

GIPPSLAND TOURISM STRATEGIC DIRECTION 2013-2018



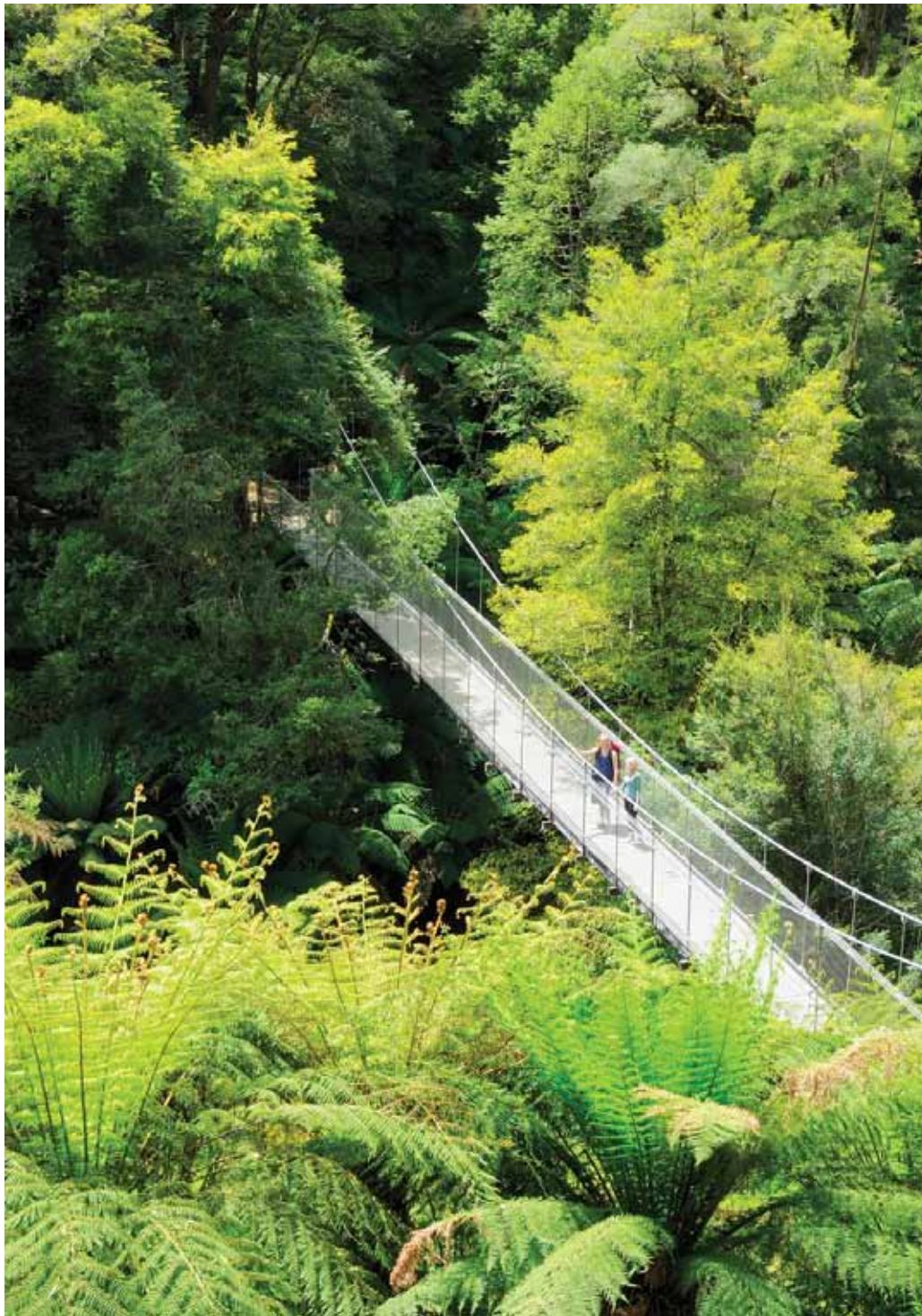




GIPPSLAND TOURISM STRATEGIC DIRECTION 2013-2018

The Gippsland Tourism Strategic Direction is a plan to build the competitiveness of the Gippsland tourism industry for the next five years. It aims to generate economic benefits to the region and outlines priorities for new product and destination development, marketing and visitor service excellence. The Strategic Direction has been developed after consultation with a wide range of industry and government stakeholders. This plan is aligned with the Gippsland Regional Plan and the Tourism Victoria Regional Strategy. It identifies actions that will benefit the region as a whole.

