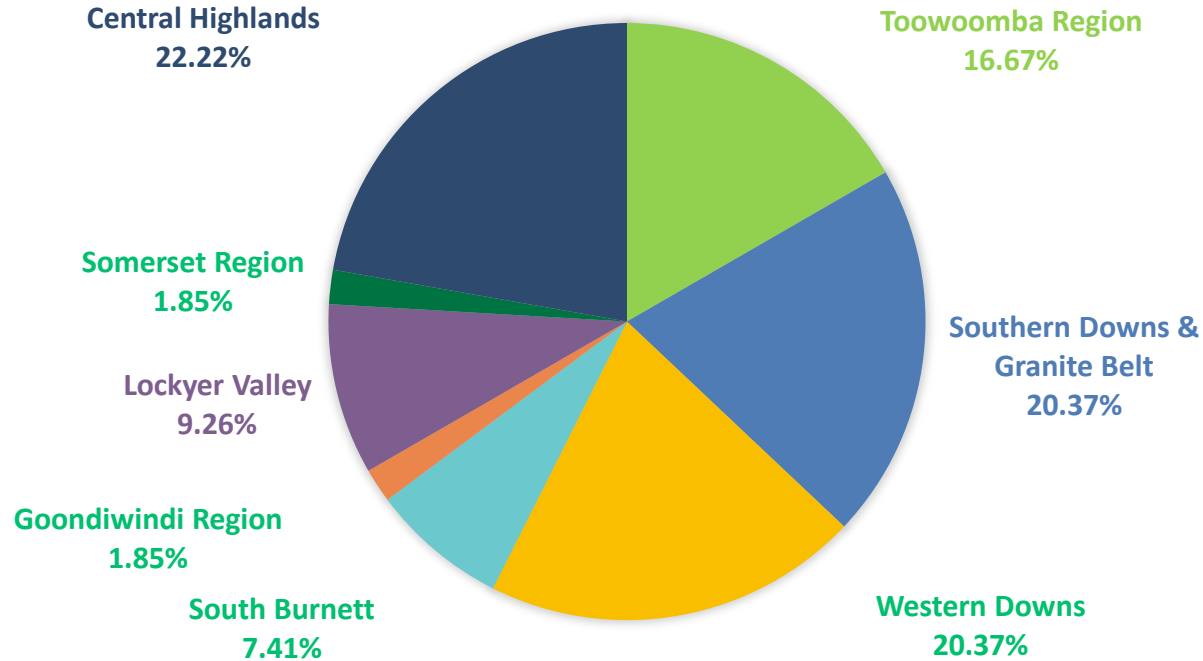


# Queensland Country Destination Management Plan Industry Survey

**60 Total Responses**  
As at 25 March, 2024

# Q1: Where are you located?



## Q2: How would you best describe the benefits of tourism for your region? (Multiple responses welcome).



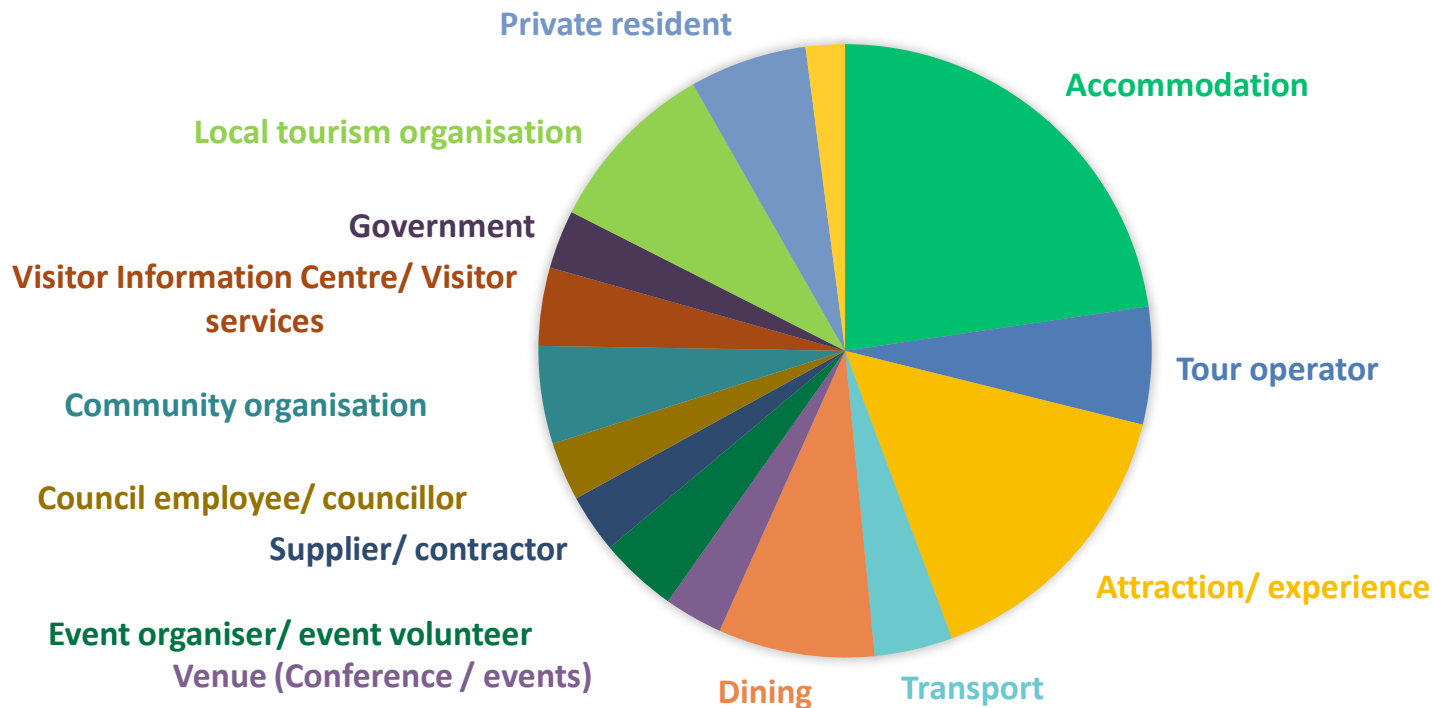
### TOP 5 BENEFITS OF TOURISM

1. Economic benefit
2. Creates employment
3. Helps attract new residents
4. Social benefits for local communities
5. Generates civic pride

Other: Activates spaces & places. Encourages agritourism. Creates new long-term advocates & demonstrates the regional role in the broader economy.

