

Kiewa Valley Experience Inc.

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KVE Inc is a group of passionate & experienced tourism operators in the Kiewa Valley (KV), NE Victoria who have been forced to create their own tourist entity because the local & state Tourism bodies are ineffective in meeting our needs, and the needs of our visitors.

Key Points

- 1. Failure of icon towns to effectively filter tourists into surrounding areas**
- 2. Lack of publicity outside of these icon towns**
- 3. Lack of tourist & Vic Road signage**
- 4. Exclusion of destinations such as Mt. Beauty, Falls Creek & the Kiewa Valley on official tourism maps such as the *Vic Tourism Escape Map & Sydney – Melbourne Touring Route***
- 5. Ineffectiveness of *Bushfire & Drought Funding***
- 6. Credibility of shire based tourism officers**
- 7. Lack of effective public & tourism industry consultation by Vic Tourism**

Expansion of Key Points

- 1. Vic Tourism's idea of icon towns unfortunately provides little if any trickle down visitations to surrounding regional areas. Tourists often only find these other destinations by pure chance. There is no obvious mechanism to purposefully move tourists to non icon areas. This philosophy is lazy marketing. All it does is attract tourists to places they already go to. What's the point if they are not directed to less trafficked areas?**
- 2. Publicity is mainly focused on these icon towns & not outside their boundaries. Nearly every journalist that comes to NE Victoria visits only towns such as Beechworth, Bright, Milawa & Rutherglen. When they venture outside these areas they have little time or energy left to do justice to our offerings. Most journalists would have no idea of the exciting destinations that exist within a half hours drive of the icon towns. Journalists seem to be unduly influenced by the best freebies on offer. Many of the State & Federal tourism campaigns fail to effectively include regional areas like ours.**
- 3. In our region there is a lack of tourism signs. The only signed exit to a tourism destination off the new Hume Freeway (Albury-Wodonga Bypass) is to Tallangatta. Not Snow Fields, Beechworth, Yackandandah, Mt Beauty, Falls Creek etc. The Kiewa Valley Hwy runs the length of the valley & there is not one sign to indicate the KV Hwy. We need consistent, clear signage to direct our visitors. Good signage helps drive tourism.**
- 4. The Kiewa Valley, one of Australia's most beautiful valleys that leads from Alb-Wod to Falls Creek (which is Victoria's largest ski field) does not exist on official Vic tourism maps such as the Vic Tourism Escape Map. We understand that our local Tourism authority will not support our inclusion for as yet unknown reasons. The newly released Sydneymelbournetouring website goes to the extent of leaving a black hole in its maps instead of directing tourists down the obvious Kiewa Valley route.**

- 5. Ineffectiveness of bushfire & drought funding. Most of the funding has no real benefit to the industry stakeholders. There is a failure to understand that we don't need city based consultants with little or no knowledge of regional tourism coming & telling us how to run our businesses. We need ongoing support & real time funding for such things as advertising, mapping and signage. Don't give us another useless report.**

- 6. We have been forced into forming & funding our own tourism body because of the failure of Shire employed tourism officers, and the recognized State & Federal Tourism bodies to adequately address the real issues & needs of regional tourism operators in the whole Kiewa Valley. Shire based tourism officers generally have little practical experience within the tourism industry. Their commitment to forging new ideas is often limited by Shire boundaries & by the lack of any meaningful direction from Vic Tourism. There is a rapid turnover of staff in these positions so few ongoing plans are ever realized. Their lack of support for non icon areas, enables State and Federal tourism bodies to deny support or recognition to these areas.**

- 7. There is a lack of effective public & industry consultation by Vic Tourism. The pursuit of the icon town campaign and the ineffective bushfire relief shows a lack of comprehension of the issues faced by Tourism operators in our region and similar non icon regions. We want practical help and support and recognition that there is life over that hill.**