Adelaide Hills

Regional Strategic Tourism Plan
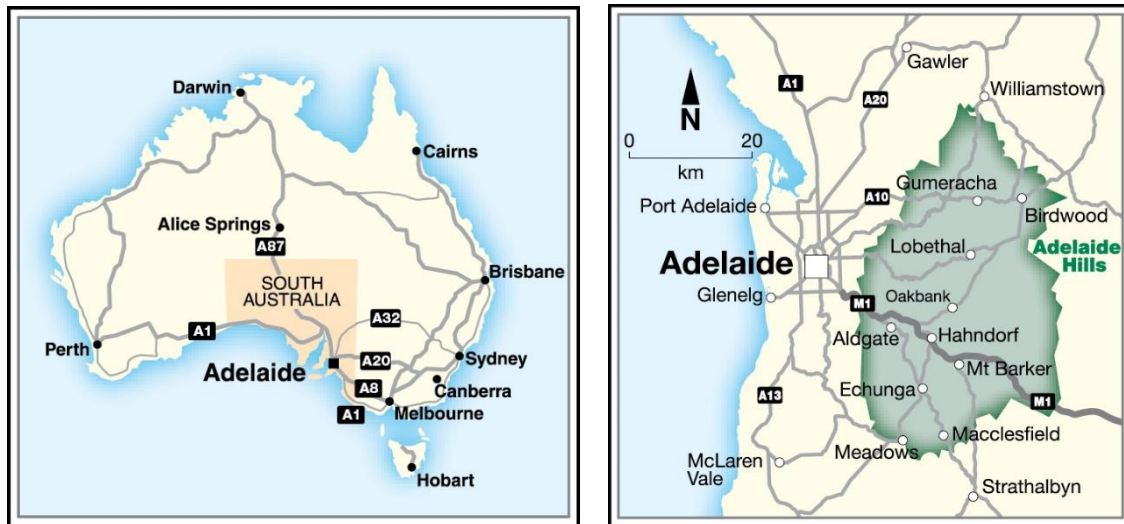## 2015-2020

Contents

Adelaide Hills Profile

The Adelaide Hills Tourism Region falls within the boundaries of the Adelaide Hills Council and the Mount Barker District Council, in the Mount Lofty Ranges just east of Adelaide, South Australia.

Map credit: South Australian Tourism Commission / Carto Graphics

Because of its proximity to Adelaide and its international airport, the region is easily accessed by vehicle, cycling and (to a lesser degree) by public transport.

As a tourism region, the Adelaide Hills benefits from good rainfall, a cooler climate, world class epicurean experiences, many small townships and a picturesque setting. The Adelaide Hills Wine Region is internationally recognised for its premium wines. Cellar doors, and beer and cider producers, complemented by quality food offerings, provide an important drawcard for both day trippers and overnight visitors.

Key experiences and their associated key messages and branding are as follows:

- Food and Wine, and emerging craft beer and cider industries – 'Land of Plentiful Pickings' and 'Land of Long Lunches'
- Art and Culture
- Nature and Landscapes – 'Land of Curious Creatures'
- Towns and Villages
- Accommodation
- Seasonality, Romance (connection/sharing) and Elevation – 'Fall in love all over again...'

The Adelaide Hills, Barossa and McLaren Vale regions are seeking UNESCO World Heritage listing of the heritage values associated with South Australia's 19th century model of systematic colonisation. If successful, the listing will provide globally recognised branding.

Visitation and the Value of Tourism

Approximately one million people visit the Adelaide Hills each year - 132,000 overnight visits and 839,000 day trips - with direct tourism expenditure of $110m (*SATC, 3-year annual average to June 2015*).

In 2013-2014, the tourism industry indirectly contributed an estimated $260m to the Adelaide Hills regional economy, representing 12.4% of Gross Regional Product (GRP). This directly employed approximately 1,100 people (5.5% of regional employment) and indirectly employed approximately 2,800 people (14.3% of regional employment) (Deloitte Access Economics, 2015).

Visitation tends to be seasonal, with the highest number of visitors in March and April (linked to Adelaide tourism numbers during the 'Festival Season' and the beauty of the region in autumn), and lower numbers in winter (*SATC, December 2012-2014 annual average*). Higher visitor numbers are experienced at weekends than mid-week.
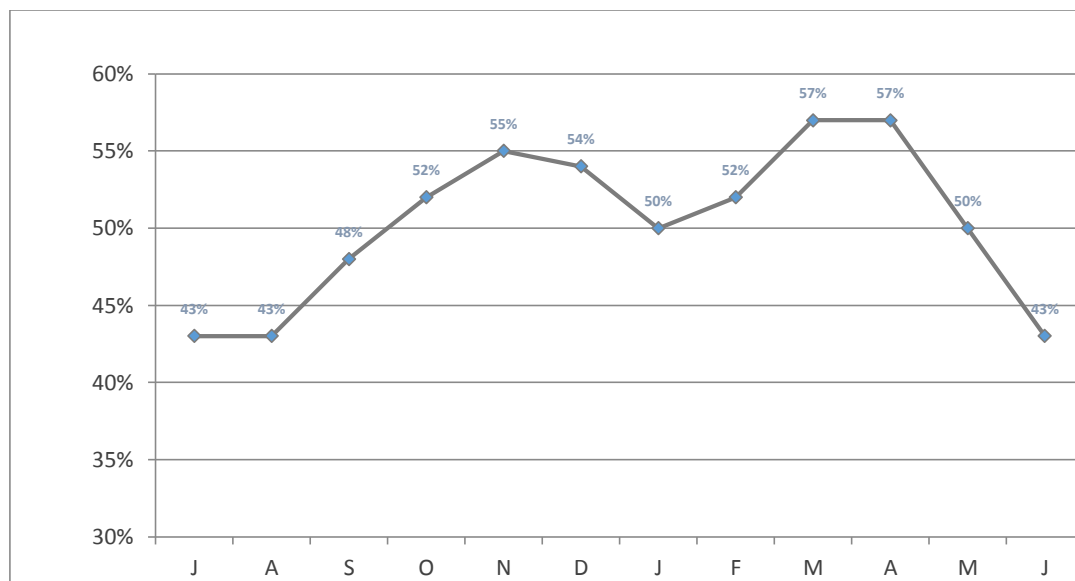
Monthly Occupancy Rates 2013/14
Source: SATC 2014, from ABS 2014

The South Australian Tourism Commission (SATC) reports that more than half (58%) of overnight accommodation is with friends or relatives (VFR), with the remaining 42% shared almost evenly between hotel/resort, rented house/apartment, and camping/caravanning (*December 2012-2014 annual average*). 70% of day trip visits are made from Adelaide. Apart from VFR (72%), the most popular activities are 'eating out at restaurants' (59%), 'pleasure/shopping' (32%) and 'general sightseeing' (28%) - noting that visitors often do multiple activities.

