



Murrindindi Shire

REGIONAL EVENTS STRATEGY 2015-2020

DIG + FISH


 Murrindindi
Shire Council

Executive Summary

The Murrindindi Shire sits across the tourism regions of the Yarra Ranges, High Country and the newly formulated Goulburn River Valley Tourism. It is an incredibly diverse shire with well known regional assets including Lake Eildon, Lake Mountain and the Great Victorian Rail Trail.

This strategy provides recommendations for the future development and funding of identified event opportunities – either new to the region or by building on existing regional event properties.

Throughout the strategy process key regional strengths for the Murrindindi Shire have been identified which can be leveraged for event development. Overall, the Murrindindi Shire is strongly associated with outdoor recreational events, particularly in relation to fishing, cycling, and water based activity. Music and the arts are also development areas.

The five year strategic event framework recommends the development of existing Tier Two events into Tier One drivers of event-based tourism. The need for long-term event planning and identified pathways to funding sustainability are required for these events to support and attract state government and private sector funding.

With respect to operational considerations, the document recommends an increased visitor focus with respect to event planning, including cross industry collaboration, development of event based itineraries across product categories and, where possible, joint marketing efforts to drive events to like-minded visitors and leverage the limited funds for event development.

To enable the development of Tier One events, greater focus on professional event management, less reliance on volunteers and up-skilling of event committees will be required.

Any future funding will be directed to events that support the regional criteria with long term event planning and pathways to future sustainability.

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1.0 Introduction

This events strategy was commissioned by Yarra Ranges Tourism in conjunction with Yarra Ranges Shire Council and Murrindindi Shire Council to develop two event strategies under the one project scope. The two focus areas are 1. Yarra Ranges Shire. 2. Murrindindi Shire with a focus on Marysville and surrounds.



The two strategies have been developed in tandem with a shared situation analysis and market opportunities section and separate event analyses and recommendations for each sub region. Two documents are therefore provided, one for each focus area.

Industry consultation was undertaken as part of the process along with detailed briefings from the project group and substantial desktop research.

PURPOSE

The strategy is intended to provide intelligence to Councils, Yarra Ranges Tourism and Industry including analysis of current events, past events and identification of gaps in the market and potential opportunities.

The strategy provides a framework for event evaluation with the strategic priorities and insights for the sustainability of event operations into the future. Event coordination and funding have been considered in the project scope.

In summary, the Regional Events Strategy 2015 – 2020 provides direction, insight and recommendations on a sustainable event model to support visitation and overnight stays for the next five years.

The strategy for Murrindindi is presented in four parts:

- Insights and Situation Analysis
- Regional Event Benchmarking
- Key Recommendations
- Operational Considerations

2.0 Insights & Situation Analysis

To inform the strategy, a detailed situation analysis has been undertaken with a combination of desktop research, project group briefings, stakeholder interviews and review of third party research. Please see Appendix 6.1 for a full list of reference material.

Events are a key part of regional marketing activity, regardless of where you are in the world. With a changing consumer landscape, increasing access to travel and the increasing ability to research and plan activities online, the choices available to regional visitors has increased.

As a result, many regions find their ability to create and own highly differentiated events that attract significant visitation and sustainable funding is under more pressure than ever before.

Thus the need to clearly understand the points of difference for each region, how they relate to existing market opportunities and a recommended pathway for future development is a core outcome of the strategy. This section looks at the following:

- Summary of consumer insights on the influences on regional tourism
- Regional visitor needs and general trends
- Global drivers of consumer behavior
- Summary of findings from regional consultation meetings
- SWOT analysis

2.1 Consumer Insights

Events are significant drivers of regional tourism. Tourism Research Australia's National Visitor Survey shows that more than half of all domestic day and overnight trips in 2013 were to regional destinations (58%) where visitors spent \$34 billion.

The needs of regional tourists are changing. With the increasing pace and demands of every day life, visitors are looking for it to be easy – better bundling of regional events, accommodation and event packages and ready-made trails for people to discover regions are all demands of the modern visitor.

One size does not fit all and flexibility in ticketing and attendance, particularly with respect to weekend accommodation, is highly valued.

Flexibility and choice in the experience is also highly valued as visitors rarely stay within a single product category. A wine lover is just as likely to visit a gallery, cidery or farm gate as a hiker or cyclist is to visit a brewery or take a cooking class.

Events and activities that are hands on, participatory and experiential are in hot demand, often the more exclusive or “money can’t buy” the better.

INFLUENCE ON REGIONAL TOURISM

- Regional event goers attend more than one event per annum and three on average
- Experiences are key drivers – particularly in the personal participation and “money can’t buy” categories
- Consumption of experiences rather than material goods is a key signal of social status
- Growth in adventure travel has accelerated at a 65% yearly rate since 2009
- Nature travel includes two out of three criteria – nature, culture, physical activity
- 54% of travellers are planning an adventure activity on their next trip
- 88% of destinations consider gastronomy strategic in defining their brand and image
- Culinary tourists are cultured and affluent
- 40% of families went on multi-generational vacations in the past year
- Attracting the multi-generational market is about memories, convenience and value

GENERAL TRENDS

- Growing demand for tailor-made experiences
- Layered events that provide multi-level engagement across product sectors
- There is a continual rise in the “Search for Adventure” holidays
- Value is a driver – however, value is in the eye of the beholder

2.2 Global Drivers of Consumer Behaviour

In addition to the Australian traveller insights, the following global drivers of broad consumer behaviour also have relevance to the strategy. These five global trends, inform the consumer mindset and enable regions and event operators to tap into these long term societal trends.

1

FEEL GOOD

The long term sustained boom in well-being, health and wellness. The drive to outdoor living and recreation - not just extreme or hard-core adventure. This trend taps into the need to feel connected to nature, to escape the urban environment and live well. The trend is evidenced with the ever-increasing participation in cycling, outdoor sports, multi-discipline events and wellness activities such as health retreats.

2

FUSION

The traditional boundaries are blending, consumers no longer have a single product focus – merging of cultures, traditions, generations, family units and so on. The old rules no longer apply and consumers are looking to be entertained and engaged as much as they want to be educated and informed. Their interests are broad and cross category.

3

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Ethics matter. This is broader than environmental considerations and extends to a consumer judgement and expectation of corporations, governments and businesses “doing the right thing”. This can be with regard to simple considerations like rubbish removal and management at events to more long term issues such as sustainable packaging, environmental protection, minimising impact, corporate social responsibility and equal opportunity. This idea of social responsibility extends to “do good, feel good” activity and social fundraising.

4

BRAND POWER

Arguably as important today as it has ever been. This references a brand’s ability to own real estate in the consumers’ hearts and minds. With the rise of social media and accessibility to information, the need for transparency, authenticity and relevance is greater than ever before. Consumers choose their content, their news, their marketing messages and so you need to be “invited” into their space. Multi-faceted marketing communications for events which build loyalty and event ambassadors are paramount.

5

MASSTIGE

The power of mass-prestige. Luxury brands are no longer reserved for the elite but are becoming increasingly accessible to the burgeoning middle, upper-middle class. Accessible luxury, bespoke experiences and the consumption of experiences over material goods are all signs of social status.

2.3 Regional Consultation Findings Murrindindi & Yarra Ranges

Detailed briefing sessions were conducted with the Project Team to provide the consultants with detailed information on existing events across both shires, background information on past tourism papers and considerable insights from individual and group perspectives.

Much of the input has been used in the development of the situation analysis and detailed SWOT and some summary findings are presented opposite.

