



17 March 2017

The Right Honourable The Lord Mayor
Cr Robert Doyle
City of Melbourne
GPO Box 1603
Melbourne VIC 3001

Dear Lord Mayor,

Response to proposed amendments to Activities Local Law 2009

1. About AHA (Vic) and TAA (Vic)

The Australian Hotels Association (AHA) is an organisation of employers in the hotel and hospitality industry registered under the Fair Work (Registered Organisations) Act 2009. AHA is represented in Victoria by AHA (Vic). Tourism Accommodation Australia (Vic) is a division of the AHA (Vic) and represents the needs and interests of the major licensed accommodation hotels in Victoria's tourism and accommodation sector. Together, TAA (Vic) and AHA (Vic) have a diverse membership of more than 400 accommodation properties, including pub-style hotels, apartments, boutique hotels, backpacker accommodation and three, four and five star international accommodation hotels located across metropolitan and regional Victoria.

AHA (Vic) and TAA (Vic) welcome the opportunity to contribute to the discussion, and are supportive of, the City of Melbourne's proposed amendments to Activities Local Law 2009, focused on protecting public amenity and disabled access while increasing the Council's ability to remove items that are left unattended in public places.

2. Tourism and the economy

The importance of tourism as a significant driver of economic activity, employment and profile for Melbourne and Victoria is well documented. Victoria has out-performed key competitor states and national averages in attracting international visitors to the State¹. Spending by international visitors to Victoria is also at record levels at \$6.7 billion (year ending March 2016), with 93 per cent of that spend occurring in Melbourne². In 2014-15 approximately 210,400 Victorians (7.2 per cent of total Victorian employment) were employed in the tourism sector, that generated 6 per cent of the State's Gross State Product³

¹ [Tourism Victoria Annual Report 2015-16](#)

² [Tourism Victoria Tourism Industry Resources](#)

³ [Tourism Victoria – value of Victoria's tourism industry](#)

Melbourne also continues to build its profile on the international stage, having received the accolade of the world's most liveable city in August 2016 for the sixth consecutive year.

Victoria's hotel infrastructure plays a pivotal role in ensuring the attraction and retention of major events, festivals, international and domestic tourism to the State. Accordingly, it is important that law and order is upheld to enable all citizens to feel safe and secure when experiencing all that Melbourne has to offer, including being able to access their hotel accommodation without impediment. The ability for people with a disability to freely navigate their way around the city, without experiencing unnecessary obstruction is also critical and is consistent with the City of Melbourne's intent, as articulated in the *Melbourne for All People Strategy - 2014-17*.

3. Melbourne's homelessness challenge

AHA (Vic) and TAA (Vic) acknowledge that providing timely support for people in need of assistance due to homelessness is a challenging issue for the City of Melbourne and relevant service agencies. We support the City of Melbourne's position advocated in the *Pathways Homelessness Strategy* to develop a 'whole of community approach' to the issue and 'create sustainable pathways out of homelessness.' Melbourne's hotel network is very supportive of these agencies and their endeavours to deliver services effectively. The provision of assistance to them includes items of food, blankets, mattresses, soap, volunteers and financial support for key events and activities.

4. Maintaining Victoria and Melbourne's tourism status

Melbourne's position as a tourism destination of choice has been hard-earned and must be protected. Threatening or aggressive behaviour, including aggressive begging, 'professional' protesting and the obstruction of access to accommodation properties is likely to have a detrimental effect on tourist numbers, their spending patterns and adversely impact our reputation among domestic and international visitors alike.

AHA (Vic) and TAA (Vic) welcomes the opportunity to share our views to the proposed amendments to the Local Law 2009 and are available to provide further input, if required.

Yours sincerely,



Paddy O'Sullivan
Chief Executive Officer
Australian Hotels Association (Victoria)



Dougal Hollis
General Manager
Tourism Accommodation Australia (Victoria)