Compared with other tourism regions outside of Adelaide, the Adelaide Hills has a relatively low level of overnight stays (see graph below). Due to its close proximity to Adelaide the region has a high proportion of day trippers (86.4% of all visits) and increasing the level of overnight stays presents a significant opportunity.
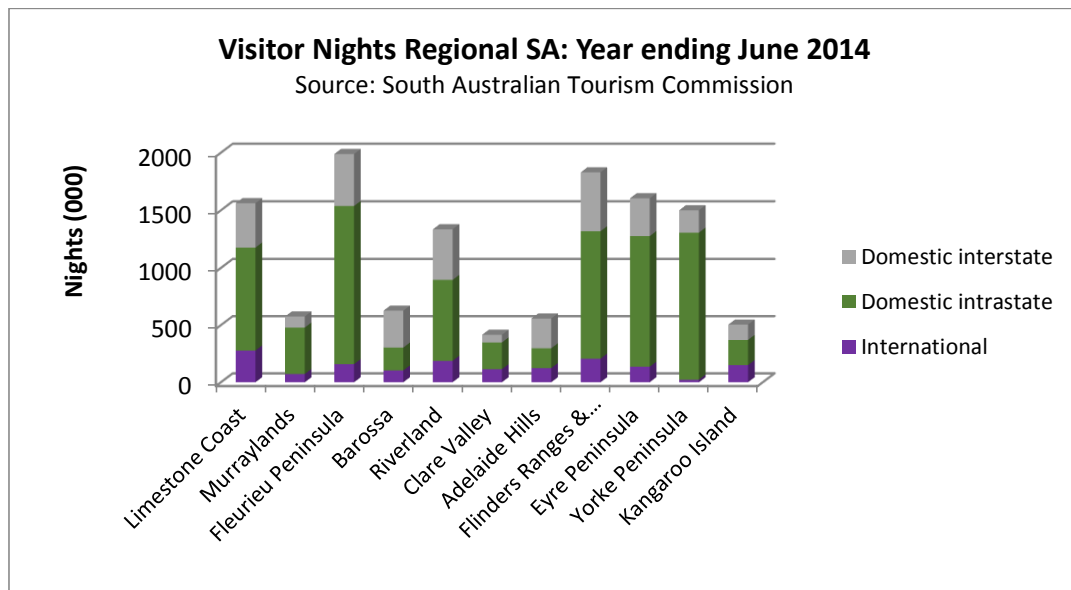
The age of domestic visitors to the Adelaide Hills is reasonably evenly spread across all age groups, with people aged 55-64 the largest visitor group at 23%, and young adults (25-34 year olds) the smallest visitor group (11%). International visitor numbers are highest for 55-64 year olds (23%) and 35-44 year olds (22%) and lowest for 15-24 year olds at 8% (SATC 2014).

As at October 2015 there were a total of 230 product listings on the Australian Tourism Data Warehouse (ATDW) in the categories of accommodation, attractions, events, hire, restaurants and tours. Businesses can have multiple listings within the same category and across categories. Engaging tourism operators in listing their businesses on the ATDW is a high priority for the region as listed businesses automatically receive exposure on key websites such as the SATC's website (www.southaustralia.com) and Tourism Australia's website (www.australia.com), along with other third party distributor sites. Some categories of ATDW products are also drawn to populate business listings on the Adelaide Hills Visitor Information Centre (VIC) website (Mount Barker District Council), www.adelaidehills.org.au.

The Adelaide Hills has one accredited Visitor Information Centre (VIC) in Hahndorf, a large Visitor Information Outlet at Mount Lofty Summit and visitor information is available at attractions, accommodation and tourism businesses across the region. The ratio of VICs to tourism businesses is low in this region (1:750 businesses) compared with competitor regions such as Fleurieu Peninsula (2:880) and better serviced regions such as Riverland (1:75). SATC reports that the average ratio of VICs to tourism businesses across the state is 1:180.

Adelaide Hills Tourism Inc.

Adelaide Hills Tourism Inc. (AHT) is the State Government recognised Regional Tourism Organisation (RTO) for the Adelaide Hills Tourism Region.

AHT is directed by a committee comprising tourism operators, industry sector and regional stakeholder representatives, and the main funding partners (Mount Barker District Council and Adelaide Hills Council).

The organisation has funds for approximately one Full Time Equivalent staff member and a small operational and project budget. The SATC also provides funding tied to specific ongoing programs, primarily industry communications and regional insight.

RTOs are the overarching tourism body in each tourism region in South Australia. They provide direction and market intelligence (e.g. disseminating Tourism Research Australia and SATC research), coordinate marketing and provide connectivity between tourism operators and government.

The role of tourism development (especially building the capability of small business) is not consistent across RTOs: a minority provide tourism development services, but in most regions industry development is delivered by Regional Development Australia (RDA), occasionally supplemented by council programs. At present, there is no secure funding source for business development services under State and Commonwealth Government policy agendas.

RTOs complement the work of local tourism associations, main street and trader groups, and industry bodies (such as Adelaide Hills Wine Region), often providing an important information and coordination role in regions where there are a number of town or industry groups.

