

ECHUCA MOAMA TOURISM

Strategic Plan 2018-22



Echuca Moama
The Murray's living legend





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INTRODUCTION

Echuca Moama and District Tourism Development Association Incorporated (EMT) is the industry based, peak tourism organisation for the Echuca and Moama Districts.

The role of EMT is to provide leadership which includes and develops the capacity of all partners and ensures the growth and development of the tourism industry in the Echuca Moama region.

Together with our members and partner organisations, EMT is responsible for driving increases in visitation, length of stay, yield and visitor experiences by providing destination marketing and the provision of exceptional visitor services.

This Strategic Plan has been developed to guide the work of EMT over the next five years, and clearly define the priorities, the milestones and the measures to show that the organisation is on track and delivering the best possible outcomes.

The purpose of this plan is to describe our current situation, our desired future and the path to get to that future. It is not a detailed visitor servicing guide, nor destination management or marketing plan – they will be two products that are developed as a result of this higher level strategic direction.

The Strategic Plan has been developed through workshops with the Board of EMT; research into industry trends, related strategies and best practices; consultations with key stakeholders and partner organisations; and consultation with other local and regional tourism bodies.

Tourism is a major driver of economic activity in Echuca Moama and across the region. We believe we can be a leader in the tourism industry sector state-wide and build a strong community based tourism model in which we all play a part. In doing so we want to share our beautiful places, stories and experiences because we as locals and local businesses love where we live and are so proud to share our place with locals and visitors. The shared pride and belief we all have makes Echuca Moama the best place it can be. In turn, this leads to building community, connectivity, liveability, and prosperity.

Building this dream is a shared vision - a two-way street – we work in a partnership with our local councils, the tourism community, locals and visitors that is mutually beneficial for all our members. The partnership builds better businesses, an even more beautiful and attractive destination, and memorable experiences for our visitors.

We will do this in four ways:

STRATEGY ONE:

Leadership and Advocacy

Organisational governance; financial management; communication and engagement with membership; industry representation and advocacy;

STRATEGY TWO:

Building our Tourism Community

Membership; stakeholders; staff and volunteers; broader community; industry development and product development;

STRATEGY THREE:

Focusing on our Visitors

Visitor experience; visitor servicing; research and experience delivery.

STRATEGY FOUR:

Destination Marketing

Development of segmented marketing calendar, a strong events calendar, digital platform, integration with MRTB and Visit Victoria and Destination NSW, new events attraction, development and coordination and promotion of the value of tourism.

The results of our strategy will be:

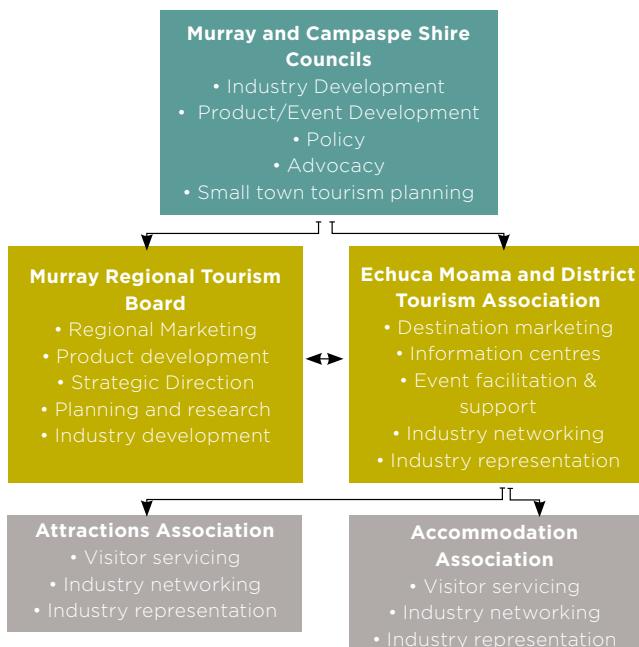
- Increase of visitor satisfaction, greater visitor numbers to 1.8 million visitors per annum, staying for 2.4 million nights per annum (by 2022) (focus to increase visitation in the softer periods eg August).
- Sustainable increased average visitor spend (from \$127 per night per person), and increase overnight stays (from 2.7 nights to 3.0 nights), resulting in tourism expenditure to \$500 million per annum (by 2022).
- Improved financial position with growing income streams for EMT.
- Improved local recognition of the value of tourism and strong community engagement.
- Attract three new repeat events to Echuca, Moama and/or surrounding region during soft periods by 2022.

ABOUT US

EMT is a member based organisation consisting of over 300 members that receives significant partner funding from the Shire of Campaspe and Murray River Shire Council.

EMT is positioned within both Victorian and New South Wales tourism strategies liaising directly with both State based tourism bodies including Murray Regional Tourism Board (MRTB).

