



## Tourism quality/accreditation

### Introduction

As sustainable tourism develops further in Australia, it is becoming increasingly important that small to medium-sized tourism operators satisfy the expectations of tourists with regard to service delivery and quality of products. In order to assist in assuring tourists and other users of products and services, a number of programs have been created to accredit tourism businesses.

### What is accreditation?

Accreditation is a method of assuring that a business conforms to certain criteria or requirements that are set by external, often independent organisations. These requirements can relate to any type of activity, but most often focus on industry standards relating to health and safety, environmental management systems, quality systems and value.

However, many accreditation programs have developed to assist tourists in evaluating the variety of tourism opportunities that exist and to assist tourism operators in enhancing their level of performance and consistency.

### Benefits of accreditation

The key benefits of accreditation for tourism operators are:

- It allows operators to systematically create a quality service.
- It encourages operators to always seek ways to improve performance and have this improvement recognised.
- It provides a marketing tool and a competitive advantage for operators.
- It provides access to resources to help implement industry best-practice.
- It allows operators to distinguish themselves. This can enable them to be recognised as a preferred operator and hence benefit the business.
- It provides ecotourists with a recognised method of identifying the tourism operators that are operating in sustainable ways.
- It can save the tourism operator and customer money, by providing relatively quick access to standardised information.

### National Tourism Accreditation Framework (NTAF)

The Australian Government is seeking to improve the quality of the Australian tourism experience through the development of a National Tourism Accreditation Framework (NTAF).

Currently a wide range of accreditation and ratings programs operate in the Australian tourism industry, under which businesses, products or service providers are certified as meeting a prescribed set of requirements. The proposed NTAF will provide an umbrella framework under which existing programs will continue to operate, but with a common national brand and agreed quality, oriented to building consumer purchasing preference and corresponding market benefit for accredited participants. The existence of a common and recognisable standard for quality in tourism will also have the benefit of creating an environment in which it is difficult for 'rogue operators' to function.



NTAF will offer the opportunity to:

- increase consumer confidence by ensuring a high level of awareness of accreditation in the market place
- improve business profitability and sustainability
- promote all programs under a consistent brand (leading to improved understanding and recognition of standards by businesses and consumers alike), and potentially provide cost savings for program managers through shared marketing, auditing and governance
- promote greater participation by business in quality programs, leading to improved practices and competitiveness
- stimulate demand for Australia's tourism product
- provide a greater level of information about the standards and practices of different businesses, leading in particular to more efficient business-to-business dealings.

The Australian Government is providing leadership in bringing accreditation/ratings programs together under the Framework. Further details can be found at:

[http://www.ret.gov.au/tourism/policy/national\\_tourism\\_accreditation\\_framework/Pages/NationalTourismAccreditationFramework.aspx](http://www.ret.gov.au/tourism/policy/national_tourism_accreditation_framework/Pages/NationalTourismAccreditationFramework.aspx)

## Key Tourism Accreditation Australia State Based Programs

ATAP (ACT) – [www.ticact.org.au](http://www.ticact.org.au)

ATAP (South Australia) – [www.satic.com.au](http://www.satic.com.au)

ARAP (Tasmania) – [www.tict.com.au](http://www.tict.com.au)

ATAP (Western Australia) – [www.trustthetick.com.au](http://www.trustthetick.com.au)

ATAP (Northern Territory) – [www.accreditnt.com.au](http://www.accreditnt.com.au)

ATAP (Victoria) – [www.tourismaccreditationvic.com.au](http://www.tourismaccreditationvic.com.au)

Further information on NTAP can be found at <http://www.atap.net.au/industry/>

## Independent Accreditation and Rating Programs (environment focussed)

Ecotourism Certification Program – [http://www.ecotourism.org.au/eco\\_certification.asp](http://www.ecotourism.org.au/eco_certification.asp)

EcoGuide Australia Program – <http://www.ecotourism.org.au/ecoguide.asp>

GreenGlobe Program – [www.greenglobeprogram.com](http://www.greenglobeprogram.com)

For further information on additional accreditation programs, see [http://www.ret.gov.au/tourism/Documents/ntaf\\_proposal\\_to\\_tmc.pdf](http://www.ret.gov.au/tourism/Documents/ntaf_proposal_to_tmc.pdf)

## Overview

Overall, it may not yet be mainstream practice for small to medium tourist operators in Australia to seek accreditation, but such programs can have a significant effect in enhancing reputation, can provide significant cost-savings and environmental benefits, and can provide a competitive marketing advantage for operators to reach out to a wider range of customers.



This factsheet has been developed in conjunction with the guide *'Climate Change: Mitigation and Adaptation Measures for Australian Tourism Operators'*. The guide and factsheets were developed by Parsons Brinckerhoff Australia Pty Ltd for the Department of Resources, Energy and Tourism, Tourism Australia. For further information please see <http://www.ret.gov.au>.



**Australian Government**  
**Department of Resources,  
Energy and Tourism**