AHT works in partnership with the Adelaide Hills VIC to develop and manage the Adelaide Hills Tourism website, and is collaborating with Adelaide Hills Council and the Mount Barker District Council to review visitor servicing (VIC provision) in the region.
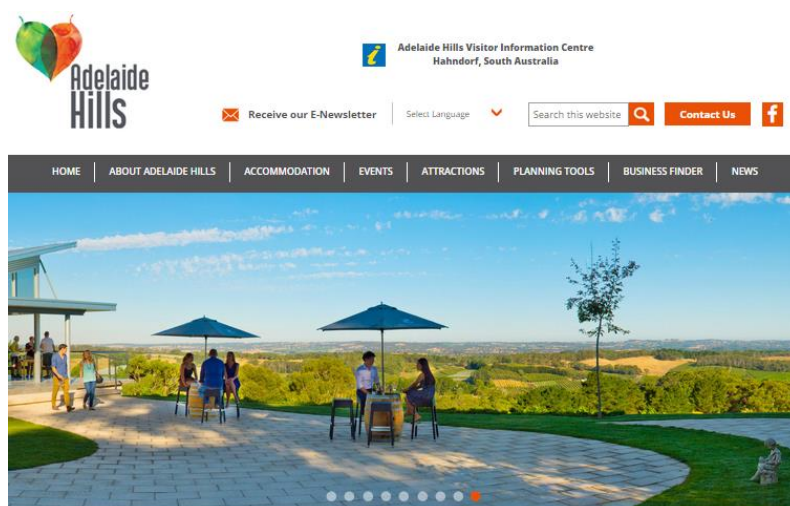
Adelaide Hills VIC website – www.adelaidehills.org.au

Adelaide Hills Tourism produces the Regional Strategic Tourism Plan for the Adelaide Hills on behalf of the industry and funding partners.

Regional Vision

The Adelaide Hills tourism industry will be collaborative, innovative, sustainable, and highly profitable - generating vibrancy and growing tourism demand.

By 2020 the Adelaide Hills will have high appeal to domestic, international and day trip visitors - providing an integrated 'best in class' experience that encourages longer stays and return visits.

AHT Mission

The Adelaide Hills Tourism Committee contributes to a vibrant and sustainable tourism economy through leadership, representation, information sharing and strategic projects.

AHT Values

The Adelaide Hills Tourism Committee operates for the greater good of the region with the following values: impartiality, independence, credibility, transparency and accessibility.

Regional Goals

The Adelaide Hills has close proximity to Adelaide, seasonal climate, diverse experiences, a strong epicurean offering and natural beauty in its favour - and enormous opportunity for tourism growth. Our industry goals for the next five years capitalise on these assets:

1. **WORKING TOGETHER:**
   We are an integrated and coordinated tourism region that presents a compelling reason to visit for Adelaide and Adelaide Hills residents, their friends and relatives, and interstate and overseas tourists.

2. **EFFECTIVE MARKETING:**
   We are all proactively promoting the region via digital platforms and traditional media, and industry and consumer events to raise awareness and grow the tourism market.

3. **BUILDING CAPACITY AND CAPABILITY:**
   We support the sustainable development of, and investment in, existing and new tourism ventures (including events) that bring more people to the region and get them staying longer and spending more.

Strategy Summary

Working Together:

1.   Effective communication and information sharing
2.   Connected businesses and industry groups
3.   Strategic collaboration with Councils, RDA, RTO network and SATC
4.   World Heritage bid support
5.   Best practice AHT performance and governance
6.   Strong community support for tourism

Effective Marketing:

1.   Digital Marketing Strategy implementation
2.   Consistent branding and storytelling
3.   Effective traditional marketing
4.   Co-operative cross-regional marketing
5.   Strong and effective Visitor Information Services
6.   Familiarisation and educational program for influencers – e.g. social media, hotel concierge, SATC and VIC staff and volunteers
7.   Initiatives to address seasonality

Building Capacity and Capability:

1.   Tourism investment attraction and support from RDA and Councils
2.   Initiatives to address development barriers
3.   Regular training and professional development
4.   Support for new tourism businesses in the region
5.   Support for existing events and development of new events

Detailed Strategy

1.   Working Together

We are an integrated and coordinated tourism region that presents a compelling reason to visit for Adelaide and Adelaide Hills residents, their friends and relatives, and interstate and overseas tourists.

Theme	Results for the tourism sector	AHT Actions	Measure	Deadline
1. Effective communication and information sharing	1. We know who's who in tourism in the Adelaide Hills and beyond, and make contact when needed (e.g. AHT, SATC, Tourism Australia, ATDW, SATIC)	• Develop and maintain a 'Who's Who' of key tourism organisations and contacts for the Adelaide Hills – outlining key contacts and their roles/responsibilities	• 'Who's Who' document is developed/updated and distributed via the industry website page	• Developed by December 2015, updated six monthly
	2. We are aware of new tourism experiences and look for opportunities to work together, including actively referring visitors to keep them in the region longer	• Stay up to date with industry news (e.g. attend precinct/industry group meetings at least twice per year) and share as appropriate • Encourage operators to keep AHT and industry up to date via newsletter contributions and AHT closed Facebook network	• Attendance reported to AHT Committee • Sharing of product updates via closed Facebook group and newsletters/social media	• Ongoing • Ongoing

Theme	Results for the tourism sector	AHT Actions	Measure	Deadline
	3. We know what's happening (e.g. campaigns, events, new experiences) and what's going to happen so we work together to plan and promote	• Advocate with government (e.g. SATC, PIRSA, Brand SA, DSD, DEWNR and DPTI) and relevant bodies (e.g. SATIC, AHWR) for AHT to be a key point for distribution of tourism industry information and share in a timely manner	• AHT receives and disseminates information about all relevant government and industry programs, events, reports and opportunities that affect the region	• Ongoing
	4. We know what Councils are doing in relation to tourism and events	• Create a culture of sharing between Councils and AHT, with dissemination to industry as appropriate	• Level of council engagement with AHT and industry • Quarterly tourism update from Councils at AHT Committee meetings and available on industry page of website	• Ongoing • Quarterly report from Councils
	5. We know what SATC is doing for our region, and its future marketing and development priorities	• Regularly attend SATC meetings and review SATC communications, with dissemination to industry as appropriate	• Monthly reporting at AHT Committee meeting on AHT engagement with SATC • Information about SATC initiatives communicated via AHT channels in a timely manner	• Ongoing - monthly reporting • Ongoing
	6. We know what tourism research is available and where to find it	• Distribute tourism research and intelligence to the region in a timely manner	• New industry intelligence links added to industry website page within two weeks and key points noted in industry newsletter and/or through closed Facebook network	• Ongoing
2. Connected businesses and industry/business groups	1. Our local business and industry associations collaborate with Adelaide Hills Tourism and each	• Use a variety of methods and media to engage and collaborate with the	• Two meetings/forums per year	• Review annually or as issues arise