### Q3: How would you best describe your business or organisation?

(Multiple responses welcome).

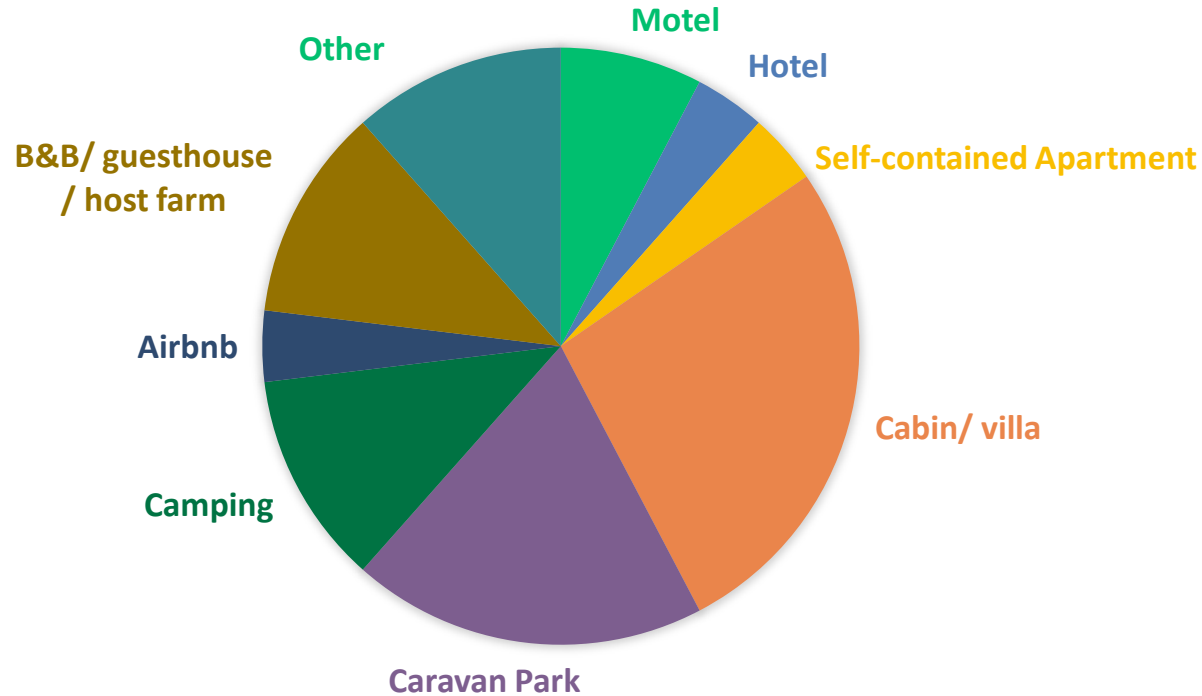


#### Survey Respondents

Wide selection of representation from across private and public sector.

Over 60% of survey respondents represent visitor economy businesses.

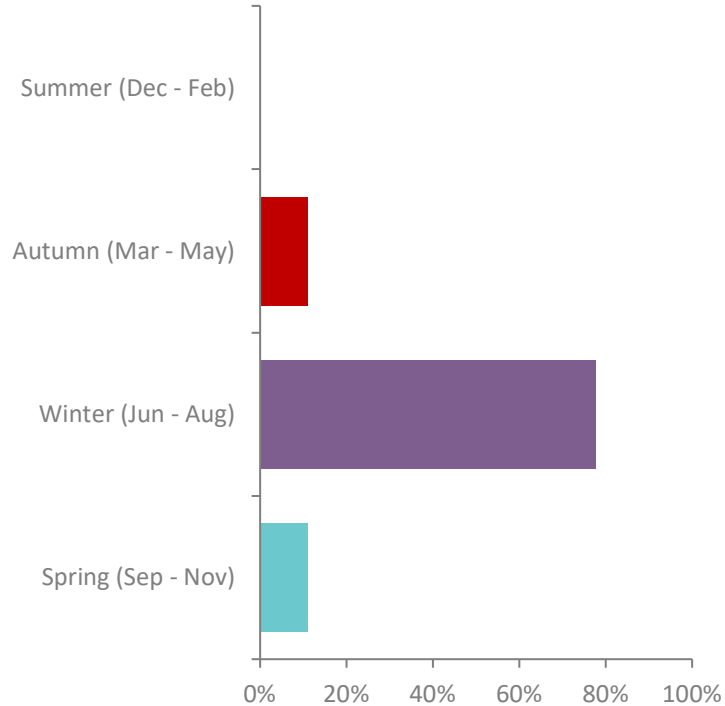
## Q4: Which of the following best describes your accommodation?



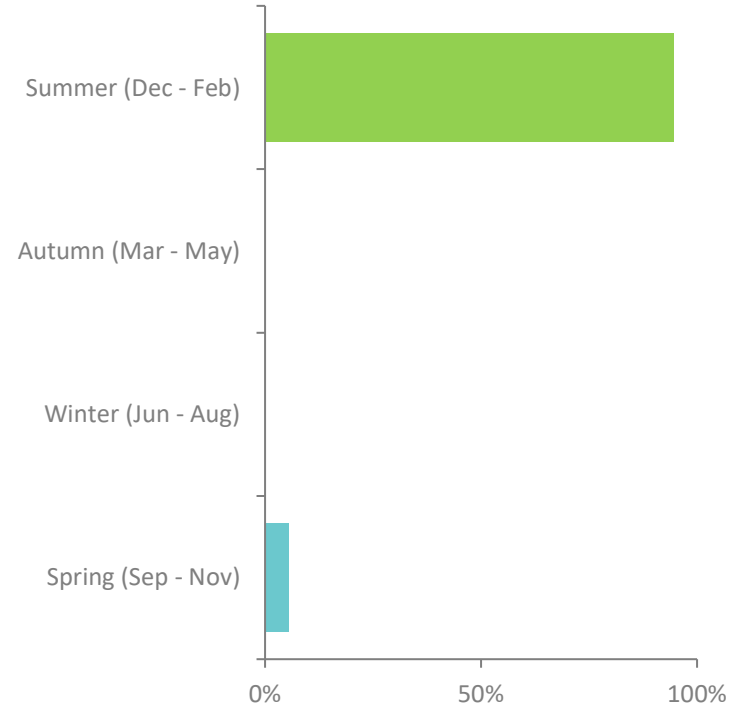
Other: Glamping. Retreat.

## Accommodation Respondents

Q5: When do you experience your highest occupancy?