The implementation will be led by Destination Gippsland and done collaboratively with the support of industry, Tourism Victoria, Parks Victoria and the six member councils of the Gippsland Local Government Network (Bass Coast, South Gippsland, Baw Baw, Latrobe City, Wellington and East Gippsland Councils). The Strategic Direction will be complemented by an annual review process and more detailed action plans including budget allocations and performance measures.



VISION

Tourism will be valued throughout Gippsland for its significant contribution to the region's economic, social, environmental and cultural sustainability. This will be achieved by the combined efforts of the sector to deliver outstanding visitor experiences.

TOURISM – A VITAL PART OF THE GIPPSLAND ECONOMY

The Gippsland Visitor Economy generates an estimated \$2.8 billion in direct and indirect expenditure per annum. It creates approximately 15,000 jobs from over 3,000 businesses that derive the majority of their income from visitors. These businesses cover accommodation, tours and transport, food, hospitality, retail and attractions. Gippsland attracts a total of 10.8 million visitors each year. This includes 5.4 million day trippers and 5.4 million overnight visitors. These figures include an estimated 2.7 million visitors staying in holiday homes and 348,000 with friends and relatives which previously haven't been recorded. Since 2008 visitation to Gippsland has increased by 10.1% predominantly on the strength of the growing daytrip market.

Source: Urban Enterprise Gippsland Economic Impact of Tourism Study, November 2012

TOURISM OBJECTIVES

The following five tourism objectives will guide the region's strategic priorities and goals:

1. To increase overnight visitation – from 5.4 million to a target level of 5.7 million overnight visitors per annum
2. To increase visitor expenditure – from \$2.8 billion to a target level of \$3 billion in direct and indirect expenditure per annum
3. To increase length of stay – from 2.8 days to a target level of 2.9 days per visitor
4. To increase dispersal (geographical and seasonal)
5. To increase visitor satisfaction

Note: To increase dispersal and visitor satisfaction we first need to establish an accepted measurement system and benchmark.



CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR SUCCESS

The Gippsland and Australian tourism industry has been operating in a challenging economic environment in recent years. However there are opportunities that Gippsland can pursue. In the development of this Strategic Direction, tourism industry and government leaders were asked to rate the performance of the Gippsland tourism sector compared with the most successful regional tourism destinations in Australia.

The results show that Gippsland has performed well by having:

- A regional tourism organisation focused on its core role of regional marketing and development
- Local government support
- Strong, consistent and effective leadership by individuals and organisations

The region was considered to perform satisfactorily in regards to:

- Consistent visitor services excellence
- Research driven cooperative marketing
- Risk management plans

There is an opportunity to improve Gippsland's performance in the:

- Breadth and depth of tourism infrastructure, products and events matched to market demand
- Strength of local tourism organisations focused on their core role of visitor servicing
- Strategic planning for the region with economic, social, environmental and cultural objectives supported by local destination plans
- Community's understanding of the value of tourism

Source: Success factors for regional tourism, Wayne Kayler-Thomson 2012

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

To achieve our vision, objectives and goals we will pursue three priority areas over the next five years:

- 1. PRODUCT AND DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT**
- 2. VISITOR SERVICE EXCELLENCE**
- 3. MARKETING**