At a local level, EMT has strong relationships with other industry associations such as Echuca Moama Accommodation Association (EMAA), Old Echuca Town Progress Association, Echuca-Moama Business & Trade Assoc Inc, Murray Business Network, C4EM, The Back Roads Trail, the Long Paddock Drive, and the local communities of Kyabram, Rochester and Rushworth



Source: *Regional Strategic Marketing Plan (2012-2016)*,
Shire of Campaspe and Murray Shire Council

GOVERNANCE

EMT is governed by a skills-based board of six elected representatives from across the community and the tourism industry, and appointed representatives from both the Shire of Campaspe and Murray River Councils.

EMT is an incorporated association governed by State based legislation and its constitution.

EMT regularly reports to its major stakeholders as to its financial position, marketing and visitor strategies.

EMT employs a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) responsible for the organisation's marketing strategies, visitor services and day to day operations of EMT.

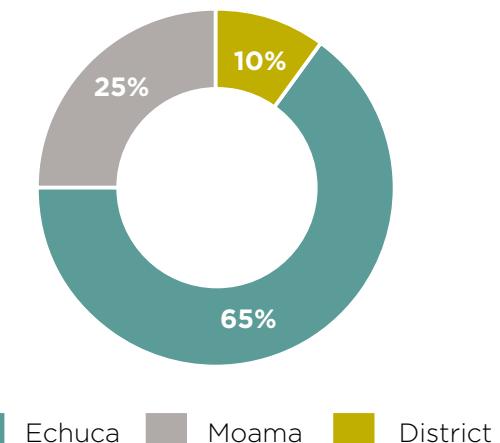
MEMBERS

In 2017, there are 312 financial members of EMT located in Echuca, Moama and broader region district[1].

Of these members, 207 are in Echuca; 74 in Moama; and the rest cover a range of areas within Campaspe and Murray River Council areas as well as surrounding areas.

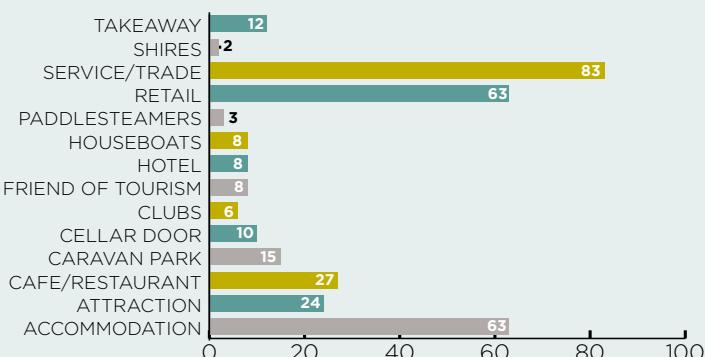
The remaining 31 members are within the two member-council areas of Kyabram (5); Barmah (2); Cohuna (2); Mathoura (2); Bunnaloo (1); Gunbower; Katunga (1); Rochester (1), Womboota(1) Tongala (1) Torrumbarry (1), Strathmerton(1) Koonoomoo(1). Members in other council areas; most notably Moira Shire Council, City of Greater Bendigo (2), and City of Greater Shepparton (2). Members are also located in Albury (1), Deniliquin(1)and Kyneton (1).

EMT MEMBERS 2017

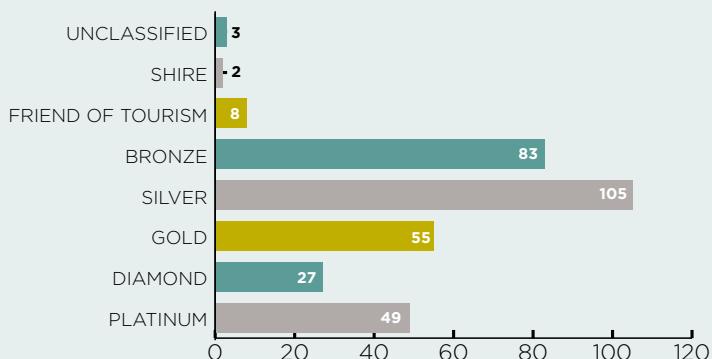


Echuca Moama District

EMT MEMBER TYPES 2017



EMT MEMBERS CATEGORIES



FUNDING PARTNERS

The relationship with both Councils is defined by three year Service Agreements. Service Agreements with Campaspe Shire cover Destination Marketing and Visitor Servicing, and are both in place until 30 June 2019. The Service Agreement with Shire of Murray (now Murray River Council) is in place until 3 June 2018.

Both Service Agreements outline the responsibilities and obligations in relation to the annual contributions made by each council.

Murray River Council specifically states that they fund:

- Visitor services (including Level 1 accredited Visitor Information Centre)
- Destination marketing

In its Service Agreement, Murray River Council acknowledges that EMT provides other services beneficial to the region beyond visitor services and destination marketing, however its funding does not extend to those services.