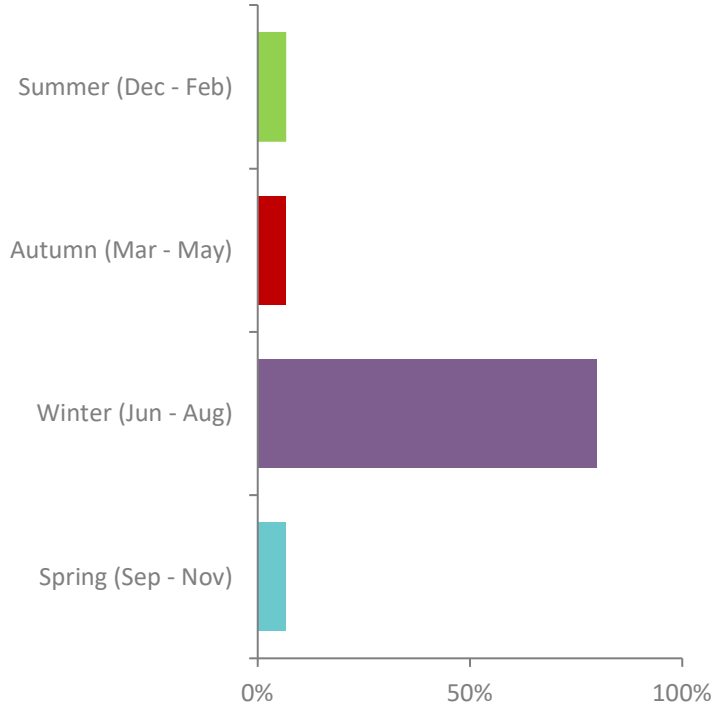


Q6: When do you experience your lowest occupancy?

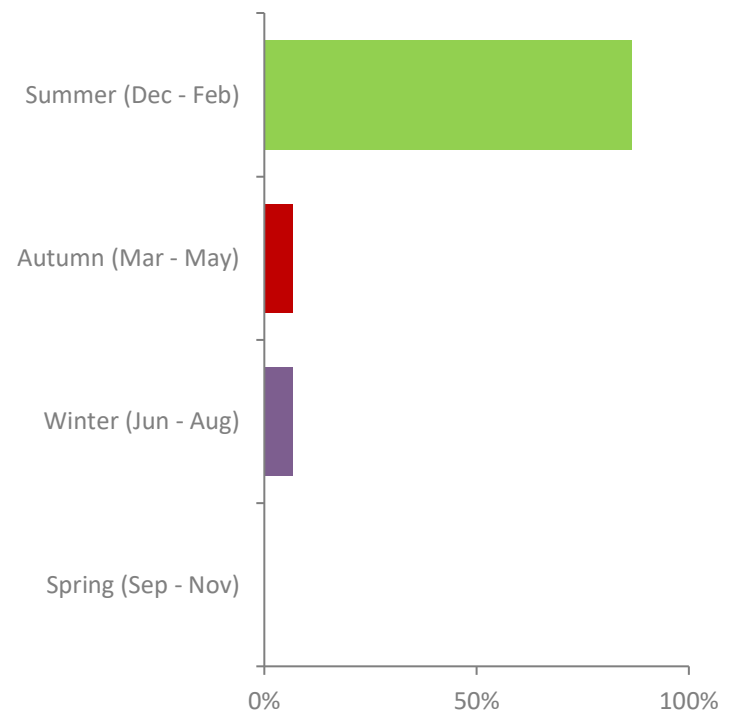


## Tour/Attraction Respondents

Q7: When is your highest/busiest season?

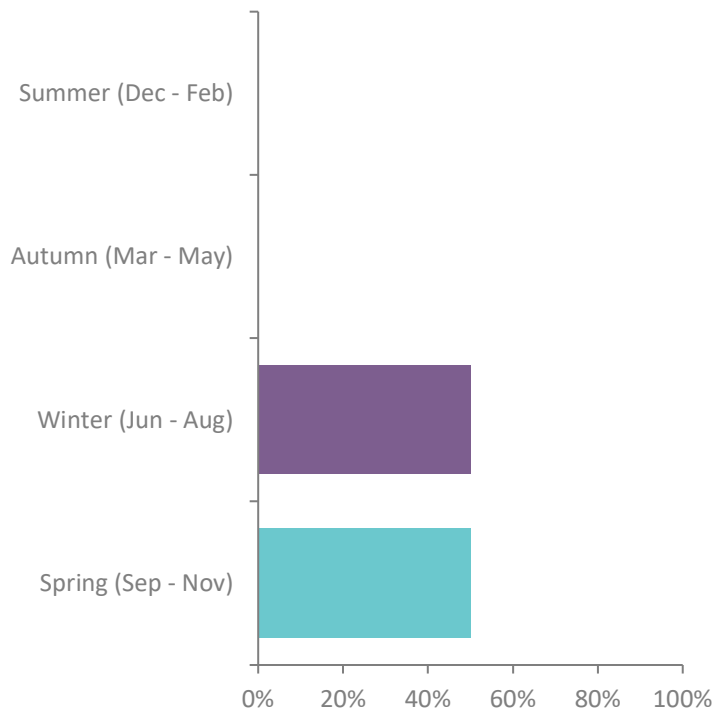


Q8: When is your lowest/quietest season?



## Q9: Event Respondents

When do you experience your highest/busiest season?