Theme	Results for the tourism sector	AHT Actions	Measure	Deadline
	other to coordinate and leverage our efforts (and broader non-region specific organisations as appropriate e.g. Food SA)	associations (e.g. email, meetings/forums, newsletters, social media)	• Information is provided to operators in an appropriate and timely manner	• Ongoing
	2. We encourage stronger relations between operators to deliver bundling, referrals and joint marketing (e.g. Land of Long Lunches winter campaign)	• Encourage and promote collaborative programs through AHT and third party distribution channels and networking opportunities	• Four new bundled experiences or joint campaigns supported by AHT	• Review annually
3. Strategic collaboration with key stakeholders (Councils, RDA, RTO network and SATC) and external bodies	1. We have a co-ordinated approach to tourism and leverage regional and cross-regional opportunities with key stakeholders	• Identify and embrace opportunities to work collaboratively on region-wide or cross-regional initiatives (e.g. Epicurean Way, Tour Down Under) • Maximise opportunities to reinforce the value of tourism to Council (including elected members) and promote inter-council collaboration. • Have an opportunistic approach to working with agencies at a state and federal level	• Participate in two collaborative projects annually • Annual combined function/famil for all elected members • Benchmarking survey of elected members • Monthly reporting to AHT Committee through Project Officer and Chair's Updates	• As opportunities arise - review annually • March 2016 then annually • Surveyed annually • Ongoing
4. World Heritage bid support	1. We understand the value of the World Heritage Bid and add value where possible	• Monitor developments with the World Heritage Bid and communicate to the tourism sector, highlighting benefits,	• Timely sharing of information	• Ongoing

Theme	Results for the tourism sector	AHT Actions	Measure	Deadline
		opportunities to get involved and leverage initiatives		
5. Best practice AHT performance and governance	1. We understand the role and responsibilities of Adelaide Hills Tourism and find the organisation accessible and representative	• Reinforce role and responsibility of AHT	• AHT role and responsibilities outlined on industry page of website and in the 'who's who' document, with reinforcement through all communications.	• Ongoing
		• Create regular opportunities for engagement through emails, newsletters, contact details on the website, industry events and closed Facebook network	• Newsletter or Chair's Update every six weeks, weekly Facebook network posts, and at least two industry events annually.	• Ongoing
		• AHT Committee membership is representative of key sectors and funding partners	• Key sectors are represented on the AHT Committee	• Annually or as positions become vacant
		• AHT Committee members stay in touch with their sectors and actively disseminate information about AHT directions and activities	• Sectors know their Committee representative and feel comfortable discussing issues and opportunities	• Ongoing
		• The Adelaide Hills Regional Strategic Tourism Plan is reviewed and updated	• Survey industry on key AHT performance indicators • Updated Plan is published on the industry section of the website	• Survey and review in July 2017 and then annually

Theme	Results for the tourism sector	AHT Actions	Measure	Deadline
6. Strong community support for tourism	1. The community appreciates the benefits of tourism and supports local initiatives	• Provide content for Council newsletters, local newspapers and relevant local radio segments	• Content appears at least three times per annum	• Review annually

2. Effective Marketing

We are all proactively promoting the region via digital platforms and traditional media, and industry and consumer events to raise awareness and grow the tourism market.

Theme	Results for the tourism sector	AHT Actions	Measure	Deadline
1. Digital Marketing Strategy Implementation	1. We have a co-ordinated and strong presence on social media including AHT's Visit Adelaide Hills Facebook page and relevant third party channels	• Develop social media policy and seasonal content plan (including leveraging opportunities) for recently established Visit Adelaide Hills consumer Facebook page and consider boosting posts (paid) and additional social media channels (pending resources and consumer trends) • Assess viability of other social media platforms such as Instagram	• Facebook – minimum three consumer posts per week • Establishment of additional social media channels as deemed appropriate by AHT Committee subject to resources and alignment to ideal customer	• Ongoing – key metrics reported quarterly to AHT Committee (number of posts, reach, engagement, followers) • Reviewed annually

Theme	Results for the tourism sector	AHT Actions	Measure	Deadline
	2. The Adelaide Hills website is an important motivational, informational and booking channel to increase visitation and length of stay	• Work with Adelaide Hills VIC to maintain site content, increase/improve ATDW listings, maximise revenue generation, improve SEO and use insights (e.g. Google Analytics) to monitor and improve user experience	• Website up to date and well populated with offerings, with minimum two blogs per season	• Ongoing – key metrics reported quarterly to AHT Committee (total visits, unique visitors, length of visit, number of pages viewed, bounce rate)
	3. The Adelaide Hills online consumer newsletter engages and motivates potential visitors	• Monitor sign-ups on the website and consider demand for and viability of a (quarterly) seasonal consumer newsletter.	• Quarterly seasonal newsletter distributed (subject to demand and resources)	• Review annually
	4. We understand the value of the ATDW and how to establish and update listings	• Provide information on the ATDW to operators including its value and the importance of establishing and maintaining a listing • Conduct a review of ATDW listings to identify gaps and outdated information then target businesses that need to add or update listings and arrange for the removal of outdated listings	• ATDW information provided in 'Who's Who' document and on industry page of website (with reinforcement through communication channels and reminders at industry events) • Quantity and quality of listings, removal of outdated listings and representative presence	• Ongoing • Gap analysis by December 2015, operators approached March 2016