CHALLENGES

- There is a natural tension identified between event compliance and event economic development. Stakeholders recognise the “dual role” of the Councils in supporting event development and ensuring all events are conducted within Council policy and local bylaws
- There is an overall lack of professional event management knowledge and expertise with many events organised by committees and volunteers who are busy running their day-to-day business operations. This results in a recognised need for more event workshops, briefings and long-term planning to enable more streamlined event operations and help prevent volunteer burnout
- Industry recognises the need for cross-collaboration to build existing event assets with other direct and indirect business operators, however it is seen as difficult to mobilise related businesses to provide greater regional infrastructure and participation in and around events
- Very high reliance on volunteers and committees and relatively low levels of funding makes it difficult to get events off the ground and invest in their future growth

OPPORTUNITIES

- There was a strong identified regional strength (Yarra Ranges) in Agribusiness and Agritourism with the diversity of farm gates and primary producers across the shire
- Both Shires have a strong market culture and although most markets are not major event draw-cards in their own right, they significantly add to the regional fabric as related activities for event goers and visitors
- Both Shires have year-round appeal with clearly defined propositions for all seasons
- There is significant, diverse event activity already happening across both shires. The depth and breadth of existing events is seen as a regional strength across both shires with a significant opportunity for greater synergy
- There was recognition of the fact that consumers don't know where the shire boundary is and that more collaborative marketing of events across shire/regional boundaries could be very beneficial

2.4 Murrindindi SWOT Analysis

STRENGTHS

- Relative proximity to Melbourne (not as close as the Yarra Valley but closer than High Country and North East)
- Recognised parts of the Shire – such as Eildon and Marysville
- Amazing natural assets that can be leveraged as key differentiators including snow country, water, state parks and scenery making Murrindindi a year round destination
- Some strong existing event assets and active Local Business and Tourism Associations
- The Great Victorian Rail Trail is a fantastic asset that can be further leveraged for the region

WEAKNESSES

- No overarching event framework
- Lack of a clear identity for Murrindindi which is “caught” between several marketing areas (Goulburn River Valley Tourism, High Country and Yarra Ranges)
- Lack of clarity on what the Shire can “hang its hat on”
- Fragmented views from local business on the role of events and the economic value they deliver to the entire region
- Fragmentation in event coordination, marketing and sales with events operating independently and not cross-promoting to each other’s audiences
- Many small websites competing for traffic and share of voice
- Accessibility (transport) for major events
- Current events are not highly differentiated and are replicated in other regions
- Events are largely operated by ‘volunteers’ and committees, not professional event managers
- Existing event planning tends to focus more on what the operators want than what the consumer is looking for
- Lack of funding

Murrindindi

SWOT Analysis cont.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Food & Drink, Music, Outdoor and Gardens remain key consumer drivers for regional events (see further information on following page)
- People are looking for short trips and escapes including regional visits in 4-8 hours
- The rise of digital technology and use of mobile devices provides the ability to communicate with large audiences simply and cost effectively
- Australia remains a key international travel destination. Australia is a safe destination, with food and wine becoming an increasingly significant influencer of destination
- With ongoing global instability and falling \$AUD domestic tourism is a more attractive option for many families

THREATS

- Risk of bush fire impacting summer event opportunities
- Environmental risks such as drought, lack of snow and blue-green algae outbreak
- Other regions across Victoria and Australia are increasing activity
- Individual groups in the region acting independently and losing collaborative benefits
- Economic pressure on disposable income
- Continued tightening of access to external funding sources

2.5 Regional Positioning

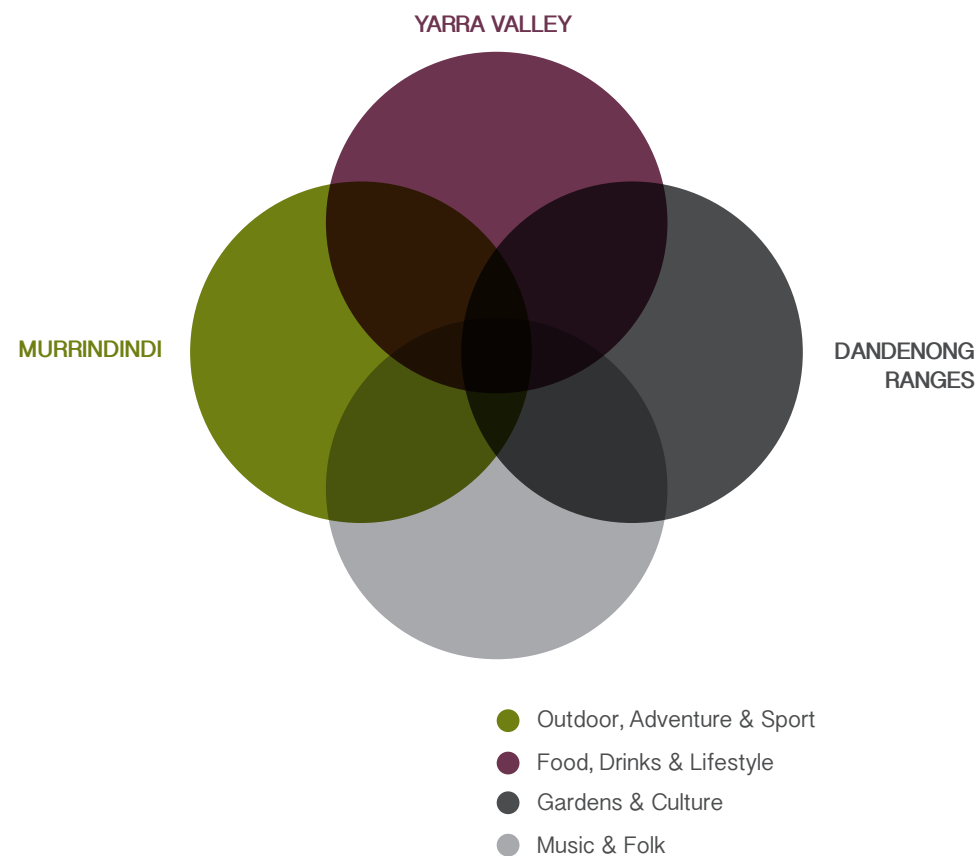
Tourism Research Australia's National Visitor Survey of 10,131 residents found that 24% of respondents had attended a regional event in the last two years. Of that 24%, 11 event types were identified, with food & wine the highest (9%) and participatory sports the lowest (3%).

- Food and wine 9%
- Music events, festivals or concerts 8%
- Garden and botanical events 7%
- Sporting events you go to watch 6%
- Art exhibitions 6%
- Sporting events you participate in 3%

When looking at how these event categories work with the regional strengths of the two Shires, there is strong alignment and the regional positioning falls quite naturally.

The identified event types have natural alignment with the key strengths of the sub-regions. This event segmentation then enables the Shires to collaborate on event strategy and prevent directly competitive events from occurring across the Shires.

Each region can then work to build a reputation for the types of events conducted that lead to a long-term sustainable audience.



2.6 Regional Event Criteria Murrindindi

The Murrindindi Shire is large and encompasses several Tourism and Marketing regions. This strategy is focused on how the Council supports events across the entire community as opposed to marketing a regional tourism brand.

Council has made the decision to direct funding support to Goulburn River Valley Tourism and encourages individual businesses to participate in opportunities offered by regional tourism boards that best fits their needs.

What is clear, is that the Murrindindi shire is rich with remarkable natural assets and has some promising existing events that should be nurtured and grown.

The event criteria in the adjacent table should be used to assess how well each individual event supports the relevant objectives of Murrindindi Shire Council and therefore the allocation of operational support and potential funding.

The same criteria that was established as part of the Marysville and Surrounds Tourism and Event program has been adopted in this strategy.

1

TIER ONE

- These events are considered major events that not only complement tourism strengths of the region, but also have the capacity to attract national and intrastate visitation on an annual basis. They will also likely have secured support from a variety of partners, including local government

2

TIER TWO

- These events are considered medium-sized events that have the capacity to attract intrastate visitation, including significant numbers from Melbourne, on an annual basis
- They will generate significant economic impacts on the local economy but be recognised nationally. They will have the potential to develop into events of significance for the region but need marketing and program development support in order to become major tourism events

3

TIER THREE

- These events enjoy local community significance but may not be well-known outside of the local region

3.0 Regional Event Benchmarking

This section of the strategy reviews leading event examples for Australia and international markets. These events were chosen due to their diversity in location and methodology and the potential for learning that they provide. The snapshots of these events provided are relevant to the local/regional context and create benchmarking opportunities in the following key event sectors:

- Music & Arts
- Outdoor Recreation: Fishing
- Outdoor Sport
- Indigenous Festivals
- Food & Wine

In each area, major event sponsors, the event's strengths and the resultant insights for the Murrindindi Shire have been considered.

3.1 Music & Arts

Byron Bay Blues Festival

2-6 APRIL, ESTABLISHED 1989

The Byron Bay Blues Festival or Bluesfest is Australia's premiere Blues & Roots music festival with more than 200 performances of the best blues, roots, folk, soul and world artists. In addition to seven all-weather performance stages, there are licensed bars, undercover food courts, food and market stalls.