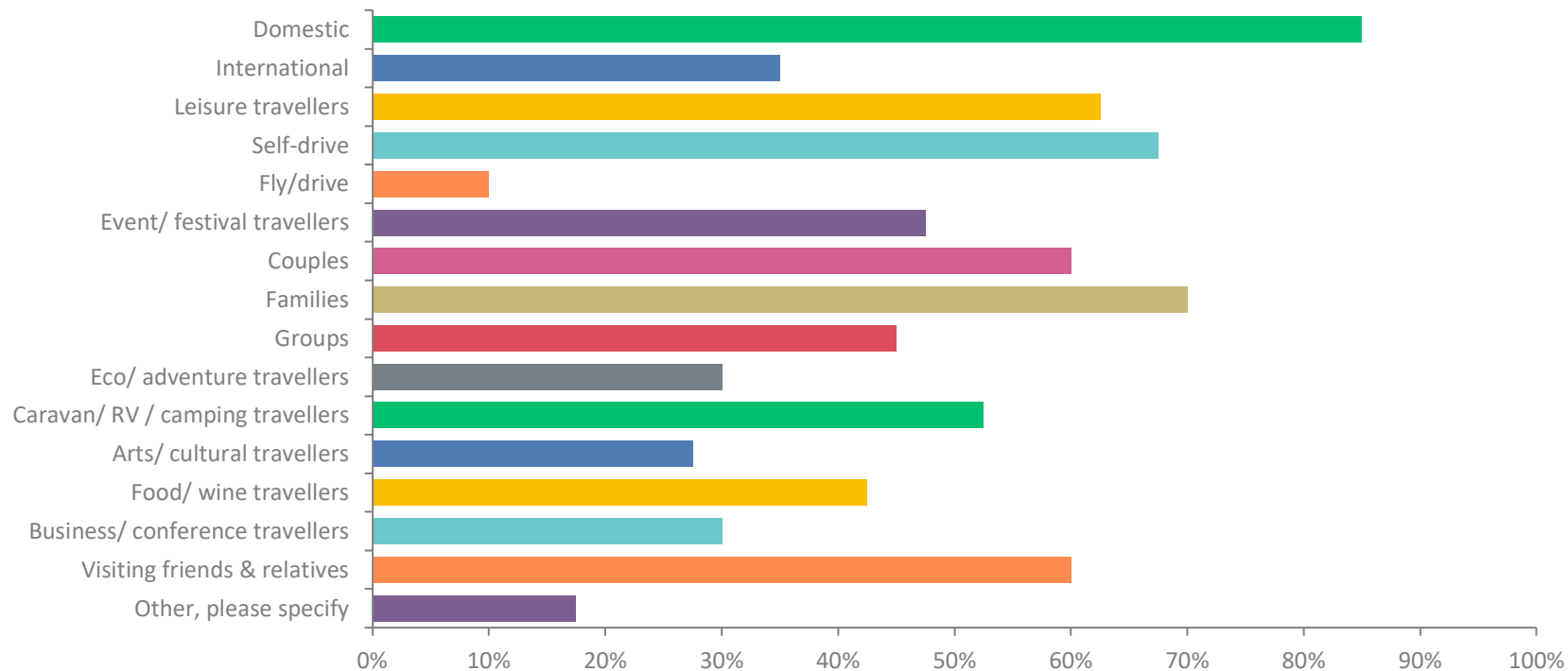
### SEASONALITY

Most respondents stated Winter as their high season, followed by Spring and Autumn shoulder season.

Summer was cited low season for all respondents.



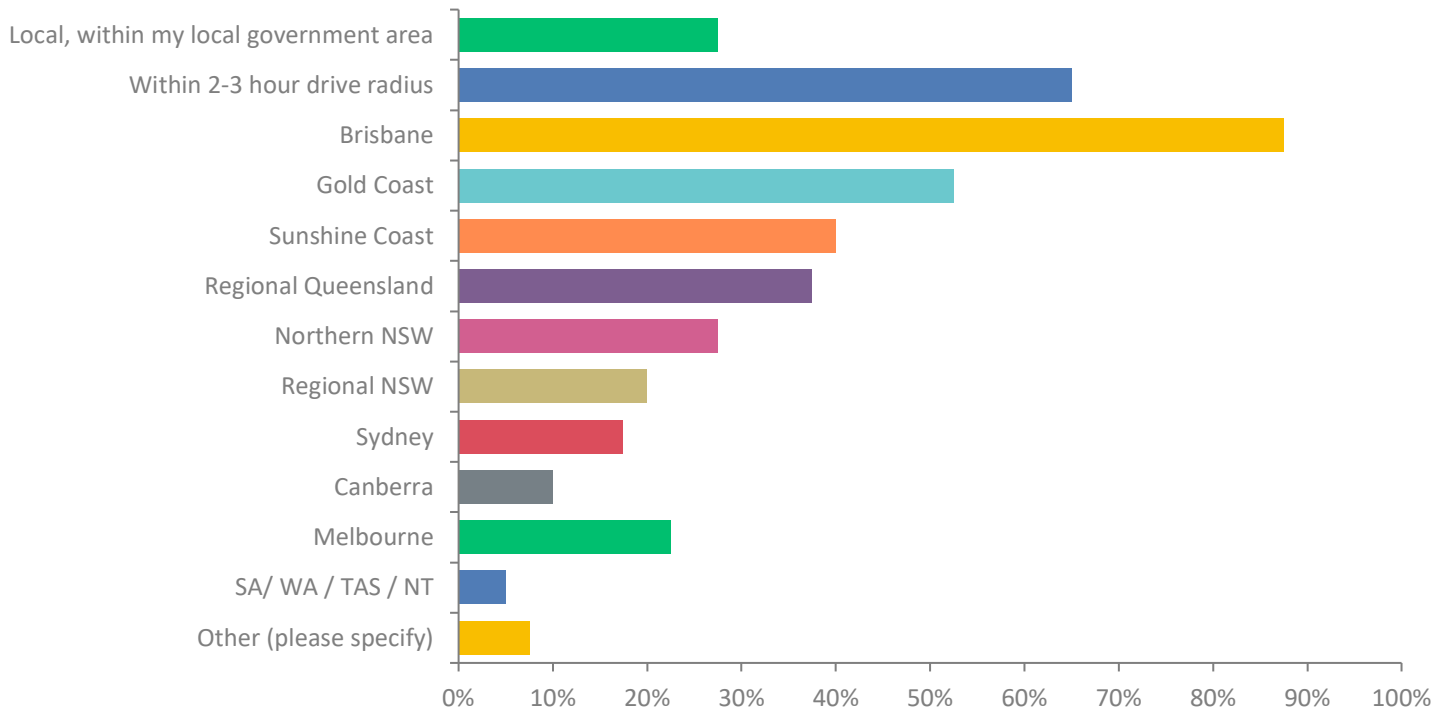
## Q10: How would you best describe the type of visitor markets you currently cater/ service? (Multiple responses welcome)



Other: Sports events and people looking for physical activities (parkrun/MTB Trails). Cyclists. Nature seekers. Corporate Guests. Workers from local/surrounding employers .

# Q11: Where do the majority of your visitors come from?

(Multiple responses welcome).



Other: Western Queensland. Australia wide. Visitors via the Newell Highway from southern states..

## Q12 : What are 3 major tourism opportunities for your organisation/business/destination?

### EXPERIENCE/INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

Revitalisation of Lake Maraboon picnic/recreation area into a premier destination.  
Heritage train experience with local village experiences.  
Grape to Glass Centre – new cellar door.  
Packaging experiences.  
Ballandean cycling trail from new winery/tavern developments.  
Winery closer to Kingaroy.  
Include local larrikins/characters alive and well in the country.  
Bush/country lifestyle experiences.  
Indigenous history and stories.  
Seasonal activities.  
Summer experiences to strengthen low season.