Theme	Results for the tourism sector	AHT Actions	Measure	Deadline
	5. The Adelaide Hills is well represented on third party websites and apps (e.g. www.southaustralia.com, TripAdvisor)	• Audit Adelaide Hills content on key third party sites and apps and identify strategies to address gaps and inconsistencies in key messages and branding	• Audit of relevant third party websites and apps is complete and strategies implemented	• Audit by July 2016 with implementation by December 2016
	6. We know how to make the most of online opportunities	• Audit operator online marketing and distribution capability gaps and develop a sector training plan to be delivered by third party providers	• Engagement with 40 operators annually (i.e. attend a training session or one-on-one review)	• July 2018
2. Consistent branding and story telling	1. We share interesting and engaging stories about our region with visitors consistent with the Adelaide Hills Interpretation Plan	• Review current Interpretation Plan and update as required, with a view to engaging businesses in developing and telling their stories	• Engagement with 40 operators annually (i.e. attend a training session or one-on-one review)	• December 2016 then annual review
	2. Adelaide Hills brand and key messages are reinforced through extensive use by AHT and relevant third parties (operators, business and industry associations, councils etc.)	• Encourage the tourism industry and associations to use regional branding and key messages	• Brand guidelines, logo and key messages document available on the industry page of the website and promoted through communication channels	• March 2016
3. Effective traditional marketing	1. The region is collaboratively marketed with SATC in traditional print, radio or television media (SATC holds region's marketing funds)	• Work collaboratively with SATC to maximise marketing opportunities, ensure inclusion of key messages and relevant experiences, and	• SATC marketing reflects regional values (including seasonality) and showcases new/hero experiences, with timely	• Reviewed annually

Theme	Results for the tourism sector	AHT Actions	Measure	Deadline
		maximise sector involvement (opportunities to leverage) • Maximise co-operative marketing opportunities (e.g. through the regional cooperative marketing fund 2015/2016) with SATC to increase awareness of Adelaide Hills as a destination	communication of leveraging opportunities to operators • Implementation of co-operative marketing activity (e.g. 'long lunch' in Rundle Mall to generate PR and 'bring the Hills to the city'	• Co-op fund proposal to SATC by March 2016 with execution by 30 June 2016
	2. We take advantage of the region's appeal to national and international television productions (e.g. food and wine, travel shows)	• Embrace opportunities to feature the region in television productions as opportunities arise	• Opportunities are communicated to operators in a timely manner	• Ongoing
	3. The region is top of mind for relevant media and receives excellent media coverage	• Develop media communications plan and consider opportunities for outsourcing and partnering on key activities (e.g. media releases, media database) and leveraging SATC PR activities	• Media communications plan developed including options for outsourcing (hours/budget, outcomes, alignment to key messages) • Briefings and famils held for SATC PR staff	• Plan developed by June 2016 • Briefings held six-monthly from March 2016 with ongoing email updates as required
4. Co-operative cross-regional marketing	1. We work with our neighbouring regions to increase visitation	• Work with neighbouring RTOs and VICs to identify synergies and cross-regional opportunities (e.g. famils for VIC staff in neighbouring	• Attend quarterly RTO meetings convened by SATC and liaise with neighbouring regions on specific projects (e.g. Epicurean Way,	• Ongoing

Theme	Results for the tourism sector	AHT Actions	Measure	Deadline
		regions, campaigns and development projects)	RDA Food and Wine Trail project) as required	
5. Strong and effective Visitor Information Services	1. We ensure visitors have access to the right information when and where they need it to improve the visitor experience and increase length of stay/return visitation	• Work with partners to provide information before and during the visit – in the right places, on digital platforms and at events	• Undertake further research of visitor servicing trends and options • Develop a visitor servicing strategy for Adelaide Hills	• March 2016 • June 2016
	2. We make sure the VICs and VIOs have up-to-date information about our businesses, our joint initiatives (packages and bundling) and good promotional materials	• Work with VICs and VIOs in the Adelaide Hills and neighbouring regions to encourage quality, up-to-date information services and the ability to upsell (including famil program) • Ensure operators know how to work with VICs to provide information and training to VIC staff to improve product knowledge	• Visitor services accurately represent the offerings in the Adelaide Hills • Information about how to work with VICs is included in 'Who's Who' document and on industry page of website, and also encouraged at industry events	• March 2016 • June 2016 and ongoing
6. Famil and educational program for influencers (e.g. social media, hotel concierge, VIC staff and volunteers)	1. We work collaboratively to target, fund and organise famils and marketing/training events that get the attention of influencers in our key markets	• Convene a working group to develop and implement a famils and educational program	• Famils Working Group convened and forward plan developed	• June 2016
7. Initiatives to address seasonality	1. The region works collaboratively to increase the number of visitors, particularly in quiet periods, including winter and mid-week	• Encourage, support and prioritise events and campaigns (including accommodation packages through third parties) that	• Timely promotion of off-peak campaigns and initiatives via AHT channels including website and social media	• Ongoing

Theme	Results for the tourism sector	AHT Actions	Measure	Deadline
		attract visitors in non-peak periods • Convene a 'Packaging Working Group' that engages operators in the development and marketing of branded bundles/packages for non-peak periods	• Packaging Working Group convened and forward plan developed	• Group convened by June 2016 with plan developed by September 2016

3. Building Capacity and Capability

We support the sustainable development of, and investment in, existing and new tourism ventures (including events) that bring more people to the region and get them staying longer and spending more.

Theme	Results for the tourism sector	AHT Actions	Measure	Deadline
1. Tourism investment attraction and support from RDA and Councils	1. RDA and Councils are actively promoting and supporting investment in tourism	• Help RDA and Councils build the case for tourism investment by providing industry data and detail • Facilitate connections between RDA/Councils and tourism businesses	• Relevant research and insights provided to RDA/Councils in a timely manner • Investment information provided in the 'Who's Who' document and on industry page of website e.g. RDA's Investment Attraction prospectus distributed to tourism	• Ongoing • June 2016