The Campaspe Shire Service Agreements state that EMT is a service provider to Council. One Service Agreement specifically covers EMT providing destination marketing

activities and that the objective of Council's financial commitment is to assist EMT to:

- Implement actions outlined in the Campaspe Murray Regional Strategic Marketing Plan
- Deliver destination marketing as evidenced in EMT's annual marketing plan

The other Campaspe Shire Service Agreement covers Visitor Servicing, requiring EMT to service visitors and potential visitors to the region, including:

- The operation of the Echuca Moama Visitor Information Centre, maintaining its Level 1 accredited status through the Australian Tourism Accreditation program
- Providing relevant advice to visitors, potential visitors to increase visitor yield, length of stay and dispersal from Echuca to other areas of the Campaspe Shire

EMT is required to annually submit a Visitor Information Centre Business Plan and Operational Budget (including notional allocation of Council's contribution). The annual Business Plan is required to outline specific visitor servicing activities, including the Ambassador Program, and be accompanied by a short explanation as to how it will satisfy visitor servicing to the whole region.

The Campaspe Shire specifically states that council's financial commitment is intended to benefit the whole of the Campaspe region, although council acknowledges that EMT will continue to focus on Echuca Moama as the 'hero' brand in marketing executions to attract visitors to the region. Theme based tours or experiences linking food and wine, indigenous food & culture; art trails could be some of the ways in which we link our regional communities with Echuca Moama.

It also asks EMT to recognise that Council has a role to provide tourism and event development activities and states that EMT and Council will agree to work in collaboration where the delivery of such activities may have mutually beneficial outcomes. Further, it requests that EMT as a member based organisation, represent the best interests of all tourism operators, destinations and visitors throughout the Campaspe region. EMT acknowledges that this may mean servicing visitor requests beyond its membership base.

Both Service Agreements state that EMT, as an incorporated association (known as EMT), is responsible for its day to day operations, controls its own management structure and manages all financial and statutory responsibilities separate to Council.

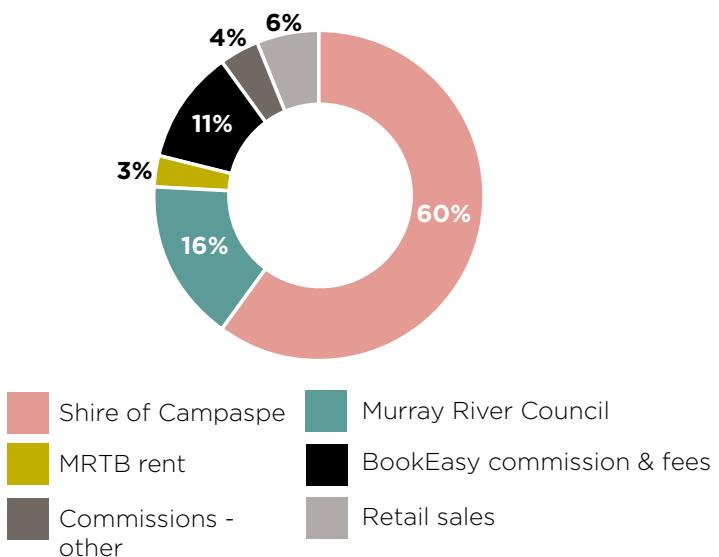
REVENUE SOURCES

EMT's current revenue sources are divided into the two key service areas:

- Visitor Information Centre and visitor servicing
- Marketing and member services

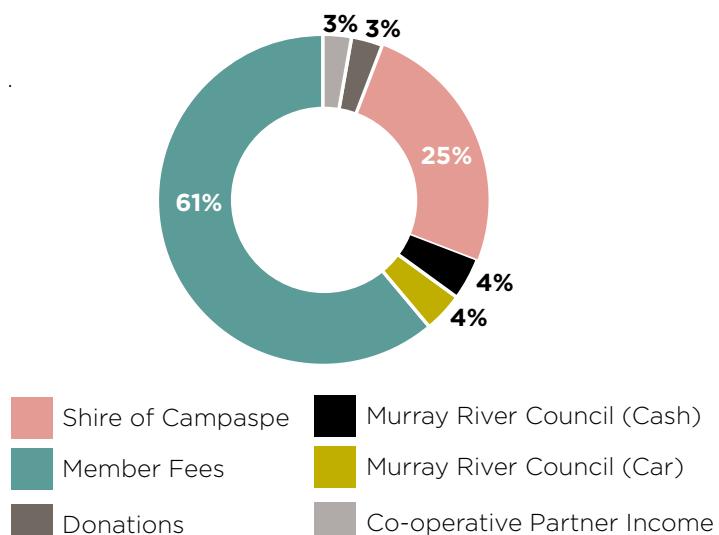
VISITOR INFORMATION CENTRE & SERVICING

The Visitor Information Centre is primarily financed through council contributions, supplemented by BookEasy commissions and retail.



MARKETING AND MEMBER SERVICES 2017 REVENUE SOURCES

Member fees are the primary source of income for marketing and member services, supplemented by in-kind and direct financial support from both Councils.



TOURISM SNAPSHOT

Annual visitation to Echuca Moama region for the year ending March 2017 was 1.49 million visitors. This comprised 672,000 domestic overnight visitors spending nearly 1.8m nights in the region; 810,000 day-trip visitors; and 11,000 international overnight visitors. Overnight visitors averaged 2.7 nights stay in the region.