### INCREASING LENGTH-OF-STAY & SPEND

Free value-adds – free camping, art trails.  
Extend day trippers into overnight stays.  
Upsell e.g. coffee & cake.

### LOCATION

Proximity to growing markets.  
On cross-roads of major highway/touring routes.  
Overflow from Olympic Games in Brisbane.

### FESTIVALS & EVENTS

Iconic events to grow visitation/new markets.  
More business events, conferences, weddings, graduations.  
Fishing competitions. Busking festival.  
Event sophistication & development.

### NATURE

Leveraging escarpment/top of the Great Dividing Range.  
Development of tourist trails Carnarvon Gorge, Lake Maraboon, Blackdown Tablelands, implementing aboriginal art murals.  
Natural wilderness.

### ACCOMMODATION

Resort style development from major market player (RACV or international company).  
Boutique, country themed accommodation with recognised name (e.g. Hunter Valley property 'The Convent').

### MARKETING

Brand recognition for repeat visitation.  
Destination profiling through SQCT.  
Coordinated marketing.  
Social and digital media.  
Re-education/market to internationals.

### AGRITOURISM & HORTICULTURE

Agricultural experiences.  
On-farm tours.  
Learning how to/peanut farm/tours.  
Sustainable farming.  
Food sources.  
Garden tours and plant sales.

### VISITOR MARKETS

People in their 20's wanting to connect/reconnect with country/bush.  
Camping, RV and caravanning.  
Growing Grey Nomads market.  
Festival/events to open area to new markets.  
Cyclists – mountain biking, gravel riders.  
Grow interstate markets.  
Adventure tourism.  
Visitors seeking to get back to simple, country life, and wanting to digital detox.  
Bush walkers, hikers, runners.  
Education market/school children.  
Cultural/Arts market.  
International markets.  
Geotourists.  
Staycations – combining work/leisure.

# Q13: What are 3 major challenges for your organisation/business/destination?

## **EXPERIENCE/INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT**

Encouraging regional growth while maintaining rural values and village feel in our towns.  
Getting enough/new/enhanced tourism product/experiences to meet demand/consumer trends  
Lack of accessible buildings with wheelchair access, including outside footpaths.  
Bushfire damage of southern railway bridges.  
Limited or no public transport.  
Not enough things for visitors to do- particularly mid-week.  
Lack of bookable and guided tours/packages.  
More quality and real 'paddock to plate' dining experiences.  
Limited/no WiFi/digital connectivity/mobile coverage.  
Large distance between destinations. Parts of region a long way from major populations. Regional connectivity.

## **TOURISM INVESTMENT**

Lack of tourism investment opportunities promotion.  
Council approval costs and processes to develop tourism enterprises.  
Lack of targeted Government investment in tourism facilities and services.  
Lack of development channels for business operators.

## **SEASONALITY**

Need greater year-round tourism activity.  
Need more visitors in Summer and mid-week.  
Lack of shops/dining/cafes open week-ends.

## **HUMAN RESOURCING**

Limited ability to employ staff as it's so seasonal.  
Workforce – available/reliable staff, lack of skilled staff.  
Lack of staff accommodation/housing.  
Shortage of trades people.  
Ageing volunteer base.  
Lack of willpower and business acumen.  
Working in isolation rather than networking together.  
Reliance on volunteers.  
Capacity of volunteers to run events.

## **FINANCIAL**

Lack of funding and cashflow.  
Rising costs of operations/doing business i.e. insurance, permits, wages, freight costs.  
Cost of running a steam train – insurance.  
Cost of living/discretionary spend affecting visitation.

## **ACCOMMODATION**

Shortage of accommodation in areas with high mid- occupancy e.g. Goondiwindi reporting high mid-week over 90% occupancy, Granite Belt reporting high weekend occupancy during winter.  
Need increased investment in accommodation as some locations are predominately day tripper region.  
Desperate need for accommodation enhancements/upgrades.

# Challenges continued

## **MARKETING/PROMOTION**

Lack of destination profile and market awareness of our location/experiences.  
Perception that Western Downs is a long way from Brisbane/Coasts.  
Need more international image/profile.  
Competition from other parts of Queensland.  
Finding and promoting uniqueness.  
Challenge that some areas aren't rolling green hills, it's more bush/desert like, not stereotypically pretty, more like perception of outback.  
Visitors can't easily find us – there's lots of competition.  
Marketing and brand awareness of our region with our budget vs marketing for Barrier reef / beaches / Gold Coast by private and state funding

## **INDUSTRY CAPACITY**

Communication and networking between operators is lacking.  
Local operator cooperation and engagement.  
Old thinking and not understanding market diversification.

## **VISITOR MARKETS**

Too focussed on our area on grey nomads who aren't high spenders.  
Last minute bookings/visitors not planning ahead affects our cashflow and ability to plan ahead, employ staff etc.  
Challenge of balancing corporate guests (our primary market) with leisure visitors.  
Family affordability.  
Limited market for summer/hot weather. Our domestic/SEQId target goes to beach when it's hot.

## **ENVIRONMENT**

Climate change.  
Catastrophic weather events.  
Recovery and negative visitor perceptions.