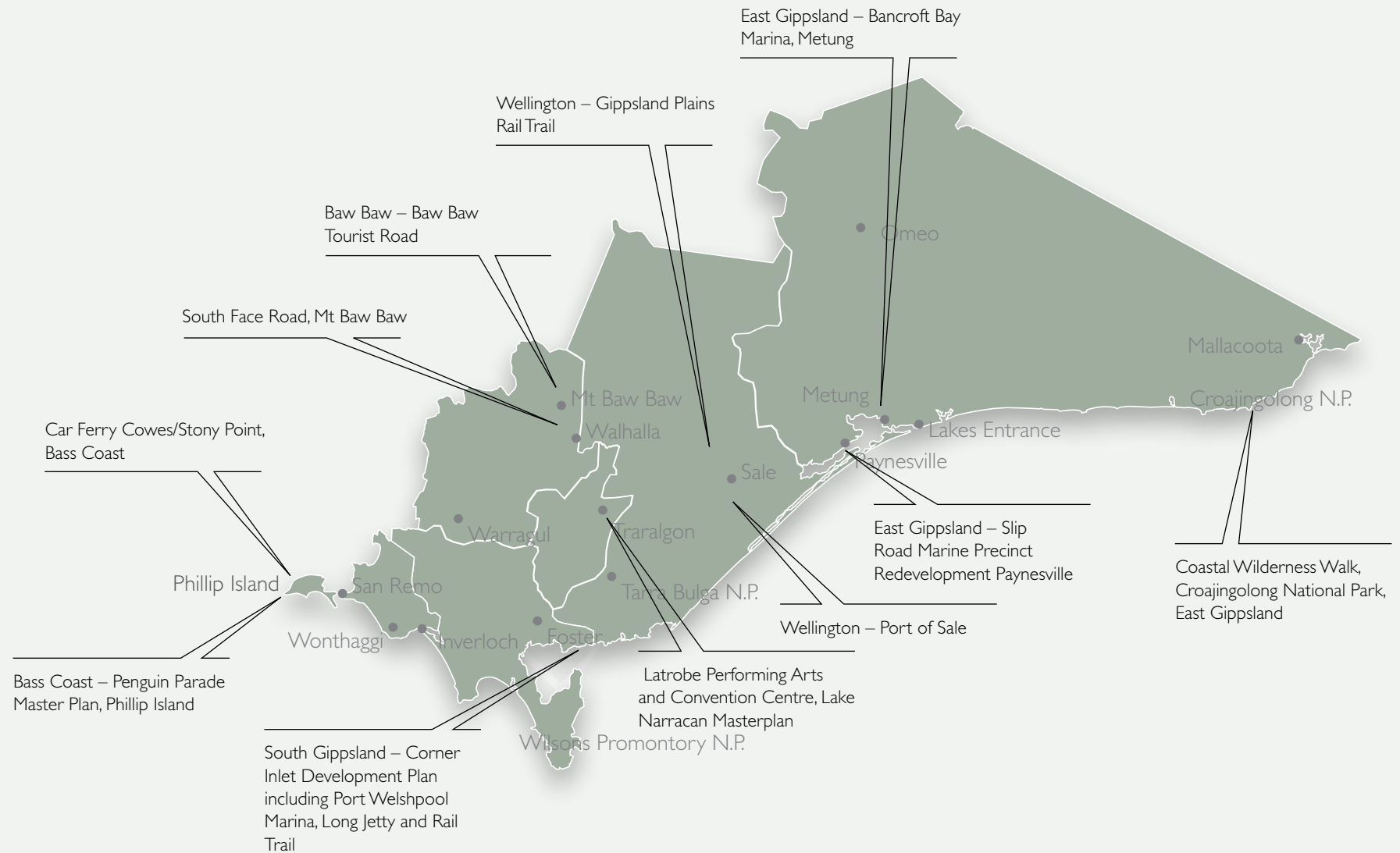


1. PRODUCT AND DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT

Key goal: Identify and facilitate investment in new and improved tourism infrastructure and visitor experiences

Action	Approach	Measures	Responsibility	Timing
1. Develop a Gippsland Tourism Infrastructure Plan	<p>We will use the approved and objective 'Tourism Infrastructure Assessment Tool' on a quarterly basis for proposed projects. A gap analysis will also be undertaken to complement the 'known' projects and identify what investment is needed. Other development opportunities will also be part of Local Destination Action Plans (see Action 5 below).</p> <p>Results from the first round of public infrastructure project assessments include:</p> <p>Regional priority projects with high tourism potential:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Car Ferry Cowes/Stony Point, Bass Coast • South Face Road, Mt Baw Baw • Coastal Wilderness Walk, Croajingolong National Park, East Gippsland • Penguin Parade Master Plan, Phillip Island <p>Local area priority projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South Gippsland – Corner Inlet Development Projects including Port Welshpool Marina, Long Jetty and Rail Trail • Baw Baw – Baw Baw Tourist Road • Latrobe Performing Arts and Convention Centre, Lake Narracan Strategic Direction • Wellington – Port of Sale development and completion of Gippsland Plains Rail Trail • East Gippsland – Bancroft Bay Marina Metung and the Slip Road Marine Precinct Redevelopment Paynesville 	Plan completed; quarterly reviews based on assessable information; product gaps to have follow up actions as part of gap analysis	Destination Gippsland (DG), Gippsland Local Government Network (GLGN), Regional Development Victoria (RDV), Tourism Victoria (TV).	<p>Plan completed 2013/14</p> <p>Implementation ongoing to 2017/18</p>
2. Develop a strong regional events calendar	Work with existing event managers and networks to develop and implement a Gippsland Events Strategy. This would focus on event acquisition, development of existing events and researching future opportunities. The calendar would also include conferences and sporting events.	Aim for 8 significant tourism events per year which attract 30% of visitors from outside the region	DG, GLGN, Gippsland Events Network (GEN)	By 2015/16