KEY SPONSORS

- Ticketmaster, Gibson, The Music, Rolling Stone, Max, ABC, Mosh Tix, Bay FM

STRENGTHS

- Now in its 26th year, it is considered to be the premier blues and roots festival in the country. With a strong blend of new and old artists, the event is marketed to pop-blues and hard core fans
- With financial support from the local shire and music industry it has a great family vibe with camping on site, shopping, a beautiful location and quality international performers. Very diverse and highly respected

INSIGHTS

- The event has become a brand in its own right with more than 70,000 followers and #rootsandblues used for individual concert performances and artist tours across the country
- There may be the ability to leverage this already strong brand and create a related event in the Murrindindi Shire



Camp Bestival

Lulworth Castle, UK

30 JULY - 2 AUGUST 2015, ESTABLISHED 2004

Camp Bestival is a multi award-winning festival that combines an all-encompassing family festival experience with an action packed camping holiday. Founded by Rob da Bank, the BBC broadcaster had a dream to one day create his vision of what the modern day festival should be.

KEY SPONSORS

- The Guardian UK

STRENGTHS

- A wonderfully curated arts and music festival catering to people of all ages
- A camping experience on the grounds of Lulworth Castle, they also have packages with B&Bs and hotels for those not wishing to camp
- Awarded Best Family Festival in 2009, 2010, 2013 & 2014
- Ticket payment plans to make it affordable for families to attend

INSIGHTS

- There is a gap in the Australian market for a truly family friendly music festival
- The festival incorporates food, drinks, market stalls and many other facets of local business that can be integrated into the core festival experience



Meredith Music Festival

12-14 DECEMBER, ESTABLISHED 1991

Meredith is a celebration of music, nature, friendship and humanity in all its four-dimensional glory. The festival is not just on-stage, it's site-wide. The whole thing continuously evolves, almost anything goes and could keep on going.

KEY SPONSORS

- Triple R – No corporate sponsors

STRENGTHS

- A privately operated event on the land of one of the owners. Has become a must-attend event
- Quite alternative, the festival has grown organically

INSIGHTS

- Music festivals continue to be significant drivers of regional tourism and overnight stays, with rural locations becoming incredibly popular over the last decade



Byron Bay Writers Festival

7-9 AUGUST, ESTABLISHED 1997

The Byron Bay Writers Festival focuses on Australian writing. From humble beginnings it has grown to fill marquees and venues around town.

KEY SPONSORS

- Southern Cross University, North Byron Beach Resort, Macquarie, Feros Care, Australian Council for the Arts, Australia Council

STRENGTHS

- The festival commenced in 1997 when a small group of locals invited a few authors to spend a winter's weekend in Byron Bay. The first festival had 200 locals and 50 Australian writers and has now grown to fill four huge marquees and venues around town selling 45,000 individual tickets. Focused purely on Australian writing

INSIGHTS

- The festival has a strong indigenous component which attracts additional support from community groups and government



Woodford Folk Festival

27 DECEMBER – 1 JANUARY, ESTABLISHED 1986

The Woodford Folk Festival is an annual music festival held near the semi-rural town of Woodford just north of Brisbane. It is one of the biggest annual cultural events of its type in Australia.

KEY SPONSORS

- Queensland Government, Tourism and Events QLD, University of the Sunshine Coast, QUT Creative Industries, Brisbane Marketing Economic Development Board

STRENGTHS

- Art, music, humour all combined into one. Woodford is now a huge event with more than 100,000 attendees. From street theatre, a children's festival, meditation, talks, circus, dance, it has it all. Folky, slightly hippy but all about "good will". 2,300 volunteers alone

INSIGHTS

- Very inclusive event, everyone is welcome and it's about feel good. From the really hippy, meditation to those just looking to enjoy great food and music
- The event integrates the arts, culture, music, food and wine into one event with many smaller activities



3.2 Outdoor & Fishing

Goulburn Fishing Festival

5-6 SEPTEMBER

Goulburn Fishing Festival is designed to attract people of any skill level. Set in picturesque Eildon, the festival coincides with the opening of the riverine trout season

KEY SPONSORS

- Victorian Government Department Environment, Land, Water & Planning (DELWP). No listed corporate sponsors were identified.

STRENGTHS

- Fisheries Victoria and the Eildon community host the Goulburn Fishing Festival for the opening of the riverine trout season. There is a fishing expo at the Eildon Community Centre that includes fishing tackle and equipment displays, local produce and fly tying demonstrations
- Includes cooking demonstrations and kids activities
- Support from DELWP

INSIGHTS

- This event is similar to the Big Fish Challenge and it would not seem feasible for two events, so closely related, to have long term sustainable growth potential
- From an external perspective, merging the two events to make a stronger, bigger festival would make sense





Riverina Classic

28 FEBRUARY - 1 MARCH

The Riverina Classic Fishing Competition and combined Riverside Markets is a two day event that caters for the whole family.

KEY SPONSORS

- APEX Australia

STRENGTHS

- The Riverina Classic is not only a major NSW Fishing Competition it is a complete family event weekend and hosts helicopter joy flights, dodgem cars, massive 37ft high slides, jumping castles, riverside market stalls, catering, kids games, live entertainment, boat displays, major boat package raffle, releasing of native fingerlings, river train rides and more

INSIGHTS

- Fishing is a great family activity and can be easily augmented with other activities to create a country festival. This appears to be consistent with the direction Alexandra Events is pursuing for the Big Fish Challenge and makes economic and marketing sense

RISE Fishing Film Festival

VARIOUS DATES THROUGHOUT THE YEAR
FEBRUARY – APRIL, ESTABLISHED 2006

The RISE Fishing Film Festival is a comprehensive event designed for the fishing community to share their passion for the sport.

KEY SPONSORS

- Southland New Zealand, Pecheur.com

STRENGTHS

- Started in 2006 RISE is one of the premier events on the international fly fishing calendar. Annually playing 60 plus shows in 15 countries, spanning two continents and screening in five languages – RISE is the most extensive international festival of its kind

INSIGHTS

- Things that seem incredibly “fringe” can have great success!



3.3 Outdoor & Sport

Sport Northland Run/Walk Series

MARCH – NOVEMBER

The Sport Northland Run/Walk Series is a number of events held around Northland, New Zealand, throughout the year.

KEY SPONSORS

- Each event has key sponsors – from Fullers Ferries to Potter Electrical

STRENGTHS

- A series of seven events across Northland, New Zealand, that increases in difficulty to culminate in the Kerikeri Half Marathon

INSIGHTS

- Attracts participants from all around the country
- Spreads the activity across the region
- Has events for all types and levels of fitness
- Finishes in a street party in the town of Kerikeri





Pier to Pub Lorne

10 JANUARY, ESTABLISHED 1981

The largest open water swim in the world, Lorne is approximately two hours south of Melbourne on the Great Ocean Road.

KEY SPONSORS

- GMHBA Health Insurance (naming rights sponsor), Speedo, Pure Blonde, Foodworks

STRENGTHS

- Largest open water event in the world
- Each year more than 4,000 swimmers compete
- An iconic summer event

INSIGHTS

- Run by volunteers from Lorne Surf Life Saving Club
- Attracts attention globally and nationally

Ballarat Cycle Classic

15 FEBRUARY, ESTABLISHED 2008

The Ballarat Classic is a community focused cycle event for all abilities and fitness levels. Riders from across Victoria and interstate travel to Lake Wendouree to participate.

KEY SPONSORS

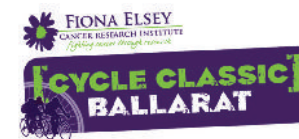
- Primary sponsors: Ballarat City Council, Titeline Group, BJT Legal
- Secondary sponsors: NAB, Arthur J Gallagher and several others

STRENGTHS

- Started in 2008 as a fundraiser for Fiona Elsey Cancer Research Institute

INSIGHTS

- Has raised over \$1 million support from Ballarat City Council



Taupo Great Lake Relay

20-21 FEBRUARY, ESTABLISHED 1995

Taupo Great Lake Relay is a scenic team or solo running or walking event around Lake Taupo, New Zealand.