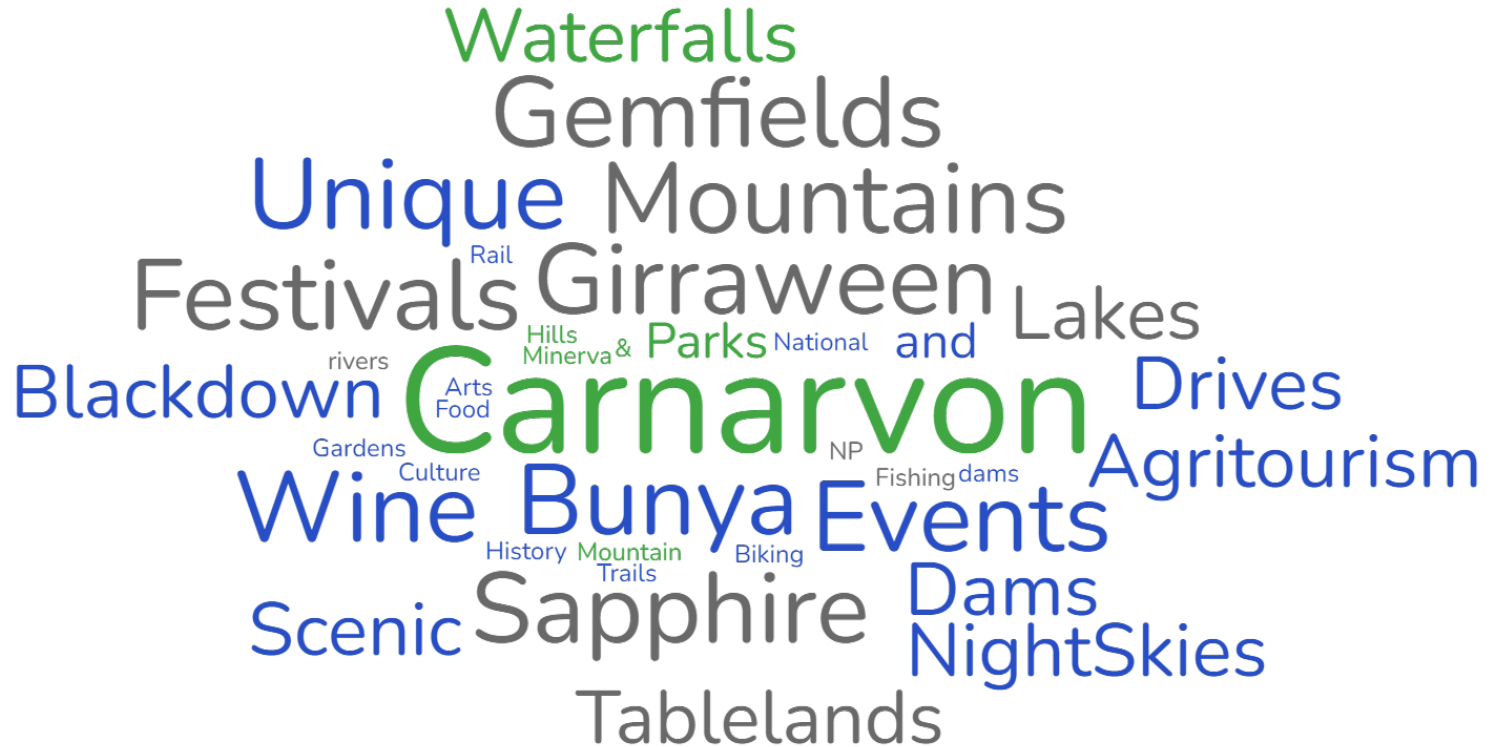
## **AGRITOURISM & HORTICULTURE**

Biosecurity on farms and wineries limit visitor access.  
Tourism is not viable for large/commercial agricultural producers.  
Competing industries with agriculture, resources and tourism, with more money invested in agriculture and resource sector.  
Lack of appreciation of the value of tourism.

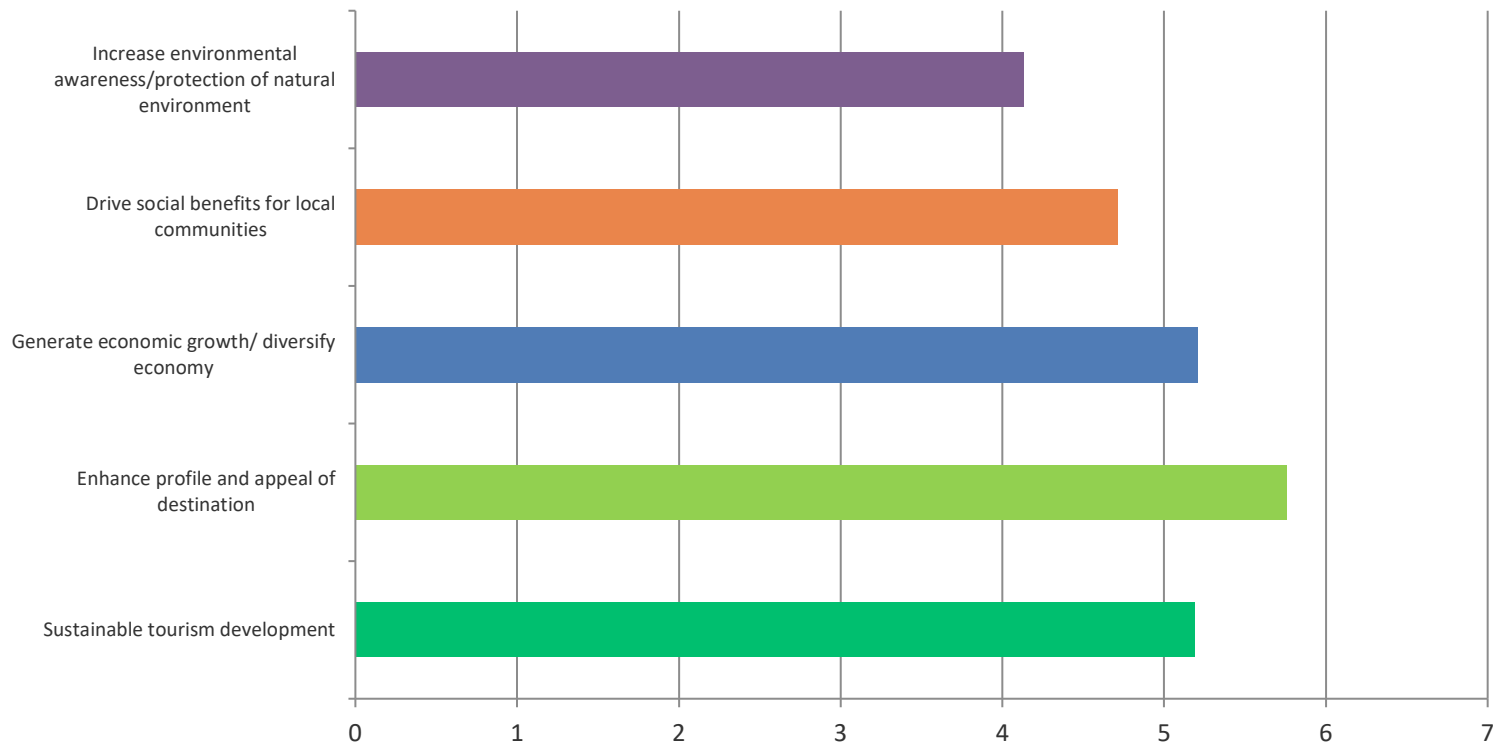
Q14: What are 3 words/emotions you would use to describe Queensland Country to attract external visitors



Q15: What are 3 key **attractions/experiences** in Queensland Country you would promote external visitors?