GIPPSLAND TOURISM INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS (public sector)



1. PRODUCT AND DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT *Continued*

Action	Approach	Measures	Responsibility	Timing
3. Facilitate business and product partnerships to create new visitor experiences	Create opportunities for accommodation, attractions and services to generate new tourism products. This would include the development of visitor packages and 'best of' experiences that can be purchased by the domestic visitor or international trade. Product themes will include nature based recreation and adventure activities, accessible (inclusive) tourism experiences, arts and culture (including indigenous), food and wine and family attractions.	Increased number of packages offered; development of new programs and products across the region	DG, Tourism Associations (TA's) and individual Local Government Authorities (LGA's)	2013/14 Ongoing
4. Deliver a 'Value of Tourism' communications plan to the local community	Co-ordinate a comprehensive program of information and advocacy throughout Gippsland. Key messages would include the economic impacts of tourism measured in expenditure, businesses involved and employment.	Plan completed with at least monthly media statements and regular government and community briefings.	DG, TA's, LGA's Victoria Tourism Industry Council (VTIC)	2013/14 Ongoing
5. Develop a series of Local Destination Action Plans that align with the Gippsland Strategic Direction	Undertake a Pilot Local Destination Action Plan in a key location in the first year. The lessons will then be applied to a series of LDAP's that provide local relevance and 'on the ground' activity to support the Strategic Direction. Each LDAP would engage local business and community leaders and focus on the overall experience of the visitor and the capacity for the destination to deliver. This includes product needs, industry service standards, community support and education, business case development and infrastructure improvements.	Completion of Pilot LDAP and Case Study analysis	DG, TA's, LGA's	Pilot 2013/14 Annual program

2. VISITOR SERVICE EXCELLENCE

Key goal: Gippsland will deliver outstanding visitor management services with the most effective allocation of resources from all stakeholders

Action	Approach	Measures	Responsibility	Timing
1. Develop a Gippsland Tourist Town Program based on a locally driven accreditation system	The pilot program will focus on visitor service excellence and will identify and assist towns that meet a newly developed criteria and audit process. There will also be marketing support and recognition of those towns that reach the identified standard.	Acceptance as pilot program for State; support of GLGN member Councils;	DG,TV, GLGN, TA's, LGA's	2013/14 Ongoing
2. Facilitate the evolution of the tourism management structure in Gippsland	Consult with stakeholders on future structures, roles and resourcing of all tourism related organisations in Gippsland. Recommendations for improvement will be based on Australian benchmarks and recognised 'Success Factors for Regional Tourism'. Emphasis will be on future visitor needs, efficient use of resources and industry connection.	Policy paper adopted by DG Board, Gippsland Local Government Network and Tourism Victoria	DG, GLGN,TV, TA's, LGA's	Commence in 2013/14
3. Create a new Gippsland Tourism Leadership Program	Develop a comprehensive leadership program that focuses on four target groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism business owners/managers from across all of Gippsland • Professional tourism management for Tourism, Event and Economic Development Officers employed in local government and industry associations • Local destination leaders. These would be connected to Local Destination Action Plans and identify a small number of community and business leaders to be provided initial direction and support before working on a local tourism project or issue. • Governance and leadership mentoring for tourism industry associations (for those in voluntary leadership roles) 	Establishment of program feedback from participants and objective stakeholders; completion of projects	DG, Regional Development Victoria,TV, GLGN	2014/15 Ongoing
4. Develop a Gippsland Visitor Information Services Plan	Provide a co-ordinated review and long term plan for the provision of all visitor information across Gippsland. This will complement the work done by the State VIC Reference Group. The focus would be to plan the next 5-10 years and include an assessment of the best methods of information delivery, consistency of service, measurement and the role of technology in visitor information.	Completion of plan Implementation of recommendations	DG,VTIC,TV,Visitor Information Centre Network, GLGN	2014/15
5. Implement a Gippsland Tourism Risk Management Plan	Be proactive in the 'prepare, respond and recovery' phases of risk and crisis management. This includes identifying and classifying potential risks, developing mitigation strategies with relevant agencies and media, and co-ordinating Tourism Response and Recovery Groups as required.	Completion and acceptance of plan by GLGN	DG,TV,VTIC,TA's	2013/14 Ongoing