Theme	Results for the tourism sector	AHT Actions	Measure	Deadline
		• Work with RDA to ensure Tourism Investment is included in the Regional Roadmap for Adelaide Hills, Fleurieu and Kangaroo Island	operators (at industry events and details/link on industry website) • Tourism investment is adequately addressed in the Roadmap	• Input into Regional Roadmap by December 2015 (due out mid-2016)
2. Initiatives to address development barriers	1. We understand planning and development processes and the best course of action if barriers are encountered	• Facilitate a forum which allows Councils to outline processes, tips and challenges relating to development applications (including case studies) • Provide feedback to Councils based on feedback received from operators	• Forum has been facilitated • Feedback provided	• By March 2016 • Ongoing
	2. Councils' planning processes are as positive towards appropriate development as regulations allow	• Reinforce the value of tourism and build the case for appropriate development to improve the visitor experience and increase expenditure	• Briefings/familiarisations conducted for elected members and relevant staff • Ensure value of tourism documentation is readily available to Councils	• Briefings held six monthly • Ongoing as data becomes available
3. Regular training and professional development	1. We know about upcoming opportunities to attend training and professional development workshops in areas such as marketing and distribution (especially digital), public relations (dealing with the media), customer	• Provide timely information about training and development opportunities in the Adelaide Hills (e.g. SATC, SATIC, RDA, council initiatives and other third-party providers)	• Information about training and development opportunities is disseminated in a timely manner via AHT industry communication channels	• Ongoing

Theme	Results for the tourism sector	AHT Actions	Measure	Deadline
	service, events management/promotion etc.			
	2. We actively seek ways to support the growth of existing and new tourism businesses	• Monitor training and development needs (not met by third party providers) and organise training if there is sufficient demand • Develop and engage businesses in the uptake of a marketing development program (e.g. AHT Business Accelerator Package) with a focus on ATDW, digital presence and interpretation (story telling)	• Training and development is facilitated when there is sufficient demand • Package is developed and 20 businesses complete the package each year	• Review annually • Program developed by June 2016. Assess November 2016 and review in November 2017 for future application
4. Support for new businesses in the region	1. We maximise the chances of success for new tourism ventures in the region	• Provide a 'soft landing' for new business ventures through introductions to established businesses and provision of helpful information such as the 'Who's Who' document, checklist and promotion through AHT social media channels (consumer and closed industry group) • Monitor new businesses and encourage them to be	• New initiatives are connected to other collaborative operators, know where to find the information they need and promoted in a timely manner through communication channels • New businesses are involved in AHT activities	• As needed • Ongoing

Theme	Results for the tourism sector	AHT Actions	Measure	Deadline
		involved in local groups and AHT networking		
5. Support for existing events and development of new events	1. Our events are well represented on digital platforms (ATDW, social media) and are supported by SATC (in visitor guides, online and through the Regional Festivals and Events funding program)	• Encourage all events to list on ATDW for coverage on key tourism websites including adelaidehills.org.au • Monitor upcoming events and post details on AHT social media channels to both consumers and industry, and ensure key influencers and PR opportunities are maximised • Provide advice on and endorsement of relevant events as part of SATC's Regional Festival and Events funding program	• Update database of event managers and ensure Information on the importance of ATDW and how to list is provided to all event managers and is available on industry page on website • All key events receive promotion through AHT channels • Adelaide Hills receives a proportional share of funded events	• Database updated by March 2016 then ongoing • Ongoing • Reviewed annually after funding announced in July
	2. We are involved in planning and implementing a new regional event that helps to attract visitors to the Adelaide Hills, avoiding peak visitation times	• Convene an Events Working Group and support development and implementation of one new event by December 2017	• A new event has been successfully held and evaluated, and a forward plan for future events has been developed	• December 2017

Alignment to the South Australian Tourism Plan 2020

The *South Australian Tourism Plan 2020* sets out the State Government's priorities and goals for the tourism sector.

The *Plan* supports:

- A profitable flourishing tourism industry that is widely recognised as a core part of the South Australian economy.

- Jobs, and contribution to the growth of resilient, vibrant and sustainable communities and regions across South Australia, supporting social, cultural and environmental outcomes as well as economic.

- Tourism experiences with wide seasonal appeal that deliver competitive authentic experiences and create strong word of mouth marketing and repeat visitation resulting in greater investment and reinvestment in the 'right' products for our target markets.

- Consumers to have a clear understanding of our competitive advantage and the depth and diversity of our experiences. They will have a high desire to visit in the near future. This desire is readily and easily facilitated by the South Australian tourism industry's capacity to inform them of the best options for their visit and to manage visitor bookings.

- Stakeholders in tourism to have a good understanding of their role, connections and relationships with each other and more widely across varied sectors in the economy. A strong collaborative approach helps achieve agreed priorities.

Five Priority Action Areas to be actioned by the South Australian tourism industry have been identified in the *Plan*. The strategies and actions in the *Adelaide Hills Tourism Plan* have been mapped against these Action Areas:

Driving demand

SA Tourism Plan	Actions Adelaide Hills Tourism Plan
Develop well connected and collective marketing Approaches that: • Recognise and facilitate the connection of all relevant parts of the tourism industry • Have the SATC drive awareness and appeal of visiting South Australia, and industry provide the tactical offering in a seamless and attractive way for the consumer • Continue to implement an international marketing focus that recognises Asian growth opportunities and converts these but doesn't lose sight of the existing markets that drive current regional visitation and length of stay.	Digital Marketing Strategy implementation Consistent branding and storytelling Effective traditional marketing Co-operative cross-regional marketing Strong and effective Visitor Information Services Famils/educational program for influencers Initiatives to address seasonality

Working better together

SA Tourism Plan	Actions Adelaide Hills Tourism Plan
• Continue to build clarity around stakeholder's roles and make the most of available resources, particularly with industry associations and as well Regional Tourism Organisations (RTOs) and Local Government Associations (LGAs). • Work with Tourism Australia and aviation partners to maintain and further grow recent solid gains in air access to South Australia for key markets. • Improve the capacity of the tourism industry to work collectively by fostering effective collaborative structures and mechanisms. • Develop innovative partnerships across sectors and different industries that deliver outcomes for tourism, including areas already active in tourism such as food and wine, the Arts, business events and international education.	Effective communication and information sharing Connected businesses and industry groups Strategic collaboration with councils, RDA, RTO Network and SATC World Heritage Bid Best practice AHT governance