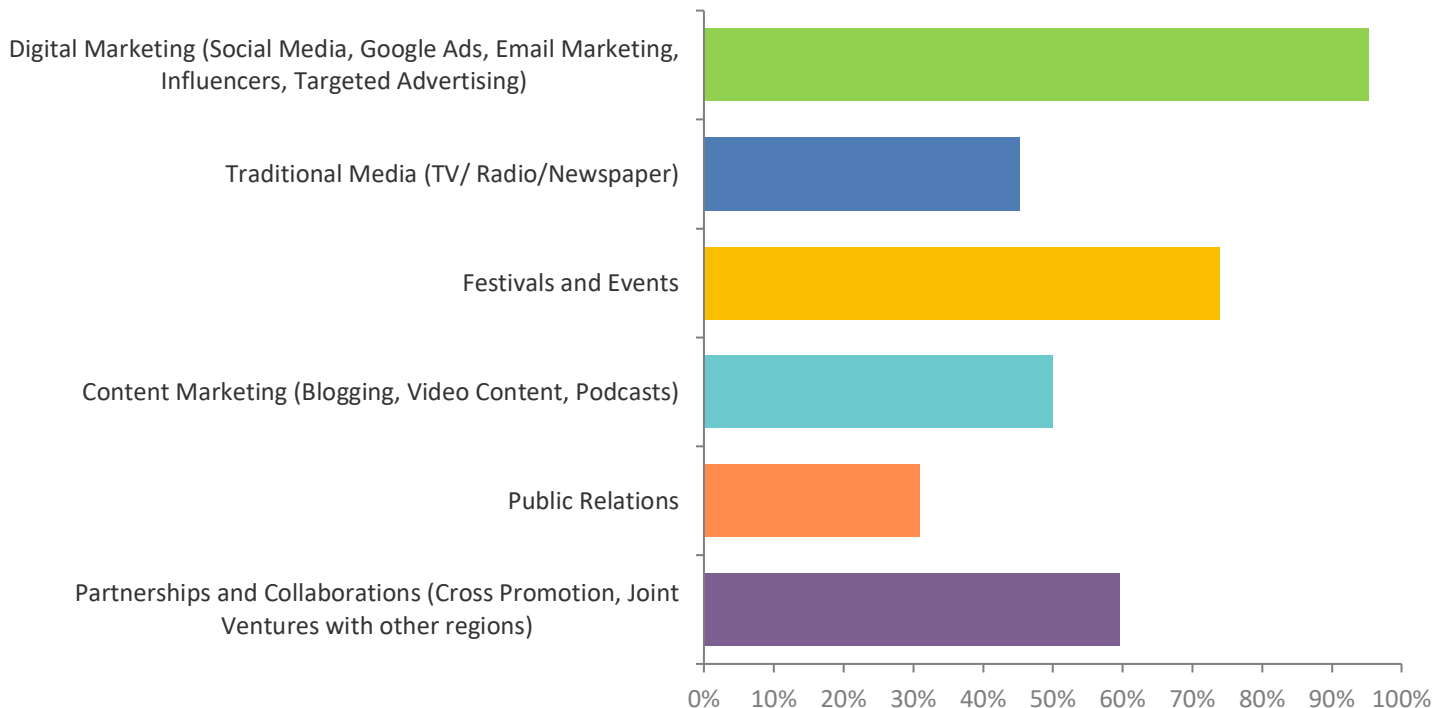


## Q16: Rank the following strategic priorities in order of importance for the future development of tourism for Queensland Country?





## Q17: What type of marketing initiatives do you think would most benefit your region? (Multiple responses welcome)



## Q18: Thinking into the future, what would you like tourism in Queensland Country to look like in 5-10 years?

- Sustainable. Abundant. Innovative, inclusive, environmentally conscious, authentic.
- Staying true to its roots - country, agri, nature, etc. within a growth corridor.
- Recognised destination for something different offering a range of experiences, attractions and accommodation to suit a variety of travellers.
- To be a thriving industry that has embraced it's assets and is attractive for new businesses that will complement these assets. To have improved hospitality skills across the board and promote hospitality training within the region.
- I would like to see it get as much attention as the Barrier Reef / Daintree / Gold Coast gets now. Be a top 3 travel destination within Qld, be easily accessible for international travellers from the airport - more transport options (jump on the train to Stanthorpe).
- Taking the lead in regional tourism.
- Each region working together to promote each other forming a real experiential trail.
- More international tourism to supplement domestic tourism.
- More organised tours not catering for just the drive market.
- All the current gaps filled i.e. lots more choice in accommodation, dining and experiences, and that includes for people with disability.
- Outdoorsy, more to do across region, much greater customer/visitor orientation.
- Increased Rail Trails and mountain biking.
- Running festivals like Wondai. Promotion of Parkruns (80,000 Australians run every Saturday).
- Major sporting events e.g. triathlons, masters games, horse sports, endurance events.
- Attracting more events to the region to showcase what is here.
- Qld Country have stable teams with good knowledge of the regions, solid forward planning, strong following through channels. Industry knows of them.
- Steady growth with business/community support. Increased support for small businesses.
- Increased focus on the agricultural bowls.
- More acceptable to tourism in the farming community.

# Q19: In the future, what are 3 **tourism infrastructure projects** you would like to see developed/progressed in Queensland Country?

## **TRANSPORT**

Fast train to Toowoomba.  
Expand routes from/to Wellcamp Airport.  
EV Charging network.  
Electric super highway.  
Hop on. Hop off bus.  
Road grading in National Parks.  
More public transport.

## **ACCESSIBILITY**

More accessible options in National Parks e.g. Carnarvon.  
All visitor information centres accessible.

## **SIGNAGE**

Greater wayfinding and information signage throughout region.

## **EVENTS**

Festival and event infrastructure e.g. Dalby  
Showground expansion to cater for larger events.

## **ARTS & HERITAGE**

Wine Museum.  
Cherbourg Ration Shed.  
Forest Hill, Peanut Silo Murals. Silo illuminations  
Indigenous Centre with storylines trail.  
Emerald Cultural & History Hub with museum, gallery,  
workshop space, gif shop, archives, kids space.

## **POLICY**

Lower PDA development approval costs (as NSW has done).

## **ACCOMMODATION SECTOR**

Additional camping options, more free camping sites.  
RV and Caravan infrastructure.  
Upgraded caravan parks.  
Boutique luxury accommodation with brand name (e.g. Peppers).  
4 star+ offerings.  
Eco-forest retreat at Bunya Mountains.  
Bunya Mountains infrastructure for caravans, trailers.  
Resort development at Bridge Street.