KEY SPONSORS

- No naming rights but myriad contributors including New Balance, Smiths, Millennium Hotels to name a few

STRENGTHS

- Teams of up to 18 participants enter to run around the 155km circumference of the lake. 500 teams, 4,500 people take part each year. 24 hour event that starts in the middle of the night and ends at 5pm

INSIGHTS

- Participants enter from all around the country. Businesses, friend groups and professional athletes all compete
- Great atmosphere and community spirit



3.4 Indigenous Festivals

Matariki Festival

28 JUNE – 26 JULY, RE- ESTABLISHED EARLY THIS CENTURY

Matariki is an important time in the New Zealand Maori calendar, when the community comes together to celebrate the Maori New Year and give thanks to the land, sea and sky.

KEY SPONSORS

- Mai FM, 2 Degrees Mobile

STRENGTHS

- A cultural month of activities celebrated in Auckland, New Zealand to commemorate the rising of the Matariki star constellation and announcing Te Tau Hou, the Maori New Year
- A month of music, food, and traditional Maori arts and crafts

INSIGHTS

- Highlights the indigenous culture of New Zealand and celebrates its meaning and importance to the heritage of the country



MATARIKI
festival

Te Matatini National Kapa Haka Festival

4-8 MARCH, ESTABLISHED 1972

Te Matatini is a Maori performing arts festival held in New Zealand where kapa haka groups perform. Patrons can shop for Maori arts and crafts and experience cultural exhibitions and workshops.

KEY SPONSORS

- Ministry for Culture and Heritage, University of Waikato, New Zealand
- Maori Arts and Crafts Institute, Kiwi Bank, NZ Post

STRENGTHS

- Every two years top kapa haka teams from New Zealand and Australia compete for the honour of being crowned the best of the best. The festival started in 1972 and is now the world's largest celebration of Maori traditional performing arts, attracting more than 30,000 performers, supporters and visitors

INSIGHTS

- World's largest Maori Festival
- Takes place over a three or four day period
- Biennial
- Held in different cities each time

TE MATATINI
KAPA
HAKA
AOTEAROA



Moundville Native American Festival

8-11 OCTOBER

Moundville Native American Festival celebrates the Southern United States' rich Indian heritage. Patrons are entertained and educated by performers, artists, craftspeople and tradition bearers.

KEY SPONSORS

- University of Alabama

STRENGTHS

- One of Alabama's Top 20 Tourism Events, the festival runs in the first full week of October and celebrates the tradition, culture and heritage of Native Americans

INSIGHTS

- 15,000 attendees across the state
- 7,500 attendees are school groups
- Highly educational and participatory





Native Rhythms Festival

13-15 NOVEMBER, ESTABLISHED 2009

The Native Rhythms Festival is a family-friendly event held in Melbourne Florida showcasing musical talents and culture of the indigenous peoples of the Americas.

KEY SPONSORS

- Candlewood Suites, FDCA - Culture Builds Florida, Brevard Cultural Alliance

STRENGTHS

- This three day festival honours the culture of the indigenous peoples of the Americas through music, and especially the music of the Native American Flute

INSIGHTS

- Headline native musical acts
- 13,000 attendees from around the world
- Native American Heritage Month

Laura Aboriginal Dance Festival

19-21 JUNE ESTABLISHED 1985

The Laura Aboriginal Dance Festival showcases dancers from around the Cape York with traditional dance cycles that have been handed down through millennia.

KEY SPONSORS

- Queensland Government, Quinkan Centre, Cape York Health Centre, Bundarra Sports, Mii Home, UMI Arts

STRENGTHS

- The Laura Aboriginal Dance Festival is an exciting biennial gathering in Cape York Peninsula, highlighting the many diverse communities, languages, songs, dances and stories

INSIGHTS

- Biennial
- Longest continuously running Aboriginal cultural festival in Australia
- International audience
- 500 performers from 20 communities across Cape York Peninsula



3.5 Food & Wine

Barossa Vintage Festival

15-19 APRIL, ESTABLISHED 1946

Australia's original wine tourism event, showcasing 95 events over five days including a decadent feast, long table lunches, wild gypsy parties, a scarecrow trail and a comedic journey through wine education. An easy one-hour drive north of Adelaide, the Barossa Vintage Festival has evolved to become the premier wine tourism festival in Australia, and is the jewel in the Barossa events calendar.

KEY SPONSORS

- South Australia Government, South Australia Tourism Commission, Barossa Real Estate, Barossa Tourism, Barossa Grape and Wine
- 5 x presenting partners: Ahrens, The Barossa Council, Heart of Barossa, Foundation Barossa, Peter Lehmann

STRENGTHS

- Dubbed a Wine Tourism Festival, it has grown to be an integrated arts, culture, music, food and wine event for the region. It has a festival director, large external funding and attracts interstate and international audiences
- Event director, committee and patrons

INSIGHTS

- The event leads with the Barossa's food and wine strength but not to the detriment of culture, community and other offers
- Strong regional identity and incorporation of the Barossa "Trust Mark". A stand-alone brand endorsing authentic Barossa producers and growers
- United regional association and tourism group working collectively to achieve a shared vision





Gourmet Escape Margaret River

21-23 NOVEMBER, ESTABLISHED 2012

At the heart of the Margaret River, Gourmet Escape festival is the must-see Gourmet Village. A buzzing world of culinary excitement and the perfect opportunity to experience the delectable delights the region has to offer.

KEY SPONSORS

- Presented by Siemens, Western Australia Government and WA Tourism
- Additional major partners: Audi, Breville, Singapore Airlines

STRENGTHS

- Operated by commercial event group "Brand Events" in partnership with WA Tourism.
- Global A-list chefs as draw-cards. Have built very strong relationships with local businesses
- Attracts interstate and international audiences

INSIGHTS

- This public private partnership structure can be lucrative. The brand is Gourmet Escape and the region is secondary. The risk is for the brand to move as the IP is with the event, not the region

Noosa International Food & Wine

14-17 MAY, ESTABLISHED 1990
OFFICIALLY NOOSA FOOD & WINE FESTIVAL IN 2009

More than 200 invited chefs, producers, wine makers and media will descend on the village of Noosa and its iconic surroundings, joining foodies from all over the world to celebrate and enjoy the good things in life.

KEY SPONSORS

- Major sponsors Westpac and Queensland Government
- Plentiful corporate partners including: Qantas, Audi, Seppelt, Kitchen Aid, Riedel, Jet Star

STRENGTHS

- A foodie paradise. All about seeing people and being seen. It operates as an umbrella event festival that has become just as much about celebration as it has food and wine
- There is a balance of fun, lifestyle events mixed in with more serious food and wine masterclass style events. There is a significant opening concert that acts as a celebration and is open to a large audience

INSIGHTS

- The annual program is established well in advance with ticket sales live at least six months out. They have now created a membership (Club Chilli) to build engagement during the year
- In recent years the event has extended into the hinterland, beyond the Noosa township
- There is just as much focus on lifestyle and enjoyment, as there is on the food and wine products





Taste of Tasmania

28 DECEMBER TO 3 JANUARY

Tasmania might be small in size but it's a giant of the Australian food scene. The island state shows off its incredible produce and sophisticated culinary outlook at Taste of Tasmania – a buzzing waterfront event that attracts 300,000 hungry patrons each year.

KEY SPONSORS

- Principal sponsor: Cascade Brewery
- Major partners: Insurance by RACT, Ritual Coffee, Hartz Mineral Water

STRENGTHS

- A Hobart City Council initiative featuring major events, tastings and master-classes celebrating the best of Tasmanian produce

INSIGHTS

- A series of events make up the whole festival. The focus is on Tasmanian produce and bringing people into the city during the Christmas/New Year break, coinciding with the finish of the Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race



Mornington International Pinot Noir Celebration

6-7 FEBRUARY, ESTABLISHED 2003

Pinot Noir from many corners of the earth will come together to party with Mornington Peninsula Pinots. Mornington Peninsula Vignerons bring it all back home, focusing on the soil, aspect, climate and nuances of site that come together to create the infinite variety that is great Pinot Noir.

