

15 May 2007

The Hon. Damian Drum MLC
Chair
Rural & Regional Committee
Parliament House
Spring Street
MELBOURNE Vic 3002

Dear Damian

Response to Parliamentary Inquiry into Rural and Regional Committee Tourism

Thank you for the opportunity to take part in your investigations into rural tourism. Clubs Victoria (ClubsVIC) is the umbrella organization for some 500 clubs in Victoria, including about 50% which are in your "target" area.

Having received your letter dated 19 April, 2007, we forwarded it to each of our rural and regional clubs for their feedback and are pleased to provide the following.....

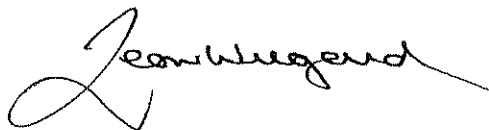
- a) Clubs believe that they are the sole providers of the bulk of sporting facilities that would attract visitors to their area and that they require assistance from Government to develop those facilities to attract greater tourism traffic.
- b) Golf clubs, particularly those in the general area of the Murray, are of the opinion that Victoria is letting a significant amount of tourism income to be generated by NSW by not having a plan to jointly develop the facilities on our side of the border. (It should be noted that the NSW border golf clubs were, in large, developed by Victorian EGM players and golf tourists in the first place, therefore the "market" is there for first class golf facilities and accommodation on our side of the border).
- c) Selected clubs could be a safe, friendly base for tourists to country areas and provide the local knowledge & support required by tourists. However, such a "Local Tourism Office" scheme would require discussion between Government, Tourism Victoria and ClubsVIC. ClubsVIC would be pleased to facilitate such discussions.
- d) Some clubs were concerned about the lack of tourism officials or facilities in their area and perhaps the scheme outlined above would satisfy that requirement for the promotion of tourism within our State.

- e) Many clubs have the basic infrastructure to provide tourism services and would require only modest assistance to become vital cogs in the rural and regional tourism network.

Other clubs mentioned the need for more promotion and/or development of existing sporting and cultural events which are organized by clubs who do not have the funds to do so alone—many such events could be substantial regional attractions. These could be jointly identified by ClubsVIC and Tourism Victoria with an action plan and budget plan developed.

We hope the above is of some interest to your Committee and stand prepared to assist your work in any way we can.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Leon Wiegard". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "L" and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Leon Wiegard
President
Clubs Victoria Inc.