

Dear Sir/Madam

I provide a submission from Voyages Hotels and Resorts on the GBRMPA Review.

Voyages is an Australian travel company providing experience-based holidays in spectacular wilderness locations including the Red Centre, Top End, Tasmania's Central Highlands, the Kimberley region of Western Australia, Queensland's Outback and of course, the Great Barrier Reef.

We operate award-winning properties such as Longitude 131°, Lizard Island, Ayers Rock Resort, Kings Canyon Resort, El Questro Resort, Bedarra Island, Silky Oaks and Cradle Mountain Lodge. We also own and operate Odyssey Tours and Safaris which offers eco and cultural tourism experiences such as the H2O exploration tour of the Great Barrier Reef and Top End tours into some of the country's breathtaking National Parks such as Litchfield and Kakadu. In addition to the properties listed above, we operate tourism businesses on Heron Island, Wilson Island, Brampton Island and Dunk Island.

We are singularly focused on providing our guests with incredible, memorable experiences, which they would not be able to enjoy anywhere else in Australia.

Because we are privileged to operate in some of Australia's most spectacular and sensitive country, we take our environmental and conservation responsibilities very seriously.

We fully support the continuation of GBRMPA in its current form. Any decision to remove or dilute the decision making powers of the authority would be a retrograde step; both for tourism and for conservation.

Approval processes, decision making, and a holistic approach to issues management are achieved through the wide ranging powers currently encompassed within GBRMPA. The organisation has acted in a balanced and common-sense fashion throughout all of our dealings, and any fragmentation of this style of operation would be detrimental to the future of the Great Barrier Reef and those tourism operators seeking to operate responsibly on it.

In particular, I would like to make the following points;

- * The independent stature of the board must be retained
- * The "one stop shop" nature of GBRMPA for permits and approvals must be retained
- * The retention of strong decision making powers (ministerial powers aside) pertaining to the GBR must be retained, and
- * An even stronger mechanism for conservation and tourism to work together for the long term protection of the GBR should be encouraged.

It is imperative that the key decision makers on issues of importance to the GBR and those who operate upon it, are available to the local communities and local industry, and this can only occur if they live within and amongst the people most affected. Any contraction of power to Canberra would be a retrograde step.

Kind Regards,
Grant Hunt