KEY SPONSORS

- Saint Martin, Saver Glass, Riedel, RACV Cape Schanck Resort, Mornington Peninsula Shire

STRENGTHS

- Held every two years the event has cemented Mornington Peninsula's claim to Pinot Noir. The event continues to grow and adds new elements to extend it beyond a wine aficionado audience

INSIGHTS

- An ambitious event that attracts an international audience. Based on a niche market that has grown to include many sub events



4.0 Key Recommendations

The Murrindindi Shire covers a diverse geographic area. Marysville and surrounds is a significant sub-section of the broader area and so the recommendations for Marysville have been split into their own section.

4.1 Key Recommendations

Murrindindi

SEE MURRINDINDI REGIONAL EVENTS PRIORITISATION APPENDIX SIX

REGIONAL STRENGTHS	EXISTING ASSETS	OPPORTUNITY	RECOMMENDATION
LAKE EILDON AND RIVERS	Big Fish Challenge	Recreational Fishing is Australia's largest sports/leisure past time*	The development of a long-term event marketing plan is recommended that provides a tighter event definition and integration of other elements – such as guest chefs, workshops, indigenous ingredient foraging, family entertainment etc. There should be a concerted effort to consolidate with Goulburn Fishing Festival.
	Lake Eildon	On-water event program	With the significant house boat population, the development of a major weekend throughout the season should be considered. Not an event so much but a themed weekend such as the first weekend of Summer – heralding the start of the “House Boat Season” that acts as a publicity driver and key reason for people to hire boats that weekend.
MUSIC	Foggy Mountain Bluegrass Festival	A new but successful event that has a strong fit with current consumer trends and event opportunities	This event requires local business participation and support to round out the weekend's activity. With the lack of compelling family festivals in regional Victoria, the expansion of this event into a “Bestival” style event could be highly advantageous.
CYCLING	Super Series	Develop into a seasonal event with regional challenges	Understand feasibility of leveraging the Super Series into a regional event. Speak to leaders of the cycling industry in Victoria and test the concept.
CULTURE & ARTS	Yea Arts Carnivale	Integrated regional festival with diverse events to attract the broadest cross section of guests	Build on existing paid event coordinator resources to help sustain greater growth, development and assistance with sponsorship and corporate funding. A review of the event name, as it is so much more than “Arts”, needs to better reflect what the event is about. This could also be achieved by the addition of an events tagline that broadens the appeal.
AUTOMOTIVE	Truck, Ute & Rod Show	This is a very successful event that has extensive community engagement linked to it. It is a niche area that has a long and sustained history and is a key asset for the region	The event should continue to be seen as an important contributor to the community and the broader trucking community at large. Ongoing support to enable the effective operation of the event should be a priority.

* Australian Recreational Fishing Foundation 2014

Tier One Big Fish Challenge

Fishing has very broad market appeal. Extending the core fishing focus to include related family activity, the event has increasing appeal that encourages people to try something new.

Alexandra Events does an excellent job with this event and has plans to grow and expand in 2015. The close proximity in the calendar to the Goulburn Fishing Festival results in two competitive events in the market at the same time, hampering the ability to grow the audience.

Ideally the two events would come together and create a stronger event, that has the capacity to talk to a much broader audience and can span the gap from experienced recreational fishermen to interested novices and families.

KEY SUCCESS FACTORS

- Strong local support and professional event coordination via Alexandra Events
- Planned addition of food and cooking elements to the event schedule
- Needs to be able to speak to a broader audience and increase reach of message for the event

RECOMMENDATION

ACTIONS FOR EVENT ORGANISER

- Consider attracting an event ambassador who can help drive the message and extend the reach to a broader community
- Seek corporate support from the food and hospitality sectors and work closely with local businesses (potentially from the Yarra Valley) to add depth to the related food and foraging elements of the event
- Develop a social media presence for the event and look to collaborate with other fishing interest groups

ACTIONS FOR MURRINDINDI SHIRE COUNCIL

- Support the event as a key driver of regional event-based economic activity
- Support Alexandra Events and the major supporters of the Goulburn Fishing Festival to work towards collaboration and merger of the two events

Tier One/Two House Boat Opening Weekend

Many people already use the Lake for a range of leisure activity throughout the year. Although difficult to run a water based event that generates significant visitor numbers due to the difficulty of spectating from shore – there is merit in the region's tourism operators coming together to create a major weekend similar to the opening weekend of the ski season in the Alps.

Late Spring / Start of Summer would be the ideal time by promoting an opening of the summer lake season. House boats would be fully occupied, the town's markets would be in full swing and a range of house boat demonstration activities could be undertaken for those not yet comfortable in a solo hire for a long weekend.

A marketing and public relations opportunity to create demand and a reason for people to visit the region. A calendar of ancillary activity across the towns and villages incorporating individual tourism operators will add to the festival feel of the weekend.

KEY SUCCESS FACTORS

- High levels of participation from the majority of house boat operators
- A coordinated marketing effort that could be funded by contributions from the operators based on expected revenues for the weekend
- Participation of other operators for land based activities such as markets, food and wine events and on water demonstrations, water ski lessons, guided hiking trails etc

RECOMMENDATION

ACTIONS FOR POTENTIAL EVENT ORGANISER

- That the Lake Eildon Houseboat Industries Association and the four main marinas/boat clubs (Eildon Boat Club, Lake Eildon Marina, Jerusalem Creek Marina and Darlingford Marina) discuss the feasibility of implementing such a themed weekend

ACTIONS FOR MURRINDINDI SHIRE COUNCIL

- An organising committee is convened to launch the house boat opening for Summer 16/17 supported by Murrindindi Shire Council and Murrindindi Incorporated

Tier One Foggy Mountain Bluegrass Festival

There are several Roots & Blues festivals around Australia, of which bluegrass is a sub-segment. Music continues to be a major driver of regional tourism, and this event clearly taps into that trend.

The inaugural event in 2014 was considered a success by organisers and is definitely an event that should have continued support to grow into a Tier One event for the region.

With every event trying to build its own audience, it could be worthwhile to make contact with other festivals, such as Byron Bay Roots & Blues, and investigate the opportunity of being a satellite or associated event to this already highly successful brand.

Leveraging the “Bestival” idea and making this a Kinglake camping, family friendly festival weekend is also a very strong concept that would merit further investigation.

KEY SUCCESS FACTORS

- Active support of the Murrindindi Shire Council to enable effective event operation and development
- Clear communication to industry and the regional community of the long term economic benefit for the region of the festival
- Continued integration of supporting event elements such as markets, food and wine experiences and weekend packaged experiences
- Potential expansion of the event, retaining a core bluegrass element but expanding to blues or family festival feel could be highly beneficial

RECOMMENDATION

ACTIONS FOR EVENT ORGANISER

- The organisers consider collaborating with other like-minded festivals to provide access to a broader target audience OR investigate a family-friendly positioning that leverages the local communities
- Broader community and industry support is garnered to extend the event footprint and include ancillary events and community based activities
- Continue to support and grow the social media footprint for the event
- Extending the committee size and expertise so the event is not as reliant on one or two people
- Accommodation options should be investigated to ensure capacity for growth, including camping to increase overnight visitation and yield

ACTIONS FOR MURRINDINDI SHIRE COUNCIL

- That the event is **acknowledged** by the Murrindindi Shire Council as a key driver of regional event-based economic activity

Tier One/Two Cycling

Cycling is another specialist sub-segment of outdoor sports and adventure activity. Again there are some strong regional assets in place such as the Great Victorian Rail Trail and the Marysville to Lake Mountain ascent.

Opportunity exists to develop a regional challenge with the Super Series for example where participants are challenged to complete all rides in one green season.

Options may then exist to monetise the ride by offering Super Series merchandise, having a race component that attracts sponsorship and potentially converting the final Super Series weekend into an event where season prizes are presented, regional food and wine is sold and potentially a series of family-friendly rides are offered throughout the day.

KEY SUCCESS FACTORS

- Community and local business commitment to supporting the ride's development
- Securing a corporate sponsor and support from the cycling sector for the event
- Capturing a mechanism for participants to register to enable participation levels to be tracked and direct audience engagement

RECOMMENDATION

ACTIONS FOR POTENTIAL EVENT ORGANISER

- Understand the feasibility of leveraging the Super Series into a seasonal event
- Speak to leaders of the cycling industry in Victoria and test the concept
- Develop an event plan and seek corporate support for the 2016 season

Tier One Yea Arts Carnivale

16-26 JANUARY 2015

A wonderful, inclusive event that has grown very well and is differentiated from other regional events with a strong base for ongoing success.