Echuca Moama region received 25.4% of overnight visitors to the Murray region and 24.1% of nights in the Murray region. In terms of domestic daytrip travel, Echuca Moama region received 30.8% of all daytrips to the Murray region. Only 18.0% of the international visitors to the Murray region came to Echuca Moama region.

'Holiday' was the main purpose of the trip to Echuca Moama and district, followed by 'visiting friends and relatives (VFR)' and 'business'.

The region received 78.3% of overnight visitors and 85% of nights from Victoria (43.5% of visitors were from Melbourne, and 34.8% from regional Victoria). NSW contributed 12.8% of visitors and 10.7% of nights. South Australia contributed 2.9% of visitors and 2.7% of nights. Largest sources of international visitors were New Zealand (25.6%), United Kingdom (15.0%) and the USA (12.6%).

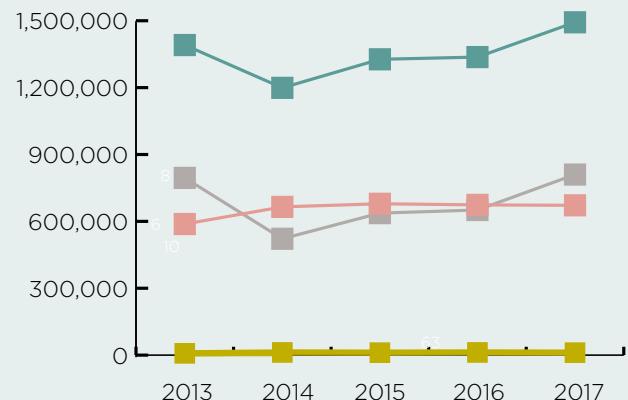
'65 years and over' was the biggest age group of visitors for overnight stays (23.4%), domestic day trips (24.4%) and 30.4% of international visitors.

	25-34 yrs	45-54 yrs	55-64 yrs	65+ yrs
Domestic Overnight visitors		19.5%	16.2%	23.4%
Domestic Day trip travel	19.2%	17%		24.4%
International overnight travel	21.6%		15.1%	30.4%

Main activities for both overnight visitors, and domestic day trip visitors were 'eat out, dine at a restaurant or café' (50.5%); 'visit friends and relatives' (38.8%); 'pubs, clubs, discos etc' (26.5%); 'sightseeing or looking around' (20.6%); and 'shopping for pleasure' (14.9%).

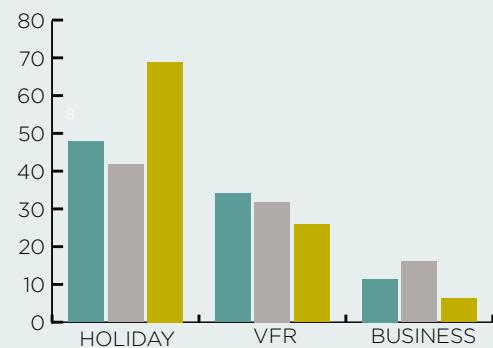
For the year ending March 2017, domestic overnight visitors spent \$227m (average \$127 per night) and domestic day trip visitors spent \$102m in the region (average \$126 per visitor).

ECHUCA MOAMA VISITOR TRENDS 2013-2017



	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Overnight visitors	588,000	665,000	679,000	674,000	672,000
Day Trip travel	795,000	522,000	637,000	651,000	810,000
International overnight visitors	8,000	12,000	11,000	12,000	11,000
Total annual visitors	1,391,000	1,199,000	1,327,000	1,337,000	1,493,000

PURPOSE OF VISIT



	HOLIDAY	VFR	BUSINESS
Overnight visitors	47.8%	34.1%	11.4%
Domestic Day trip travel	41.7%	31.8%	16.1%
International overnight visitors	68.9%	25.8%	6.3%

CURRENT SITUATION

CHANGES

Since the last EMT Strategic Plan (2014-2017), the organisation and the tourism sector in Echuca Moama and district have undergone some significant changes:

- In November 2016, several new Board members were appointed and in July 2017, a new CEO was appointed.
- Murray River Council was established through amalgamation of the former Wakool and Murray Shire Councils.
- A new Council has been elected in Shire of Campaspe.
- A change in the Victorian State Government (2014), and re-election of NSW Government (2015).
- Significant infrastructure investment in the Echuca Port was undertaken, as well as ongoing reviews of the Port precinct operating model.
- The new second river crossing planning work has commenced. The Warren Street (Echuca) entrance roundabout construction has commenced.
- Shire of Campaspe has worked closely with indigenous community groups in the development of the river crossing, and has now forged stronger relationships for mutual benefit, including tourism.
- Major events including Riverboats Music Festival, Winter Blues, Southern 80 continue to attract visitors. New emerging events including Pop & Pour and Flavours of Echuca Moama continue to grow.
- Key tourism strategies have been developed: Victorian Visitor Economy Strategy (2016-2020), and the Murray Regional Tourism Strategic Plan (2015-2020)
- NSW is reshaping and ‘re-energising’ Regional Tourism Organisations into Destination Networks.
- New operating and partnership agreements were established with former Murray Shire Council and EMT, and Campaspe Shire Council and EMT, with expiry dates of June 2018, and June 2019 respectively.