## **MAJOR ATTRACTIONS**

Skywalk/night sky experience.  
Mega Fauna Centre -interactive activities, research, preservation work.  
Quarry Gardens, Toowoomba.  
Wellcamp Entertainment Precinct.  
Mega horse training and performance centre.  
Major water park.  
Entertainment centre.  
Toowoomba Convention Centre.  
Indigenous tourism centre.  
Motor raceway at Wellcamp.  
Aerospace and Rocket launch site.

## **TRAILS**

Escarpment mountain bike trails and vertical park such as Skyline Rotorua infrastructure to support (chairlift or transport).  
Connected walking, hiking and cycle trails.  
South Burnett Rail Trail. Finish signage of rail trail from Kilkivan to Gympie on quiet backroads Thus public transport available at both ends of 400 km Cycling trails before the Olympics.  
Rail trail from Maryvale to Mt Edwards.  
Digital and Audible Trail experiences.  
MTB trails and supporting infrastructure throughout entire region.  
Artesian Spa Trail.  
Complete MTB parks at Gordonbrook Dam and Esk.  
Railtrail/Country Cycling – Gympie to Ipswich.  
Connecting trails from accommodation with CBDs.

## **FOOD, AGRITOURISM & HORTICULTURE**

Make it easier for farm owners to diversity income.  
More dining options.

## **LAKES, DAMS, RIVERS**

Lake Maraboon - Revitalise picnic area, install playground etc.  
Goondiwindi River Precinct.

## Q20: In the future, what are 3 **visitor experiences** you would like to see developed/progressed in Queensland Country?

### **TRANSPORT**

Shuttle buses for rail trails.  
Hop on/hop off experiences.

### **AIR**

Increased joy flights, hot air ballooning, sky diving, night sky visitor experiences to 'activate' our Big Skies.

### **EVENTS**

Strengthen Event Portfolio – Triathlon, Tough Mudda, Drone events.  
Packaged country racing experiences.  
Busking festival.  
Festival/experience to highlight Italian heritage.  
Further grow Western Downs events.  
Support events with ever increasing red tape so volunteers can continue to put them on.

### **ARTS & HERITAGE**

Innovate visitor experiences throughout heritage experiences using latest technology.  
Guided aboriginal tours, culture story telling, workshops & indigenous song lines.

### **FOOD & DRINK**

Microbrewery/distillery cluster in Western Downs.  
Fine dining in crop country.  
Food and beverage trails.  
Wine & food experiences – growing, making, cooking, distilling.  
More fine dining.  
Country food experiences in every food servery.

### **AGRITOURISM & HORTICULTURE**

Contemporary sunflower experiences in Central Highlands/Darling/Southern Downs.  
Sunflower experiences to meet insta demand.  
Apple Blossom experiences (e.g. to be famous like Cherry Blossoms in Japan).  
Agri-tours e.g. peanut farm tours.  
Linking visitor experiences to agriculture.  
Sustainable & organic farm experiences.  
Camping & glamping on private properties.  
Wildflower tours.  
Expand Pick Your Own produce experiences.  
More horse riding experiences throughout region.

### **ADVENTURE**

Increased outdoor adventure experiences e.g. ziplines, kayaking, off-road buggy.  
Multi-day hikes.

### **LAKES, DAMS, RIVERS**

Lake Maraboon inflatable aqua park.  
Visitor experiences at Bjelke Peterson Dam.  
Boating on the lakes.

### **NATURE/NATIONAL PARKS**

Guided tours at Bunya Mountains.  
Specialised guided tours for special interest markets e.g. birdwatching, wildflowers, ecosystem.  
Park-run Holidays of Queensland Country.

### **GEOTOURISM**

More Sapphire Gemfield experiences.  
Guided/hands-on gemfield experiences.  
Fossicking tours.

### **HIGHWAY NETWORKS**

Leverage/package/self-drive experiences along highway networks e.g. Country Way, Great Inland Way

## Q21: Any additional comments or suggestions for the Queensland Country Destination Plan?

- Long-term experience development and infrastructure endemic to local areas that can't be copied/experienced elsewhere.
- Adventure tourism is on the rise, we have all the natural attributes to facilitate and promote adventure tourism We are the leading state in terms of alternative and emerging wines - need to take better advantage of this.
- There needs to support for new tourism businesses to establish e.g. river activities, events. We have several people with ideas, but funding to get the plan created and the step up is limited. Also Building Bush Tourism open to businesses and NFPs has been of huge interest in the region.
- Include High Country Hamlets which is an important micro region.
- Protect accommodation diversity from uninsured and unregistered accommodation types.
- Promotion of Indigenous Tourism e.g. Cherbourg and Ration shed and wineries and link with Rail trail holidays.
- Please create a Visitor Guide that has maps, suggested drives or trails, photos but not full or half page. maybe a Drive loop throughout the Queensland Country Tourism Region.
- The Brisbane valley rail trail has been a big boast for little communities I would like to see a similar trail that can link the small communities in and around our area open only to walkers horse riders and push bikes
- Just a note to say tourism is the antithesis of sustainability. The movement of people from one region to another goes against sustainability, though tourism is currently essential for most communities. A big focus should be on enhancing the local experience to improve liveability and investment with the increased benefit of attracting visitors.
- Sustainable and eco-tourism is where its at, our area can't support tourism that uses water inefficiently.
- There needs to support for new tourism businesses to establish e.g. river activities, events. We have several people with ideas, but funding to get the plan created and the step up is limited. Also Building Bush Tourism open to businesses and NFPs has been of huge interest in the region.
- As we deal with tourists/caravanners every day, each of my suggestions are things that guests have enquired about almost daily. They always ask where they can do a peanut farm tour, they never realise we have a large wine region until they are here so don't plan to experience it (this may need some really great promotion!) and they ask why the peanut silos aren't painted. We are constantly finding that there are not enough tourism activities open during the week, even in our peak tourism time. During our peak April - October, we are just as busy during the week as we are on weekends.
- It was hard to rank those five priorities on Q16. They're all important!
- No one knows what they don't know. Also many don't know the value of what they do have. Seeing and experiencing and working collaboratively.
- All the small business's have to be supported as they are the back bone of tourism here.
- We all need to work together to make a difference and to make our region special.
- This survey is a great way for all tourism operators to tell their thoughts to enhance the region. Great job!