The committee and organisers are all volunteers working on an ambitious program requiring significant local coordination and arts community support.

There is opportunity to grow the event, similar to Woodford, extending the carnival into new areas including building on the food and wine component for example.

KEY SUCCESS FACTORS

- A hard working, dynamic and entrepreneurial committee, which is already in place
- Build on existing paid event coordinator resources to help sustain greater growth and development and ensure the sustainable future of the event
- The ability to leverage the success of the event to attract greater corporate sponsorship

RECOMMENDATION

ACTIONS FOR EVENT ORGANISER

- Identify a “patron” or “curator” for the event who can work with the fantastic committee to further build the event and support marketing programs
- Review the regional benchmark events in this strategy and look to adopt some of the best proactive activity - lock in event dates 12 months in advance, sell season tickets
- The committee may wish to consider removing the “arts” from the name and becoming the Yea Carnivale enabling the event to speak more directly to a broader audience who may not resonate with “arts”. The event is so much more and would be very attractive to those seeking community engagement, family-friendly regional activity and much more
- Work with Murrindindi Food and Wine Inc and/or Made in Murrindindi to enhance offering across food and wine and arts and crafts sectors.
- For other events to use a similar model of one over-arching event committee, with individual groups or sub-committees running individual activities

ACTIONS FOR MURRINDINDI SHIRE COUNCIL

- That the event is **acknowledged** by the Murrindindi Shire Council as a key driver of regional event-based economic activity
- That **guidance** be provided for the development of a funding proposal that can be used to attract greater corporate sponsorship

Tier One Truck, Ute & Rod Show

6-7 JUNE 2015, ESTABLISHED 1996

A free of charge, family-friendly event attracting many thousands, held for the last 19 years in Alexandra over the Queen's Birthday Long Weekend.

Alexandra Events has done a fantastic job growing the event year-on-year. Coordination of all aspects along the 2km-long display route, including closure of roads and engagement of local businesses and communities requires significant management.

Alexandra Events are adding new attractions to the event each year, such as the vintage bike display and market both new for 2015.

KEY SUCCESS FACTORS

- A popular highlight of Murrindindi Shire's events calendar for two decades
- Successful organisation and management by Alexandra Events team, including bolstering ongoing relationships with stakeholders
- Family-supported returning audience year-on-year - across multiple generations, some of whom have now moved out of the area
- Valuable support from an army of passionate volunteers

RECOMMENDATION

ACTIONS FOR EVENT ORGANISER

- The key opportunity for the Truck, Ute & Rod Show is in growing the awareness of the event therefore attracting a larger audience
- The memorial provides a meaningful public relations opportunity that not only builds awareness of the memorial, but of the plight of drivers on the road and the event itself
- Recommend potential for the development of a PR program for the Show along with extended social media support
- The addition of Instagram to the social platforms would yield strong results for the Show

4.2 Key Recommendations Marysville and Surrounds

SEE MURRINDINDI REGIONAL EVENTS PRIORITISATION APPENDIX SIX

OVERVIEW:

Marysville is an important hub of the region and is a major tourism destination in its own right. Marysville was one of the most affected areas during the 2009 bushfires and as part of the bushfire recovery program, the Marysville and Surrounds Tourism Events and Marketing Package 2011-2014 (MSTEP) was formed.

The objectives of the MSTEP events program were to:

- Increase the number of visitors to the Marysville and Surrounds region
- Enhance the quality of experience of these visitors
- Enhance the branding and reputation of the region as a tourism destination

Although significant event activity was funded via MSTEP, few Tier One events were built to a long-term position of sustainability. This strategy is designed to build on the MSTEP activity and guide regional operators and event groups in future activity therefore requiring a separate set of recommendations for Marysville and surrounds.

RECOMMENDATION:

ACTIONS FOR POTENTIAL EVENT ORGANISER

There are many small, successful events in the Marysville and Surrounds region. The key recommendation is for the formation of a seasonal event calendar and marketing strategy that builds on these individual activities for a more synergistic benefit.

Examples of how this could be achieved have been expanded in the following pages.

The Opportunity in: Outdoor Activity

There is a significant number of existing outdoor events in the Marysville and Surrounds region that fit under the theme of outdoor adventure and fitness. This is a defined and growing market segment where people are looking to travel into the regions for physical events – particularly endurance style activities.

Marysville Triangle Business & Tourism (MTBT) and Lake Mountain Alpine Resort could better market to this audience by restructuring their websites to talk directly to this sub-segment. Event operators could be encouraged to provide suggested itineraries for participants along the same themes – places for pre-event carb loading, ultimate rehydration breakfast or a spa session the following day as part of recovery activity.

These themed itineraries marketed to this active lifestyle audience can then be targeted by PR and direct marketing activity to drive engagement with a highly targeted audience.

KEY SUCCESS FACTORS

- A centralised 'portal' on existing regional websites that clearly differentiates the outdoor event / adventure sport market
- A regional focus on these combined events that have a dedicated marketing / PR plan
- Discussions with operators on how to market the events and extend stays in region

RECOMMENDATION

ACTIONS FOR POTENTIAL EVENT ORGANISER

- Consideration should be given to the ease at which existing content on websites and other tourism information on regional events could be grouped and co-marketed
- Develop an understanding with operators, where possible, of the degree of audience overlap and those returning to the region for similar activity
- Consider some kind of "passport" for event visitors who attend the region multiple times that may apply special offers or discounts

The Opportunity in: Food, Wine, Music & Arts

There is a growing food, wine, music and arts offer in the Marysville region and Spring is an ideal time of the year to bring people to the region and this may be a perfect draw card.

The development of a specialised campaign is recommended that may grow into an event proposal in time. Individual businesses would be encouraged to create visitor content around a central theme such as “Spring Thaw” that celebrates the transition from Winter to the bud burst of Spring.

Similar to Outdoor Activity, the dedicated Eating & Drinking section of the MTBT website could be developed to focus on a Spring campaign as a focus key message during the season. This would not exclude food, wine and arts from other times of the year but provide a targeted promotional window for Marysville and surrounds.

KEY SUCCESS FACTORS

- The development of a cohesive dialogue about Marysville in Spring that acts as a conduit to the winter playground message for Lake Mountain Alpine Resort
- Dedicated communications about food, wine and arts
- Greater integration of existing events into broader regional marketing and collaboration of existing operators

RECOMMENDATION

ACTIONS FOR POTENTIAL EVENT ORGANISER

- Understand the feasibility of marketing a Spring seasonal theme for the region
- Understand the potential breadth of that offer and develop key messaging around the Spring Season

The Opportunity in: Winter Sports & Recreation

Winter sports and recreation is a key attraction for Lake Mountain Alpine Resort and the Marysville region. Lake Mountain is a wonderful snow play destination and already has events and activities that are attractive to families.

Lake Mountain Alpine Resort should continue to build interest in these events and potentially consider the timing of the family fun weekend – the Queen's Birthday long weekend, the official opening of the ski season, is promoted heavily by Victorian resorts.

Would Lake Mountain benefit from choosing a less crowded (by way of conflicting marketing messages) weekend to promote family fun? Is there an ability to build on the snow sculpting component of this weekend, involving some talented artists, and create a family event along similar lines to the Frankston Sand Sculpture exhibit over Summer?

With the huge popularity of the movie Frozen, ice and snow sculpture has captured the hearts of tens of thousands of Australian children and an expanded ice and snow sculpture exhibit and associated competition would also drive PR exposure for the resort.

KEY SUCCESS FACTORS

- Building a marketing theme around the family fun weekend that has social currency for families and children
- Inclusion of a visually sensational sculpture component that may drive significant media coverage
- Inclusion of some sculpture / arts element that could occur in Marysville and provide a natural tie-in to the on-mountain experience

RECOMMENDATION

ACTIONS FOR POTENTIAL EVENT ORGANISER

- Develop key marketing themes for the Marysville region for Winter, overlaying a relevant proposition to drive attendance of families for the Family Fun Day
- Look to extend that theme into the whole region for that given event period extending the reach and appeal beyond snow play
- Develop a clear marketing and public relations plan to drive awareness

4.3 Tier Two, Three & Corporate Events

The sustainable operation of tier two, three and corporate event activity across regions is vital for ongoing tourism success.

