

SAVANNAH GUIDES



Protectors and Interpreters of the Outback

26 April 2004

The General Manager
Adjudication Branch
Australian Competition and Consumer Commission

Dear Sir

RE: Application for Authorisation lodged by ITR in relation to accredited tourism businesses (A90912 and A90913). Your Ref: C2004/436

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the above application. Savannah Guides is a network of tour operators and guides in the Tropical Savannahs of Northern Australia, working to develop sustainable, community based tourism. Our members deal with a diverse domestic and international client group, and range from single person part-time walks and fishing tours to QR Traveltrain. Over fifteen years we have developed a training and accreditation framework that now includes ATAA accreditation. Our members are successful across their triple bottom lines, and include Australian Tourism Award winners.

The Application for Authorisation brings to a decision point an important issue for the Australian tourism industry as it works to become more competitive internationally. It is an important opportunity for the industry to move forward. The approval of the Authorisation would improve consumer awareness about quality and risk, and result in greater choice in tourism products and services.

There are also benefits to potential, fledgling and existing tour operators through the provision of guidelines and choices concerning which level they would like to participate at. Some businesses will have their needs met without becoming accredited. Those who undertake the ATAA endorsed accreditation will have reviewed their business at a basic level, ensured they are operating legally and identified a pathway that includes operating in the wider industry. Through this process businesses become more competitive and consumer focused. The ATAA "stepping stone" can lead to sectoral accreditation and higher industry participation. Overall businesses have more positioning options, overall standards are raised and the consumer is far better served.

Savannah Guides Limited endorses each element of ITR's supporting submission, and has witnessed the public benefits and associated industry development in our own model. We strongly support the Application.

Yours sincerely
SAVANNAH GUIDES LIMITED

Russell Boswell
President