TRENDS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Trends affecting EMT include:

- Over the past five years, there has been increasing tourism visitation, length of stay and expenditure (yield) albeit at an uneven pace of growth, and variations between domestic overnight travel and yield, and domestic daytrip travel and yield
- Decreased percentage of revenue for EMT from accommodation and event bookings, and retail sales
- Increasing trend to online booking, in-destination use of mobile technology for information, increasing value placed on social media experience ratings and recommendations
- Increased use of non-traditional accommodation sources, eg AirBnB

- Domestic market competition with well-priced, accessible overseas travel
- 2018 VIC election 24 Nov and NSW 23 March 2019 provide opportunity for major projects and tourism funding

INTERNATIONAL TRENDS:

Destination Copenhagen is now creating a new trend in global tourism – being a temporary local – enjoying and experiencing all the joys of the destination as a local would. This trend involves community members and visitors ‘co-creating’ shared experiences and opportunities, bringing to the fore interactions around the local food, wine and leisure based experiences.

CHALLENGES

Since the last EMT Strategic Plan, there have been some key challenges:

- Significantly increased competition from other locations
- Blue green algae outbreak
- Huge variations in river heights, river flows, environmental damage to rivers
- Sourcing additional income streams to fund destination marketing campaigns.
- Growth of Digital technology
- Need to clearly define roles of tourism bodies and councils, particularly ‘hub and spoke’ model for visitor servicing and destination marketing; product development; event development and marketing; building industry and business capability (awareness and training)

STRENGTHS

Over the past three years, EMT has built

- An award winning visitor service centre in Echuca Moama
- A solid and supportive membership base
- Support of major stakeholders, in a true cross-border partnership
- Sense of community, one voice for tourism, unity, single point of contact
- Being the ‘best we can be’ with a belief in our achievements, and high expectations
- A sustainable financial position



This has been enabled by:

- A culture of collaboration
- Willingness and preparedness to change (flexibility, tenacity, open-mindedness)
- Strong industry and community support
- Strong volunteer base
- Local Government Support

VICTORIAN VISITOR ECONOMY STRATEGY

The Victorian Visitor Economy Strategy sets the overall direction to grow Victoria's visitor economy over the next 10 years.

It sets a goal of increasing visitors spending to \$36.5 billion by 2024-25 and identifies the following nine priorities:

- More private sector investment
- Build on the potential of regional and rural Victoria
- Improved branding and marketing
- Maximise the benefits of events
- Improved experiences for visitors from Asia
- Better tourism infrastructure
- Improved access into and around Victoria
- A skilled and capable sector
- More effective coordination

The goal of the regional and rural Victorian Strategy is to deliver a more diverse product offering and attracting more visitors who are staying longer by 2025.

Significantly, new funds have been set aside for the Regional Tourism Infrastructure Fund, and a new Regional Events fund. Alongside the establishment of Regional Partnerships to advance significant projects, there are opportunities to align the EMT Strategic Plan with the Victorian State directions, and potentially attract government support.

MURRAY REGION TOURISM STRATEGIC PLAN

The stated aim of the Murray Region Tourism Strategic Plan (2015-2020) is to grow visitation by developing a quality visitor experience, promoting the destination and continually improving as an organisation and an industry.

The focus of the Strategic Plan is to achieve the potential of \$2.27 billion of visitor expenditure by 2020; and increased visitation by 4.5% to 5.72M visitors per annum. This will generate an estimated additional 1100 jobs for the Murray region economy.

The four strategic priorities are:

- Product development
- Advocacy and leadership
- Regional marketing
- Industry development

Echuca Moama and district is covered in the Central Murray area of the Murray River region.

Of particular interest to EMT is the focus on:

- All aspects of visitor servicing to enhance the quality of the visitor experience along with increasing expenditure per visitor
- Embracing digital technology for marketing platforms to create targeted and direct engagement with visitors
- Building industry capacity through education and skills development

Experiences found to be most likely to generate additional visitation were:

- Escaping into the natural world
- Touring routes (domestic and international)
- History and heritage experiences
- Food and wine experiences
- Night experiences

OUR VISION

Echuca Moama Tourism will play a key role in building an inclusive, high performing tourism industry. The industry will work cohesively in engaging and embracing visitors and locals with the unique stories which showcase our region's assets.

STRATEGY ONE LEADERSHIP AND ADVOCACY

Objective

Ensure Echuca Moama Tourism is a well-governed, high performing, and accountable tourism body which effectively leads and advocates for tourism

Explanation

Urban Enterprise (2012) undertook a survey of Regional Tourism Organisations and found that successful tourism organisations have:

Multiple revenue streams -

this is critical for the sustainability of a tourism organisation, and that regions with larger budgets are more able to draw on funding from other sources (government and business).