Murrindindi Shire Council provides event support via process facilitation. The ability for the region's operators and local tourism and business associations to improve and support the professional management and delivery of events at all levels will be critical to the long-term sustainability of an event program for the region.

Whilst the strategy recommends that any available financial support be skewed to Tier One event development, continued in-kind support to Tier Two and other events should remain.

More broadly, events that align with the event strategy should be supported with respect to minimising barriers and reducing red tape.

The Murrindindi Shire Council Grants Program should be further promoted to Tier Two and Tier Three event organisers.

EXTERNAL EVENTS

- Externally-run events occur throughout the region and should be encouraged within the Murrindindi Shire Council economic development footprint and with in-kind support
- Funding support of external events should be considered where a strong partnership model is in place with the community and when the event is aligned with the events strategy. Regional businesses would need to be key stakeholders in such an event

RECOMMENDATION

ACTIONS FOR MURRINDINDI SHIRE COUNCIL

- Recognise the ongoing provision by Murrindindi Shire Council for a centralised calendar of events (online and print) to enable events to coordinate with other operators and ensure opportunities for leverage are identified

5.0 Event Operations

Murrindindi Shire

A key requirement of the strategy is to make recommendations on the operations of event activity across the Murrindindi Shire.

THE FOLLOWING AREAS ARE COVERED:

- Learnings from benchmark events
- Event development framework
- Regional planning, application and approval process
- Funding considerations

LEARNINGS FROM BENCHMARK EVENTS

There is no such thing as an overnight success. Particularly in the event industry. On average it takes five to seven years* for an event to become sustainable and have a funding model that allows for paid organisation and can attract reasonable levels of external funding.

The challenge is that local government and tourism event funding is usually apportioned on a year to year basis making long term planning difficult.

A more sustainable model for funding was applied in the Advancing Country Towns Program. For the Big Fish Challenge to receive funding, the event coordinators were required to enter into a six-year agreement, such that funding provided to the event was allocated over a three-year period. The allocation was scaled as follows: 37.5% in the first year, 37.5% in the second year and 25% in the third year. The event costs for years four to six of the event were to be met through generated income, sponsorship, philanthropic and other sources.

The benchmark events reviewed for the strategy shared several other characteristics:

- With few exceptions, the events each had a clear, long-term vision and event “champion” who drove success and engagement in early years
- The events all have strong local community involvement, often with organising committees and support from local business groups, councils and other stakeholders
- Many of the events are multi-faceted and have grown from a more narrow product focus. For example Barossa Vintage Festival started with a wine focus and now is a broader, cultural event and Woodford which started as a folk festival is now a much broader event encompassing food, wine and lifestyle elements
- Family friendly is a major consideration, at least in part, for all the benchmark events

* Anecdotally derived from detailed event review and research

5.1 Murrindindi Event Development Framework

There seems to be some disconnect between how the operators and LBTAs are approaching event development and what consumers are looking for. For example, the research shows that consumers are seeking more aggregator models that provide easy access to whole of region information*.

The strategy has already mentioned the benefit of collaboration not only across Shire boundaries, but across industry sectors. Future Tier One event success will require effective collaboration of this nature to have a strong sense of long term sustainability. The LBTAs and private enterprise are currently managing regional event planning and delivery, however a broader industry group who meet as an events group twice per year could be a welcome addition to help facilitate this cross pollination of ideas.

Structural challenges also exist with the perceived bureaucracy of event management and the natural tension between Council's commitment to supporting tourism and events and the required logistics and compliance associated with their delivery.

Finally, continuing to invest in building local knowledge is critical, particularly across industry sectors. Murrindindi Inc plays a critical role as a conduit for collaboration of shire-wide events.

* Anecdotally derived from detailed event review and research

5.2 Regional Planning Application & Development Process

Given that the Murrindindi Shire sits across several tourism regions, the same approach to regional event planning as recommended for Yarra Ranges would not be effective.

Opportunities are available to use regional tourism networks such as Goulburn River Valley Tourism to promote events and activities. Should Murrindindi Shire Council receive funding from external sources and identify a priority for expanding its event coordination role, continuing or adding the following activities/initiatives should be considered:

- Facilitation of event planning and reduction of perceived red tape for event operators
- Assistance and guidance for identified Tier One events to attract and ask for state government, tourism and private sector funding support
- Assistance in event development – for instance playing an active role to try and merge the Goulburn Fishing Festival with the Big Fish Challenge
- Coordination of a whole of region communication plan to bring diverse regional stakeholders together with a shared view and understanding of the economic impact and importance of events to the Shire
- Promote any funding opportunities to events coordinators

5.3 Funding Considerations

The final component of the strategy is a recommendation on funding considerations for the ongoing support of regional event activity.

Now that the MSTEP event funding has concluded there is no additional funding available from the Victorian Government for event management. Murrindindi Shire Council has a community grants program and an events budget. Any additional funding available in the future from external sources could be directed to event coordination or to:

- Events that support and enhance the Regional Event Criteria set out on Page 9
- Potential Tier One events in the identified priorities for the Murrindindi Shire, which help to achieve economic sustainability. In these instances, the event operators should be providing a detailed event strategy submission with a long term vision and growth plan to show the pathway to sustainability. Murrindindi Shire Council should then consider making longer term funding commitments to these events over a three year period with performance expectations that are renewed annually
- Strong Tier One events act as icons for the region, driving much broader awareness, public relations and visitation to the region. This is an important halo effect for Tier Two and community events

5.3 Funding Considerations (cont.)

There are a number of existing funding avenues that can be accessed by event operators. A short summary of these are presented below:

TOURISM VICTORIA'S COUNTRY EVENTS PROGRAM

Managed by Tourism Victoria's Events unit, the Country Victoria Events Program (CVEP) provides support for the facilitation and enhancement of regional events. This program focuses on events that are able to attract or likely to attract in the near future intrastate and interstate visitors.

The funding aims to assist the event to be self-sustaining, to build profile of the event to attract visitors outside the region and maximise economic benefits generated by the event.

For criteria of the program and participation opportunities visit: www.tourism.vic.gov.au/tourism-industry/events-programs

VICTORIAN ARTS GRANTS

The VicArts Grants program invests in the creative endeavours and professional practice of Victoria's artists and smaller arts companies. It provides one-off support for discrete projects and programs that will develop and bring dynamism to Victoria's arts sector.

VicArts Grants will support projects and programs that: create new works across all forms of contemporary art, music, literature and performance and present original performance, literary works, recordings or exhibitions that engage Victorian audiences and/or reach new audiences nationally and internationally.

For more information visit: http://www.arts.vic.gov.au/Funding_Programs/VicArts_Grants

ACCESSING CORPORATE FUNDING

The majority of corporations and local businesses have some internal commitment to funding community based activity and events.

Once potential partners have been identified, it is critical to understand what their current commitments are, their internal processes for evaluating sponsorships and the timelines they work within. Invariably, regional event requests come in too late and don't articulate the key benefit to the sponsor. Tips for seeking corporate funding include:

- Plan early and get the request in 12 months in advance and preferably in the previous financial year for budget consideration in the new year
- Have a clear proposal that articulates what is in it for them. This must be more than logo placement and tickets
- Know who to talk to, if you have get a personal referral it will make a big difference
- Be clever and different – unique experiences for sponsors are highly valued

5.4 Next Steps

To ensure this strategy is actionable for Murrindindi Shire Council and industry, the following summarises the recommended next steps:

EVENT PLANNING

- The development and delivery of regional event workshops on event planning, writing funding/sponsorship submissions and event management would be highly valued by operators. Murrindindi Shire Council may be able to work with industry and a private provider to implement such a program
- Communicate the event strategies and regional priorities in advance to all stakeholder groups to ensure industry and private operators understand the priority focus areas
- Host an annual event planning day where operators come together to be briefed on each other's activities and identify opportunities for collaboration and cross promotion

