have been identified:

- Only a small number of data collections met the qualifying criteria despite developing local level knowledge bases being rated as a high priority for all stakeholders interviewed throughout the project;
- The key barriers to implementing small area data collections related to a lack of data management skills, poor understanding of how data might be applied to management decision making, and a tendency to attempt to collect too much data;
- Data collections have been successful where destinations have engaged with research and education providers in data collection and analysis and have reported results of the collections back to stakeholders in meaningful ways; and
- A review of the structures used to maintain small area data collections in other industries and sectors has identified some opportunities for tourism.

Future Action

The following recommendations are made as a result of this study:

- A guide to managing small area tourism data collections has been drafted and may be distributed to local and regional tourism associations;
- There are state and national sources of small area tourism data, which have not been widely used in decision making at the local level. These may be analysed and reported in similar ways to the TTF Employment Atlas; and
- It may be possible to use Decipher and other online tools to make it easier to capture, store, and distribute small area tourism data.

This catalogue was designed to record small area data collections and to identify strategies for assisting local and regional tourism organisations to implement data collection initiatives.