Business membership -

a strong membership base provides revenue for the organisation as well as ensuring that the organisation has the best interests of the industry in mind.

Scale -

tourism organisations are strong when they have scale. This includes representation across LGAs and scale in the number of tourism operators.

Support from industry -

support and trust from industry is critical to the development of a sustainable tourism organisation. This will ensure buy in to marketing programs and a cohesive approach to visitor services

Experienced manager/leader -

a high quality manager and leader is essential to a successful regional tourism organisation. The manager needs to be able to think strategically, have good administration skills and importantly, have strong rapport with industry

Quality strategic board/committee -

board members need to be carefully selected, with a sound succession plan so that they work with the manager

to provide overall strategy without being involved in day to day activity. This is critical to achieving a harmonious tourism organisation. The role of the Board is to bring insight, oversight and foresight.

EMT is making significant progress towards these key indicators.

Industry advocacy and representation is also a key element of this strategy – being a cohesive, united voice to ensure that key industry positions and messages are heard and acted on. Past issues with blue-green algae and the potential for future natural disasters means that pre-thought, planning and coordination is vital to be able to best represent the tourism sector. Equally, a combined voice and agreed strategy is essential when lobbying for larger grants, funding, and external decisions.

Key elements of Strategy One

Organisational governance; communication and engagement; industry representation.

Year One Priorities:

- Resolve Service Agreement with Murray River Council (expiration 3 June 2018).
- Set up robust internal structure for better reporting, communication and industry cohesion.
- Establish staff position descriptions and KPIs.
- Ensure the Board has a dedicated strategic meeting mid year to deal with the challenge of revenue sources into the future.
- Put in place sound business practices including the development of a 'Financial Principles and Standards' document, and business processes to be endorsed by the Board and external auditors.
- Review finances to support strategic directions, put in place 12 month rolling financial goals.

Beyond Year One:

- Resolve Service Agreement with Campaspe Shire (expiration June 2019)
- Determine strategy for VIC and lease thereof
- Yearly Board strategic review and repositioning planned for
- Set up board succession plan/process for skills based recruitment
- Successfully acquit funding agreements, operational plans and annual reports (ongoing)

STRATEGY TWO: **BUILDING OUR TOURISM COMMUNITY**

Objective

Develop a whole of region, whole of community shared approach to tourism. Expanding our tourism community to include our locals as co-experiencers and co-beneficiaries of tourism

Explanation

Some concerns have been expressed about the way in which tourism is being managed for Echuca Moama and District. Membership engagement has been difficult (or lacking) at times, and there has been a sense of unease about membership value. Changes in board membership and CEO are designed to address those concerns and rebuild trust.

Murray Regional Tourism Board, the two councils, EMT and various tourism associations work very well together when there is clarity about who does what, a defined target and campaign approach, and when the tourism industry comes together to overcome shared challenges.

The VIC and EMT depends on the willingness, time and skills of local volunteers to work in the VIC, assist with events, and become Ambassadors for Echuca Moama and District.

In addition, Visiting Friends and Relatives is an increasing reason for visiting and community members can have a very positive and active role in welcoming and sharing the attractions and experiences of the region.

The purpose of this strategy is to actively re-engage with members; develop and embed a two-way industry communication and engagement approach; and build a shared and collaborative approach to tourism.

Key elements of Strategy Two

Membership; stakeholder engagement; staff and volunteers; broader community; industry development

This is inclusive of:

- Strong engagement of the local community
- Build partnerships with local organisations and local businesses including tourism businesses growing the marketing partnerships
- Build relationships with local bloggers
- Empower local community members to use FaceBook and use Instagram to ensure the destination is alive and vibrant.
- Stakeholder engagement with many industry and local community groups
- Skill industry in digital capability

Work with local government to ensure locals are well informed and love the place in which they live as well as communicating with staff and volunteers and the broader

community.

Year One Priorities

- Communication and marketing engagement strategy to build strong relations with the local community, supported by dedicated staff resources to deliver this strategy
- Build a community network of social media supporters to ensure different stories are told to different segments - this strategy to include product/experience development/identify gaps/initiatives packages/ event direction/hub and spoke strategy model
- Review Membership value to ensure retention and growth
- Implement Ambassador Programs with strong community links with an emphasis on service delivery and links with community
- Develop a tactical marketing strategy to promote the value of tourism to the community

Beyond Year One - Building Our Tourism Community

- Continue to grow tourism awareness through campaigns targeting local and regional communities and businesses
- Investigate implementation of a broader based membership model which provides valued benefits and stronger outcomes for the destination.
- Grow cooperative marketing funded opportunities which address growing visitation; length of stay and yield.