EVENT DEVELOPMENT- MURRINDINDI

- **Fishing** – Provide feedback to, and support of, the development of the event plan and participate in discussions with Goulburn Fishing Festival to merge with Big Fish Challenge
- **Yea Arts Carnivale** - Provide the suggestion of a curator / patron for the festival. Provide in-kind support and advice on seeking corporate funding
- **Foggy Mountain Bluegrass Festival** – commence dialogue with the operator to identify potential growth opportunities to either a) identify synergies with other major Blues festivals or b) expand into a truly family festival event
- **Cycling** – recommend the development of a cycling tourism strategy and action plan for the region to identify the scope for further development of cycling infrastructure, trails and events
- **Tier Two, Three & Corporate Events** – continue to encourage and support event development in region that supports the key priority areas identified in the strategy

ROLE OF MURRINDINDI SHIRE COUNCIL

- Funding and resources to support event development are very limited, however, if future scope were to be made available in the events unit, the investment in more high-level regional event development would be advantageous

BRANDING

- The operators within the Murrindindi Shire do fall across several Tourism Regions. The Murrindindi Shire Council should continue to communicate the brand opportunities for each of those tourism regions whilst continuing to support Goulburn River Valley Tourism

FUNDING

- Access to state funding is constantly changing, Murrindindi Shire Council could support operators by communicating changes to state grant and funding programs

6.0 Appendices

6.1 Reference Materials

EVENT STRATEGY.ZIP

Event Operator SWOT's

Murrindindi Documents

Statewide Documents

EVENT OPERATOR SWOTS

- 7 Peaks Lake Mountain.doc
- Alexandra and District Open Gardens attachment.doc.docx
- Alexandra and District Open Gardens.doc
- Alexandra Speedway.pdf
- Alexandra Spring Show.pdf
- Granite Grind.doc
- Lake Mountain Marathon.doc
- Lake Mountain Ski Race Program.doc
- Marysville Marathon.doc
- Mountain motorsport.doc
- Open Gardens Marysville.doc
- Paradise Music Festival.doc
- Rollerski Championships.doc
- Walk the Wall.doc
- Yea Arts Carnivale.doc
- Yea Autumn Fest.docx
- Yea Picnic Races.docx
- Yea Show.doc

MURRINDINDI DOCUMENTS

- Goulburn River Valley Tourism
- GRVT Marketing Strategy 2011 – 2016.pdf
- GRVT Tourism Development Plan 2011 – 2016.pdf
- GRVT_Destination Management Plan_Final Report 16th April.pdf
- MSTEP
- Examples of Marysville brand assets.pdf
- Marysville and surrounds 2014 event calendar.xlsx
- Marysville and surrounds tourism events and marketing package 2011 – 2014.pdf
- Marysville Boston Consulting Group Progress Report 2011.pdf
- Marysville Boston Consulting Group Report 2009.pdf
- Marysville surrounds accommodation audit.xlsx
- MSTEP Event Funding Guidelines.pdf
- MSTEP Events Funded.xlsx
- TNE13_4423_Marysville & Surrounds Booklet_HR_Single.pdf

STATEWIDE DOCUMENTS

- DVS Events Drivers of Regional Tourism FINAL 04082014(1).pdf
- Get social and improve your event toolkit August2014.pdf
- GFK Australia – Regional Event Impact FULL REPORT.PDF
- TRA – Final presentation plain cover June 25 Final Rev 3.pdf
- Victoria's Tourism and Event Industry Strategy 2020.pdf

6.2 Events Listing

For the calendar year 2015, the following events were listed in Murrindindi Shire Council's Calendar of Events brochures, however this list is not exhaustive.

JANUARY:

Touch A Heart 2 – Art Exhibition
 2015 Canoe/Kayak Slalom National Championships
 True Blue Family Fun Day – Picnic Races
 Yea Arts Carnivale
 PIGment of Imagination – Yea Arts Carnivale
 Meg Heres Art Demo
 Tunnel Art Vision – Yea Arts Carnivale
 Further Reflections – Art Exhibition (January-March)
 Rodwells Yea Cup Day – Picnic Races
 Taggerty 4 Seasons Summer Market

FEBRUARY:

Granite Grind – Cycle Race
 St Pat's Race Day – Picnic Races
 Stonelea Alexandra Cup – Picnic Races
 Wakeboard Victoria State Titles
 Say Goodbye To Summer Dinner – Holmesglen @ Eildon

MARCH:

Marysville – Lake Mountain Challenge – Cycle Race
 Autumn below the Ranges Exhibition at Banksia Gallery – (March-April)
 Yea & Beyond – Art Exhibition
 Botanical By Design – (March-April)
 Eildon 2 Alex Multi-Sport Race

APRIL:

Meg Heres Easter Art Exhibition (April-May)
 Eildon Lions' Easter Market
 Taggerty 4 Seasons Easter Market
 Molesworth Easter Bazaar and Clearing Sale
 Kerrisdale Mountain Railway 'Steamfest'
 Alexandra Easter Fair
 Lake Eildon Challenge – Multi-Sport Race

MAY:

Café Culture Series – Taliska – Music Concert
 Ralph Wait Memorial Ride – Horse Ride
 Von Guerard Inspired Art - (May-June)
 Mother's Day Lunch - Holmesglen @ Eildon
 RSPCA Million Paws Walk
 Mountain Mayhem – Lake Mountain Fun Day

JUNE:

Winter Art Exhibition – (June-July)
 Victorian Truck Drivers Memorial Service
 Taggerty 4 Seasons Market
 Alexandra Quilters Inc. Annual Exhibition
 Snow Season Opening – Lake Mountain Alpine Resort
 Alexandra Truck Ute and Rod Show
 Melbourne International Comedy Festival - Marysville
 Sprint X - Cross-country Ski Event

JULY:

Australian Snowman Festival - Lake Mountain Alpine Resort
 Lake Mountain Mini Series - Cross-country ski event (July-August)
 Murrindindi Beanie Festival
 Christmas in July - Holmesglen @ Eildon
 Bullfight Charge - Cross-country ski event

AUGUST:

Taste of Tamworth – Music Concert
 Winter Warrior Challenge

SEPTEMBER:

Café Culture Series – Klezmania – Music Concert

6.2 Events

Listing cont.

For the calendar year 2015, the following events were listed in Murrindindi Shire Council's Calendar of Events brochures, however this list is not exhaustive.

OCTOBER:

Spring Art Exhibition and Open Gardens at Banksia Gallery
 19th Annual Wood Show
 Foggy Mountain Bluegrass Festival
 Marysville Jazz and Blues Weekend
 Eildon Big Fish Challenge & Food & Wine Festival
 Spring Degustation Dinner
 Australian Sparkling Wine Show
 Run for the Roses Race Meeting – Picnic Races
 Alexandra & District Open Gardens
 Lake Mountain Marathon Run
 Marysville Art Show - (October-November)
 Yea Camera Club Annual Photography Competition - (October-November)
 Tiddelly Pom - The Art Of Children's Song - (October-November)
 Rotary club of kinglake Ranges Trivia Night
 Alexandra Automotive Swap Meet and Historic Truck Muster
 7 Peaks Alpine Ascent Challenge – Cycle Event
 MRF Tyres Akademos – Car Rally
 Spiritual Connections – Celebrating Halloween
 Taggerty 4 Seasons Market
 Wandering in the Wetlands - (October-November)

NOVEMBER:

Alexandra Spring Fair
 Kerrisdale Mountain Railway 'Steamfest'
 Cup Eve Dinner – Yea Arts Carnivale
 Targa High Country – Car Rally
 Yea & District Open Gardens
 The Buxton Bootcamp - Mountain Bike Race
 RACV Marysville Marathon
 Young at Heart – Art Exhibition
 Alexandra Annual Spring Show
 Yea Spring Racing Day – Picnic Races
 Great Tarmac Rally – Car Rally
 Paradise Music Festival
 Kinglake Ranges Rotary Art Show
 Moondance Over Alex – Music Concert
 Buxton Reunion & 140th School Anniversary

DECEMBER:

Christmas Celebration Dinner – Holmesglen @ Eildon
 The Summer Warrior Challenge
 Kinglake Community Christmas Carols
 Sister Olive 3000m Handicap – Picnic Races

REGULAR MARKETS:

Alexandra Market
 Bollygum Community Market
 Flowerdale Community Market
 Kinglake Produce & Artisan Market
 Marysville Market
 Yark Country Market
 Yea Country Market