

# Tourism East Industry Advisory Committee

## Terms of Reference

### TOURISM EAST

Tourism East is the newly formed Visitor Economy Partnership (VEP) for the local government areas of Yarra Ranges, Nillumbik and Cardinia Shires. The organisation has been established as part of the Victorian Government's Visitor Economy Recovery and Reform plan. VEPs have been established throughout Victoria to act as the leading bodies for all visitor economy related matters, fostering statewide collaboration and strategic planning.

Transition to a VEP aims to enhance the functions of previously existing regional tourism boards, in this instance Yarra Ranges Tourism Limited, to optimise marketing expenditure, facilitate and implement actions in the region's Destination Management Plan (DMP), and fortify the tourism offerings of the region to build a resilient sector that supports sustainable growth. This includes the development of new experiences, products and infrastructure to attract more international, interstate and intrastate visitors while balancing the needs of local communities.

The region is well known for its diversity of tourism product with particular emphasis on its natural environment and attractions, its diverse range of quality food, beverage and cultural offerings, and its proximity to Melbourne. The region is well known locally and globally as a premium wine destination.

#### Tourism Information

The value of tourism to the Tourism East region is some \$855 million annually. There are more than 4000 businesses across the region who participate in the visitor economy and there are more than 9,000 people employed in the region's visitor economy.

Average visitor numbers annually are in the order of 4.6 million and average visitor nights across the region total some 2.5 million.

#### Tourism East Limited

Tourism East was established on 1 July 2025 and is a new organisation whilst effectively taking over the previously existing responsibilities of Yarra Ranges Tourism Limited. Tourism East's purpose is to work collaboratively to support a vibrant, thriving and sustainable visitor economy while maintaining the region's natural beauty for the benefit of our businesses, visitors and the community.

The purpose of Tourism East is accomplished through four core priority areas:

- Visitor attraction.
- Industry support, growth, and resilience.
- Product development and investment attraction.
- Advocacy for the region.

The organisation now has broader geographic responsibilities as a result of the participation of Cardinia Shire, in addition to Yarra Ranges and Nillumbik Shires. In this context the organisation is not starting

from scratch and current staff of Yarra Ranges Tourism have transferred to the new entity from 1 July 2025.

Tourism East Limited is governed by a Board of Directors, which provides the organisation with leadership and direction and oversees its operations.

A CEO manages the organisation's operations with a relatively small team of staff.

The Board consists of:

- An Independent Chair
- Three Local Government CEOs
- Up to four industry partner members
- Up to three skills-based members
- A State Government representative from the Department of Jobs Skills Industry and Regions (DJSIR). This position is an observer on the board and does not have voting rights.

The Board's role includes:

- Setting the organisation's goals and strategic direction and monitoring achievements against agreed targets and deliverables.
- Providing strategic oversight for the implementation of the Destination Management Plan for the Region.
- Establishing and overseeing the implementation of the Board's policies and procedures.
- Supporting the CEO in industry engagement and stakeholder management.
- Advocating on behalf of the Region in relation to the visitor economy and its growth.
- Ensuring legal compliance, sound financial monitoring and good governance.
- Fulfilling all fiduciary duties expected of a Board for this type and scale of organisation.
- Actively supporting the growth of the visitor economy across the Region.

#### Tourism East Industry Advisory Committee

As part of the transition to the new Tourism East organisation an Industry Advisory Committee is being established.

The Committee will be comprised of at least two Board members and a number of tourism industry representatives.

The key role of the Industry Advisory Committee is to be a forum to assist the Board with the development and implementation of its strategic plan, by keeping partners informed of the work of the Board and enabling members of the Industry Advisory Committee to provide feedback and propose ideas for the Board to pursue.

The Industry Advisory Committee is advisory in nature and can only make recommendations to the Board.

The Committee's purpose is to:

- Provide advice that assists with the development of tourism strategies that relate to the core priority areas of Tourism East, such as the Strategic Plan and Destination Management Plan.

- Provide advice on regional visitor economy related issues that also have an impact on the wider community.
- Act as a primary conduit for representation of local tourism industry operators to the Board.
- Act as an ambassador for Tourism East throughout the regional tourism industry.

The committee's primary purpose is to act as a regional strategic advisory body rather than determine day to day operations of the organisation.

A review of the Industry Advisory Committee will occur after 12 months of the Committee being established.

The initial appointment for committee members will be for up to 2 years and may be eligible for re appointment.

The Tourism East Board will invite applications for membership of the advisory committee through media and local government publications.

Applicants seeking to nominate for membership of the Committee should demonstrate that they meet the following selection criteria:

- Reside and/or work within the Local Government areas of Yarra Ranges, Nillumbik and/or Cardinia Shire.
- Have experience in and an understanding of the tourism industry.
- Are interested to further advance the tourism industry within the region.
- Be able to work as part of a team, be respected by others and able to influence in constructive and positive ways.

It is also preferable that applicants demonstrate one or more of the following:

- Demonstrated capability as an existing or emerging leader.
- An understanding of the principles of sound governance for community and business groups.
- Strong communication and engagement skills.
- A willingness and ability to commit for the required term of 2 years.

#### Role of Committee Members:

- Attendance and active participation in meetings with a total of 4 meetings per year.
- It is expected that each member will attend a minimum of 75% of all meetings, unless valid reasons are provided to the chairperson.
- Take an active role in communicating the views of business and organisations to the committee.

All committee members have an advisory role and do not hold any authority to make decisions or commitments on behalf of Tourism East.