Supporting what we have

SA Tourism Plan	Actions Adelaide Hills Tourism Plan
• Help businesses, industry and Government make better decisions by mutually sharing insights on what consumers seek, allowing the most appropriate experiences to be showcased to the right consumers in a coordinated approach. These insights will assist in improved risk management approaches that drive the right investment decisions. • Industry needs to continue to deliver and further strengthen its delivery of high quality experiences and better customer service to visitors to ensure strong satisfaction, repeat visitation and word of mouth marketing. A range of accreditation programs and awards contribute to this outcome. • Ensure Adelaide acts as a strong hub, and works collaboratively to drive visitation to the regions. • Support airlines by growing demand through continued cooperative partnerships to maintain current increased inbound air capacity to South Australia, then investigate further capacity to grow.	Strong and effective Visitor Information Services Tourism investment attraction and support from RDA and Councils Initiatives to address development barriers Regular training and professional development Support for existing events

Increasing the recognition of the value of tourism

SA Tourism Plan	Actions Adelaide Hills Tourism Plan
• Develop relevant messages on the value of tourism to the economy at State, regional and local level and disseminate widely. These messages need to be relevant and tailored in the language that is effective for each audience. • Develop case studies that clearly demonstrate the value of tourism and return from tourism investment (such as around Adelaide Oval, specific festivals and include regional and local examples). • Provide relevant messages at community level. Encourage locals to become advocates for tourism and thereby actively drive the 'Visiting Friends and Relatives' market, improving community pride, supporting Local Government and community approaches that welcome tourism to their place (from planning through to festivals) and recognising and facilitating the links between their own work and tourism to foster the outcomes of this Plan.	Strong community support for tourism Strategic collaboration with councils, RDA, RTO Network and SATC

Using events to grow visitation

SA Tourism Plan	Actions Adelaide Hills Tourism Plan
• Attract or develop new events to drive visitor expenditure to South Australia, with a focus on events outside the peak season. • Grow existing events in visitor volume and yield. • Drive increased business events, particularly via newly developed infrastructure in Adelaide. • Use major events to showcase South Australia in the media, with a view to spurring future leisure trips.	Support for existing events and development of new events

Appendices:

Appendix 1 - Background

One of the most important roles of a Regional Tourism Organisation is to develop and oversee the implementation of a Regional Strategic Tourism Plan. The previous Adelaide Hills Regional Strategic Tourism Plan 2011-2014 was produced in an era of greater funding and more staff. The intent of the 2011-2014 Plan was for the tourism industry to implement the plan - with the RTO a partner in the implementation process. This aspiration was well founded, as the role of the RTOs is not to 'do it to us', rather to provide an overarching view that 'allows us to do it better'.

The 2015-2020 Adelaide Hills Tourism Plan will be based on the same partnering philosophy as Adelaide Hills Tourism does not have the resources to do it any other way.
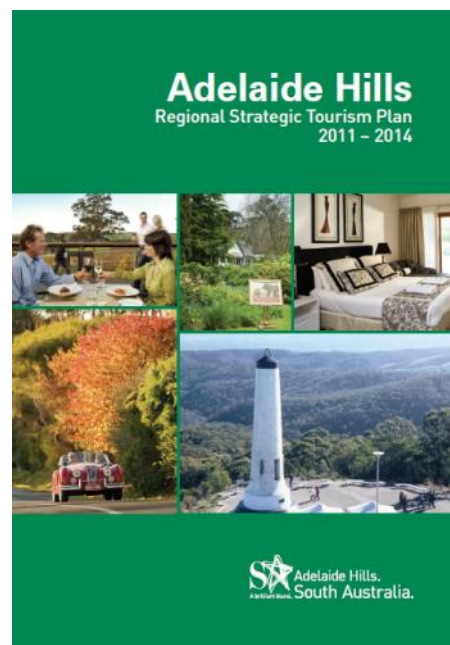
Consultation Process

In developing the plan, AHT and Dr Kristine Peters of KPPM worked closely with the tourism industry to identify the issues and opportunities that can be addressed *together*. This means that there are some issues that challenge the regional tourism industry (the value of the Australian Dollar is a good example), which are beyond the influence and resourcing of AHT, and these have not been included in the Plan.

The development of the Adelaide Hills Tourism Plan 2015-2020 has been a collaborative process, involving:

- Several meetings with the Adelaide Hills Tourism Board
- Interviews with key stakeholders including industry leaders, local business associations, Adelaide Hills Wine Region and the South Australian Tourism Commission
- An online survey to gain feedback about the continuing priorities from the previous Plan, and identify issues that need to be addressed in this Plan
- A tourism industry workshop, held at The Prancing Pony in June 2015, and attended by approximately 60 operators, that set the goals and priorities of the Plan
- Production of a Draft Plan, widely distributed for comment
- An industry partners' workshop at The Haus in August 2015, aimed at operators who want to work with AHT to implement the Plan
- A priority-setting workshop with the Adelaide Hills Tourism Committee
- Production of the Final Plan for consideration and endorsement by the AHT Committee

Plan Review Process

This Plan covers the period 2015-2020. It is important that the Plan remains current throughout this time, and Adelaide Hills Tourism therefore intends to undertake an annual 'rolling review' of the Plan that involves:

1. Reviewing the outcomes of the past year
2. Considering changes to the tourism operating environment, and how these might affect the regional
3. Setting priorities for the coming year
4. Updating strategies and actions for the next five year period

This approach will mean that the Tourism Plan is always current, and simplify the process of developing the next 'major' strategy in 2020.

AHT Digital Marketing Strategy

The Adelaide Hills Tourism Digital Marketing Strategy was developed in 2014 and sets out the web and social media strategy to support regional tourism marketing, within the strategic planning framework.

The actions in this Tourism Plan relating to digital capabilities and marketing are therefore summarised as 'implement the Digital Strategy', except where specific emphasis is needed, in which case these actions are clearly stated.

The key actions in the Digital Marketing Strategy are:

- Increase brand awareness
- Provide the right visitor information in the right format and place
- Grow repeat customers
- Empower the industry

Actions include: establishing and managing social media accounts, developing content, developing a website, increasing content on third party sites, search engine optimisation and industry education.