2. VISITOR SERVICE EXCELLENCE *Continued*

Action	Approach	Measures	Responsibility	Timing
6. Deliver a comprehensive Industry Development Program for tourism businesses	Create a culture of 'quality and service' that continually drives up standards, visitor satisfaction and yield. Program to include: Gippsland Tourism Conference; Tourism Excellence workshops and information; Research (Holiday Homes, Visitation, Economic Impacts); Industry Health Surveys; Victorian Tourism Awards mentoring; Business and Town Audits (Mystery Shopper Program); Skills, employment and career path development in partnership with the education sector.	Increasing business numbers from professional development events; improved visitor satisfaction levels via surveys; greater engagement with training providers; improve skill level of tourism sector workforce	DG, TV, VTIC, LGA's, TA's	2013/14 and 2014/15
7. Facilitate a whole of government approach to strategic tourism projects	Use networks such as the Regional Managers Forum and develop systems that encourage all relevant government agencies to work together on specific tourism projects and issues. This would include Parks Victoria, Department of Environment and Primary Industries, Tourism Victoria, Gippsland Ports, Regional Development Victoria and Australia, Gippsland Lakes Ministerial Advisory Committee, Gippsland Coastal Board, Vic Roads, Local Governments, Committee for Gippsland and connections to industry and community.	Level of co-ordination and multi-agency support for major tourism projects. Identification and acceptance of joint responsibility.	DG, Regional Managers Forum (RMF), RDV, RDA, GLGN	2013/14
8. Create benchmarks for the measurement of visitor dispersal and satisfaction	Work with Visitor Information Centres, key attractions and selected locations to collect primary data.	Establishment of new benchmarking system and results; sustainable collection and accuracy of data	LGA's, TA's, VIC's, DG	2013/14

3. MARKETING

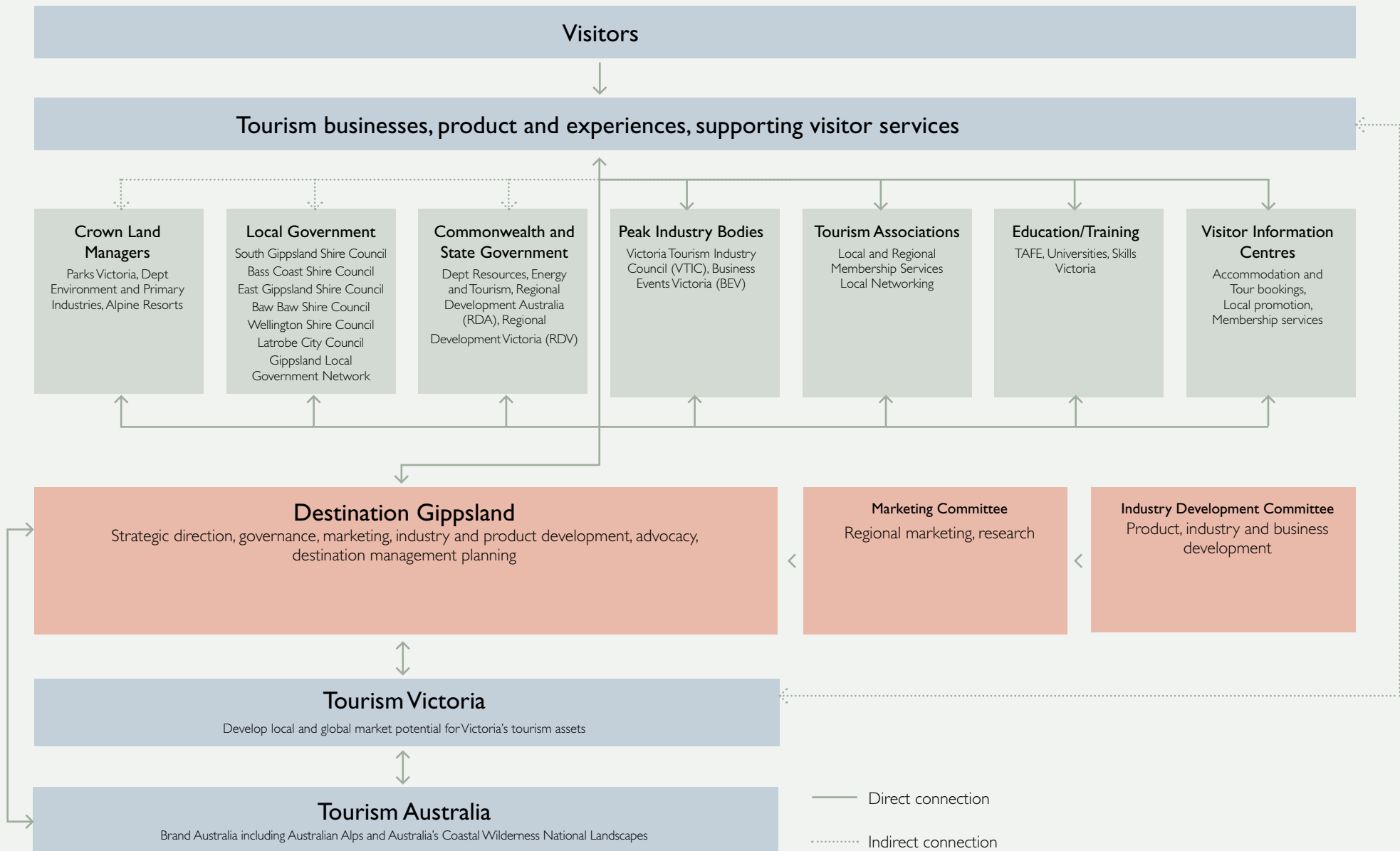
Key goal: Market Gippsland using research and methods that focus on increasing visitor numbers, yield and dispersal from target markets.

