

**Submission
No 153**

**ADEQUACY OF THE REGULATION OF SHORT-TERM
HOLIDAY LETTING IN NEW SOUTH WALES**

Name: Mr Bill Mitchell

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We refer to the present Parliamentary Inquiry into Short Term Holiday Letting ("STHL").

We share the Inquiry's objectives of making sure that any new regulation of short-term holiday letting delivers better outcomes for everyone involved, as well as ensuring that local economies continue to grow.

As responsible property owners we believe we have a right to let our property when we want to, short term or long term, providing that our property is managed responsibly.

We have witnessed first hand and been a part of the growth of the sharing economy with online platforms like Airbnb and Stayz. It is true to say that people are changing the way they book their holidays and rent out their homes.

We have responded to these changes in terms of better self regulation ([REDACTED]) to ensure acceptable standards of customer safety and neighbourhood amenity.

Our credentials are based on 6 years of successful and responsible holiday letting in Byron Bay. We initially tried to rent out our house to permanent renters over a 6 month period. Since we are in the centre of town (with the associated noise and traffic issues), permanent renters don't want to live there unless it is at such a low rate that we could not pay our mortgage. This will become worse when Council implements its Preferred Bypass Route past our house.

Also the sheer extent of current backpacker's accommodation in Byron Bay makes it impossible to live in and maintain a full time job as we tried to do for 4 years.

Short term rental does not provide a windfall but in fact a loss..... a loss that we wear because we also regularly at least 4 times a year, stay in our home to ensure that it is maintained in a professional safe atmosphere and to retain our links to the area we love.

We rent our property to a variety of tourist groups from families, wedding groups, festival goers and overseas tourists. Many are returning guests. Like the vast majority of STHL properties, we do so without neighbourhood amenity problems.

The number of complaints directed at STHL dwellings in Byron Bay is less than 1% of the occupancy nights.

Short term rental provides a significant contribution to the Byron Bay economy. We provide reliable and regular employment and income to many local people and businesses including cleaners, maintenance and local tradesman, linen and catering companies

The current Byron Shire Council draft strategy demonstrates a lack of understanding of Short Term Holiday Letting ("STHL"). This is likely due to the flawed consultation process (i.e. no consultation with experienced people such as ourselves).

One of the major myths about short term rental is that it is a financial bonanza. However, for most the reality is that, from an investment perspective, they would be better off letting on a permanent basis. Why don't they do this? Because they also use the dwelling for their family needs.

The proposal to apply two strikes and you're out for an owner of a dwelling being short term rented is not practical nor fair and equitable.

We propose that the Government avoids the problems associated with allowing individual regulatory strategies involving changes to the individual LEPs and gives statutory power to the Code of Conduct. This would effectively provide a legal

instrument to serve the STRA sector and its guests as the Residential Tenancy Act does for long term rentals, over 90 days.

In line with NSW Government endorsement of self-regulation of STHL, we recommend that the future short term rental strategy include:

- In-depth consultation with the visitor industry, property owners and the NSW State Government will ensure that the best behavioural management will be implemented.
- The minimum of extra regulation in accordance with best practice government.



Yours sincerely

Bill and Cane Mitchell