AHT Interpretation Plan

Some actions in this Tourism Plan relate to AHT's Interpretation Plan which was developed and implemented in 2011-2015. In November 2011, after extensive consultation with industry, AHT launched Phase 1 of the Interpretation Plan - key and minor messages for the region (as per key messages in the Adelaide Hills Profile on Page 1). Phase 2 of the Interpretation Plan aimed to equip operators with the skills to tell the stories of their businesses and the region. In 2012 point of difference workshops were held at four locations throughout the region delivered by Emeritus Professor Dr. Jane James to more than 80 operators. The purpose of the workshops was to help participants differentiate their business and 'stand out from the crowd'. Following these workshops, research was undertaken to see how tourism operators implemented their key and minor messages into various elements of their business (e.g. phone, website, social media, printed material etc.). Those who made most effort to implement messages, were recognised as 'Story Telling Heroes' and offered one-on-one mentoring sessions with Dr. Jane James in 2014, heavily subsidised by AHT.

Appendix 2 - Industry Priorities

The consultation process highlighted issues that the sector considers important to include in the Tourism Plan:

From the last Tourism Plan

Respondents to the Ideas Survey, identified these items from the previous Adelaide Hills Tourism Plan as 'most important' to continue in this Plan:

- Develop key regional events
- Work with government to achieve consistent signage
- Develop new tourism experiences
- Improve collaboration between operators
- Undertake targeted online marketing

From the Survey

These were the 'stand out' future priorities identified in the Ideas Survey:

- Consistent and targeted marketing and branding
- Better collaboration and packages (including events)

The survey also identified the following blockages and barriers:

- Planning regulations/council red tape/response speed/compliance
- Access to capital/funds
- Lack of collaboration (especially between wine and food)

From the Tourism Industry Workshop

These strategies were prioritised by groups at the industry workshop:

- Get visitors to come more often and stay longer through collaboration: share, package, refer, pool resources, promote
- Establish and manage a co-ordinated regional presence on social media
- Increase awareness with key influencers, including famils
- Increase awareness with potential visitors through en masse promotions (e.g. Rundle Mall promotion)
- Encourage new innovative events
- Engage with locals (Adelaide and Adelaide Hills) about VFR activities
- Increase and improve Adelaide Hills listings on the ATDW listings (in turn increasing online content on key websites and programs including Epicurean Way)

From the Industry Partners' workshop

A second workshop was held for tourism operators who were keen to work with AHT to implement the Plan.

Priorities identified at the workshop are as follows:

- Working more collaboratively
- Positioning AHT as the main point of contact and information dissemination between government and tourism operators in the Adelaide Hills
- Supporting a major event that attracts new segments, drives overnight stays and complements the Adelaide Hills brand
- Coordinating an ongoing program of famils
- Helping the wider business community understand their role in tourism and the value it brings to the region
- Creating a business development program (e.g. accelerator package) consisting of:
  - How to list on ATDW or improve an existing listing
  - Review of the business's digital presence
  - Assistance with story-telling (i.e. key interpretation principles such as identifying points of difference or 'how to stand out from the crowd')
  - Identifying or developing and promoting hero visitor experiences

Operators agreed to take part in working groups to develop packages, initiate a major event, and coordinate a program of famils.

Tourism Industry Workshop, Prancing Pony, June 2015

Appendix 3: Monitoring Performance

There are a number of challenges in setting metrics that measure the success of actions by a small organisation tasked with influencing a large and diverse sector:

- Identifying changes that can be directly attributed to the work of the organisation
- Establishing a sound 'baseline' against which change can be measured
- Availability of meaningful data which is consistent
- The cost of undertaking research

The SATC provides valuable regional tourism data (some quoted in the introduction to this report), however it is often difficult to connect the specific work of a Regional Tourism Organisation (RTO) to this data. For example, if an RTO had a goal of 'more international visitor stays', the most likely influencers of international visitation are a sound economy in the home country, the value of the $AUD and effectiveness of SATC and Tourism Australia marketing - none of which are under the control of the RTO. This illustrates the danger in hanging an entire strategy on one measure.

Stakeholders, both internal (e.g. funding partners such as Councils and SATC) and external (e.g. tourism operators), provided feedback about the success factors that they considered important.

Overarching performance indicators for the region include:

- Increased visitor numbers
- Increased overnight visitation
- Increased tourism expenditure
- Increased direct and indirect employment

While AHT has limited ability to influence the above outcomes due to external factors, AHT will monitor, disseminate and analyse the available data for the region in these key performance areas to identify areas for improvement and issues that need to be addressed.

To contribute to the achievement the above overarching performance indicators, stakeholders identified the following key performance indicators over which AHT has greater influence.

- Continuous improvement in digital marketing results (e.g. website and social media metrics)
- Strong differentiation from other regions
- Reliable tourism data to assist with decision making and planning
- Increased number of tourism businesses/experiences including events
- Increased business at traditionally off-peak times (e.g. winter, mid-week)
- Increased collaboration between stakeholders
- Increased recognition of the value of tourism by the Adelaide Hills community and Councils

Refer to the Detailed Strategy (pages 7-20) for measures and deadlines relating to these performance areas.

Appendix 4: Glossary

AHT – Adelaide Hills Tourism Inc.

ATDW – Australian Tourism Data Warehouse

AHC – Adelaide Hills Council

AHWR – Adelaide Hills Wine Region

Bounce Rate – the percentage of visitors to a website who leave from the same page they entered

DAP – Destination Action Plan

DEWNR – Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources

DPTI - Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure

DSD – Department of State Development

HBTA – Hahndorf Business and Tourism Association

MBDC – Mount Barker District Council

PIRSA – Department of Primary Industries and Regions SA

RDA – Regional Development Australia

RTO – Regional Tourism Organisation

SATC – South Australian Tourism Commission

SATIC – South Australian Tourism Industry Council

SEO – Search Engine Optimisation

SBA – Stirling Business Association

TA – Tourism Australia

TRA – Tourism Research Australia

VIC – Visitor Information Centre (accredited)

VIO – Visitor Information Outlet

The Adelaide Hills Tourism Plan 2015-2020 was produced by:

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