

14 September 2022

Via Email: TourismITP@mbie.govt.nz

SUBMISSION TO THE MINISTRY OF BUSINESS INNOVATION AND EMPLOYMENT ON THE HE MAHERE TIAKI KAIMAHI – BETTER WORK ACTION PLAN

Kia ora,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit feedback on He Mahere Tiaki Kaimahi – the Tourism Better Work Action Plan.

There is some clear alignment in purpose between the abovementioned plan and the Queenstown Lakes District's draft Destination Management Plan 'Tourism for a better future'. This Plan aims to create a regenerative future for tourism where the industry consistently gives back more than it takes from people, communities, and the environment. Queenstown Lakes District Council, Destination Queenstown and Lake Wānaka Tourism would like to see some balance between short term solutions and the longer-term action and investment required to transition towards the goals outlined in the plan.

Given that almost 60%¹ of all jobs in the Queenstown Lakes District are in the tourism industry, the district is well placed and very keen to support and pilot initiatives such as the adoption of technology and recognition of skills gained in the industry. However, the sector is currently facing extreme labour shortages.

The following feedback and input represent the views of Council Officers and members of our Business Advisory Group for the development of the Destination Management Strategy and has not been ratified by full Council.

For ease of reference, we have provided comment to each of the proposed Tirohanga Hou attached as Annex A.

Kind regards,



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¹ Infometrics 2019, 'tourism share of employment' <https://ecoprofile.infometrics.co.nz/Queenstown-Lakes%2bDistrict/Tourism/TourismEmployment>

ANNEX A

1.0 Tourism and Hospitality Accord

- 1.1 We broadly support the development of an accord. However, the accord needs to be clear, accessible, and work alongside the many other accreditation frameworks in the industry².
- 1.2 Both consumer and employee feedback should be included as part of the reporting and assessment process. The main benefit of the accord will be in staff attraction and retention rather than consumer recognition.

2.0 Promoting a purpose-driven, intergenerational mindset

- 2.1 We support this approach and considers that the Te Ao Māori values approach is important and guardianship, manaakitanga, whanaungatanga should be at the core of the visitor economy.

3.0 Enabling better work through innovation and technology

- 3.1 We strongly support this element of the proposed plan. As a sector, better understanding of the barriers for adoption of new technology is needed. It is not necessarily just scale of the business, but also customer demand and service practice, time to implement, and cost that will impact uptake and effectiveness. Businesses may need to witness proof of concept and will require support in making implementation of new technology seamless, particularly where it includes an initial investment of time and money.
- 3.2 Queenstown Lakes is very keen to be a pilot region for any projects in this area and has already led the charge with the adoption of tourism and hospitality technology. Queenstown Lakes has a role to play in innovation (given the strong concentration of tourism) which will enable rapid prototyping and feedback from consumers and early adopters. In addition, Queenstown Lakes hosted a highly successful tourism tech expo several years ago and would be very keen to re-visit this with some support and investment. Disruption due to COVID-19 has prevented delivery of a regular schedule of similar events.

4.0 Building cultural competency

- 4.1 We strongly support the building of cultural competency. It is important that cultural competency is both about Aotearoa's own culture as well as having competency with foreign visitors. The role of our migrant tourism workforce in supporting this cultural competency should not be underestimated. Cultural competency in this context is multi-faceted, requiring consideration of visitors, community, businesses, and workforce.

5.0 Embracing the peaks and troughs of tourism demand

- 5.1 Seasonal troughs can be seen as an opportunity for some employers to upskill and do maintenance. Similarly, there is a proportion of the tourism workforce that pre-COVID-19 would take advantage of seasonal contracts to travel internationally for work. Therefore, research needs to be done to understand the appetite of the workforce to be employed year-round if it involves different roles and/or employers.

² Destination Queenstown do not support collective agreement, however, the Queenstown Lakes District Council do not have a position on the matter.

6.0 'Fit for purpose' education and training

- 6.1 Support the proposal of 'fit for purpose' education and training and agree with the need for more emphasis around micro-credentials.
- 6.2 Tourism is a diverse sector with many pathways into, through and out of it. It can be a platform for gaining experience in a wide variety of business role types and future industries and could be promoted as such. We would be interested in data and information on the pathways of people through the sector.
- 6.3 The tourism sector is one of the few sectors that build the soft skills in demand by many other sectors. There is considerable competitive advantage in this, and it is a unique selling point for the sector. It is therefore important that these transferable skills are recognized within and outside of the sector. There is also a significant opportunity to emphasise the range of transferable business skills within the sector.

7.0 Better tools and resources for business owners and operators

- 7.1 There is clear opportunity to leverage off the large network of businesses in our district (1,000+) that have taken up Tourism Communities funding as well as the strong uptake of Digital Boost. These existing networks should play a key role in delivering better tools and resources for business.

8.0 A public campaign to showcase better work in the industry

- 8.1 We recommend a focus on the value of transferable skills gained within the tourism industry and how these can be used to explore a broad range of opportunities. This work should also present a selection of impressive advocates for the industry, including people who have since moved to other sectors as part of their career path.

9.0 Immigration is missing from the Tirohanga Hou

- 9.1 The value and skills that the international workforce bring to the tourism system are not reflected in this plan. It states that 22% of tourism employees were migrants in 2019. In Queenstown Lakes that figure is closer to 30% and in some industries such as accommodation, it can be more than 50%³.
- 9.2 We recommend that the government establish a realistic target in relation to resilience, that enables comparison with other equivalent countries.
- 9.3 Furthermore, the Queenstown Lakes District Council, Destination Queenstown and Lake Wānaka Tourism are keen to review further detail in relation to the transition plan / actions and support for employers towards achieving reduced reliance. It's important to recognize that many of the actions proposed within the plan are longer term and staff shortages are currently severe.
- 9.4 We recommend that this issue is given further consideration with districts such as Queenstown Lakes in mind, in alignment with the changes to immigration policy.

³ Census, 2018