STRATEGY THREE : **FOCUSING ON OUR VISITORS**

Objective

Improve the services and experiences at every point of the visitor journey. Build the concept of 'local-hood' for our visitors and locals

Explanation

There are critical elements in the visitor journey that are 'touch points' – moments of time where the consumer experience can be enhanced and made extremely pleasing and memorable. Things which make an outstanding visitor experience are:

- Sense of welcome
- Packaging/ bundling experiences
- Transport
- Accessibility
- Visitor Information and servicing (Visitors & Community as Advocates)
- Digital connectivity
- Product and experience 'fit'

Explanation

Visitor Centres

Visitor Centres (traditionally known as Visitor Information Centres) are being re-imagined. They still need to service

visitors but must be rethought in a digital world. Visitor Centres provide services in person, by phone or online and are the first touch point (if positioned correctly) for visitors. Visitor Centres are the yield makers - VC's through their services keep visitors here longer and encourage them to do more, see more and experience more. They are also the link with the industry - providing reassurance, services and confidence in the industry.

In addition, Visitor Centre's have the ability to inspire locals to make best use of the many, unique and varied experiences on offer in the Echuca Moama region. It is a resource for all and taps into one of our largest market segments - the Visiting Friends and Relatives segment.

- Residents are part of the tourism community, and contribute to it.
- Visitors want to live within the local experience, they want to be a temporary resident.
- This current trend in the tourism industry adds value to the community. Instead of tourism detracting from quality of life, it should enhance it.
- 'Local-hood' is a long-term vision that supports the inclusive co-creation of our future destination.
- We are creating a future destination where human relationships are the focal point. Where locals and visitors not only co-exist, but interact around shared experiences of 'local-hood.'
- 'Local-hood' in practice means that all industries and members of the community responsibly co-create tourism growth between new and existing stakeholders - sharing stories, branding, experiences, everyday interactions with temporary locals, with local-hood as a shared identity and common starting point.

Year One Priorities:

- Visitor Services Review (focusing on visitor global trends and innovation)
- Visitor Servicing Strategy VIC Operational Plan to deliver this
- Clarity about responsibilities in event management and marketing; and product development
- Consumer focused digital strategy and internal business processes to bring digital engagement to life
- Website redevelopment
- Online delivery based marketing strategy
- Internal Facebook communication site
- Social media calendar

Beyond Year One:

- New Campaspe Murray Strategic Destination Management
- Leverage the pending Murray Regional Tourism strategy
- Consumer research - market segmentation
- Implementation of Visitor Servicing Strategy
- Measures - Focusing on Visitors
- Increased online engagement, call to action/purchase/visit, digital sharing
- Increased Visitor satisfaction
- Grow visitation, length of stay, yield, in softer periods of the year
- Ensuring EMT have a plan based on the Trip Cycle which addresses each stage of the Visitor Experience
- Investigate and implement a social media feedback loop



STRATEGY FOUR: DESTINATION MARKETING

Objective

Grow visitation and niche visitor audience to the region through a well defined marketing and event strategy.

This strategy curates the numerous experiences of Echuca Moama to create a more active and contemporary brand.

Link the marketing strategy to identified high yield segments of the market by combining experiences; history/heritage with niche wine and food experiences; cruising experiences; nature based experiences; weddings and branded events in niche audience segments. The identified priority segments and combinations will underpin and inform the marketing strategy.

Other initiatives will be further leveraging regional air access; events tourism; taking advantage of digital capacity; rejuvenation of niche experiences; reactivate regional access via designated 'trails'.

Priorities for Year One.

- Create marketing reference group
- Clearly define market segments i.e. business, consumer, international
- Reinforce our brand through signature events - position Echuca Moama as a major player in regional events (e.g. attract funding and government support)

- Determine a strategy with Campaspe Shire and Murray River Council to fund a dedicated events position to professionalise and attract MAJOR events to the region.
- Determine a strategy to maximise 'events' and the value of 'events', for example the growth over time of the Winter Blues Festival to a New Orleans style international event.
- Increase role of VIC in ticketing major events and grow income streams - eg major festivals and community events.
- Develop an event attraction strategy which grows overnight stays and yield to the tourism sector, in order to tap the funding opportunities in both NSW & Victoria.
- Review regularly digital data to ensure real time visitor behaviour trends are captured. This will inform the strategic marketing direction of EMT.

Beyond Year One:

This strategy will be dependent on the strategic focus and trending from year one.



2018/19 PRIORITIES

The following priorities have been identified as critical to the forward momentum of this Strategic Plan and are targeted for completion by end June 2018:

- Visitor Services Review
- New Visitor Servicing Strategy and VIC Operational Plan
- Leverage from Murray Regional Destination Management Plan to deliver a Campaspe Murray Strategic Destination Management and Marketing Plan (including product development gaps/initiatives/packages; events direction; discussion of 'hub and spoke' model; extent of EMT region)
- Communication and marketing engagement strategy, supported by dedicated staff resource
- Membership retention and growth strategy
- Implement Ambassador Program, to further cement links with community
- Set up robust internal structure for better reporting, communication and industry cohesion
- Establish staff structure, appropriate position descriptions and KPIs
- Put in place sound business practices to deliver strategy.
- Review finances to support strategic directions and put in place 12 month rolling financial goals

STRATEGY : ONE **LEADERSHIP AND ADVOCACY**

Objective:

Ensure Echuca Moama Tourism is a well-governed, high performing, and accountable tourism body which effectively leads and advocates for tourism

Measurable outcomes:

Actions:

	Action	Who	When	Priority
1.1	VIC Lease renewal	Board	Aug - Dec 2018	High
1.2	Renewal of Murray River Council funding agreement	Board	Feb - June 2018	High
1.3	Staff performance reviews, KPIs and training schedule	CEO	June 2018	High
1.4	Develop strong financial guidelines	Board	2018	High
1.5	Active communication and engagement with staff, shires and community and industry	CEO / Board	2018 (Ongoing)	High
1.6	Investigate and develop strategy for broader based revenue streams for EMT	Board and CEO	December 2018	High

STRATEGY TWO: **BUILDING OUR TOURISM COMMUNITY**

Objective:

Develop a whole of region, whole of community shared approach to tourism

Measurable outcomes & Actions:

	Action	Who	When	Priority
2.1	Quarterly industry events, one being AGM	CEO	Quarterly	High
2.2	Review Membership	CEO & Board Membership sub Committee	May - Sept 2018	
2.3	Update website member section with current 2018 membership details, benefits and promotional opportunities	CEO	Part of the web development March - June 2018	High
2.4	Communication & marketing strategy promoting the value of tourism	CEO	Oct 2018	High

STRATEGY THREE: **FOCUSING ON OUR VISITORS**

Objective:

- Share the uniqueness of our locations and experiences with ‘temporary locals’
- Improve the services and experiences at every point of the visitor journey

Measurable outcomes:

- Increase of visitor numbers to 1.8 million visitors per annum, staying for 2.4 million nights per annum by 2022. Build visitation in higher spend market segments and grow markets in “soft” visitation periods.
- Increased average visitor spend, and length of stay, resulting in increased tourism expenditure.
- Visitors connected emotionally and digitally to the region before, during and after their visit

Actions:

	Action	Who	When	Priority
3.1	Upgrade computer system, booking and social media capacity (includes digital strategy)	CEO	Feb/March 2018	High
3.2	Review Visitor Services Strategy	CEO	Feb - June 2018	High
3.3	Develop - operational Plan based on review of Visitor Servicing & Marketing & Communications Plan	CEO	June - Aug 2018	High

STRATEGY FOUR: **DESTINATION MARKETING**

Objective:

- Grow visitation and niche visitor audience to the region through a well defined marketing and event development and attraction strategy.

Measurable outcomes & actions:

	Action	Who	When	Priority
4.1	Create a marketing reference group	CEO	Feb 2018	High
4.2	Define niche market segments and develop an interim marketing strategy	CEO	March 2018	High
4.3	Work with Shires of Campaspe, Murray River Council and MRTB to develop an event development and attraction strategy which aims to grow o/n stays and yield to the tourism sector strengthening EM's brand values	CEO / BOARD	June 2018	High

IMPLEMENTATION & REVIEW PROCESS

Implementation and adoption of this Plan is an extremely important part of the process.

EMT must share this Vision and implementation with its key stakeholders to gain their support and adoption of the Strategy as a whole.

The key stakeholders include

- Shire of Campaspe
- Murray River Council
- Tourism Members
- EMAA
- Major Attractions
- Business Groups - C4EM; Murray Business Traders; Business & Trades; Women's Network Group

An Annual Review of this strategy is important to ensure it is refreshed and relevant to the overall strategy.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX ONE: REFERENCES

- Echuca Moama and District Tourism Strategic Plan (July 2014 - June 2017)
- Echuca Moama Regional Tourism Join the Team Membership Prospectus (2017)
- Echuca Moama Regional Tourism Join the Team Membership Prospectus (2016)
- Echuca Moama Visitor Information Centre Business Plan (2016-2017)
- Murray Regional Tourism Board Murray Regional Tourism Destination Management Plan (July 2012)
- Murray Regional Tourism Strategic Plan (2015-2020)
- Murray Regional Tourism Travel to the Murray Region Quarterly Tracking of Selected Measures (Year ended March 2017)
- Murray Shire Council Three Year Service Agreement - Murray Shire Council and EMDTA (2015/16 to 2017/18)
- Campaspe Shire, EMDTA Service Agreement Destination Marketing Services (July 2016 - June 2019)
- Campaspe Shire, EMDTA Service Agreement Visitor Services (July 2016 - June 2019)
- Shire of Campaspe, Murray Shire Council Regional Strategic Marketing Plan (2012-2106)
- Urban Enterprise Bendigo Region Destination Management Plan (2015)
- Victorian State Government Victorian Visitor Economy Strategy Action Plan (2016-2020)
- Wonderful Copenhagen The End of Tourism as we Know it -
<http://localhood.wonderfulcopenhagen.dk/wonderful-copenhagen-strategy-2020.pdf>

[1] Data provided by EMT, July 2017

[2] National Visitors Survey, year ending March 2017, Tourism Research Australia



Echuca Moama
The Murray's living legend

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