Action	Approach	Measures	Responsibility	Timing
1. Implement the current Gippsland Tourism Marketing Plan 2012-2015	Maintain the Inspired by Gippsland brand as the foundation of all regional tourism marketing. Balance efforts on attracting new markets and growing existing ones. Deliver activities based on seven key product segments (Touring/Villages; Walking and cycling; Boating, fishing and coastal; Accessible; Camping and caravanning; International trade; Visiting friends and relatives).	Plan adopted by Marketing Committee and Board; National and International Visitor Survey data; Committee approval and majority stakeholder support; Gippsland Economic Profile data; Visitor Information Centres (for dispersal statistics)	DG, TV, GLGN, TA's, Industry partners	2013/14 Annual
2. Develop a cooperative marketing model that encourages industry participation	In addition to regional marketing activities undertaken in action 1, provide an opportunity for industry to participate and contribute to co-operative marketing programs. These co-operative opportunities should be tiered to reflect different levels of engagement such as Level 1: Basic database and communications; Level 2: Website and digital platform inclusions; Level 3: Domestic tactical opportunities; Level 4: International trade program; Level 5: Brand.	Co-operative marketing prospectus released by June; increasing number of participants involved and/or revenue targets generated in all six levels	DG, TV, TA's, GLGN, Industry partners	2013/14 Ongoing
3. Improve industry conversion and booking strategies to complement marketing activities	Focus on digital technology and consumer channels that increase the Gippsland accommodation sector's booking capability. This includes: websites, smart phone applications, Visitor Information Centres and improving individual business practices to develop responsive booking systems.	Strategies prepared by June each year within Marketing Action Plan; increase in bookings via 'measurable' channels	DG, TV, GLGN, TA's, Visitor Information Centres (VIC's)	2013/4 to 2014/15
4. Grow international markets to Gippsland	Prepare an International Marketing Plan that continues to invest in international marketing and industry development. The primary market remains the UK/Europe however the region needs to prepare for the opportunities available in the growing Asian markets. Retain support of Sydney Melbourne Touring and develop alliances with neighbouring regions (South Coast NSW, Phillip Island, North East Victoria and Melbourne).	Completion of annual action plan by June each year. Measured against International Visitor Survey data with a focus on yield.	DG, TV, Sydney Melbourne Touring (SMT), Industry partners	2013/14 Ongoing

3. MARKETING *Continued*

Action	Approach	Measures	Responsibility	Timing
5. Continue to use 'Inspired by Gippsland' as the brand position for the region	Extend the use and provide flexible options of the 'Inspired by Gippsland' brand to sub-regions and other industry sectors. Co-ordinate and encourage the industry associations and overall tourism structure to support the brand position.	Develop at least two new brand partnerships each year that leverage the Inspired by Gippsland brand position	DG,TV, GLGN, TA's and industry partners	2013/14 Ongoing
6. Develop Accessible Tourism as a market segment	Implement the Gippsland Accessible Tourism Plan so that the region will be widely recognised as having a significant range of accessible (inclusive) tourism products.	Review against the milestones and implementation goals within the Gippsland Accessible Tourism Plan	DG,TV, GLGN, Gippsland Accessible Tourism Group (GATG)	2013/14 Ongoing

GIPPSLAND'S TOURISM STRUCTURE



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