



Guidelines for Operation of WTA Branches

Wildlife Tourism Australia Inc.

Policy Document, November 2005

Introduction

Wildlife Tourism Australia supports the establishment of State or regionally based branches in areas where sufficient interest exists from wildlife tourism operators. The main purposes of these branches are to:

1. provide opportunities for mutual support and networking at a level where significant opportunities for face-to-face interaction exist
2. facilitate members working together on wildlife tourism-related issues of local interest
3. build the WTA membership base

The Tasmanian branch is the first to be formed, and provides a good example of the sort of approach we recommend be taken. Minutes of meetings of this branch are available on the WTA website www.wildlifetourism.org.au

Guidelines

1. The principal role of any WTA branch is to work on issues that branch members deem to be important in their region, which also fall within the overall mission and objectives of WTA. It is also the role of branches to encourage informal interaction between branch members.
2. All branch members must be current (paid) members of WTA.
3. Each branch will informally elect members to act in the positions of Chair, Secretary and any other positions deemed by the members.
4. Each branch will hold at least one face-to-face meeting per year, which must follow formal meeting procedures. Other contact between branch members will occur as needed by email and phone.
5. Minutes of meetings are to be formally recorded, and supplied to the WTA administrator (c.northrope@griffith.edu.au) for posting on the WTA website (available to WTA members only). Electronic updates of 1-2 paragraphs are to be supplied to administrator at least 3 monthly, for inclusion in the email update to all WTA members.
6. Each branch is to be responsible for most of its own administration.
7. The WTA national committee is available to provide advice, as a channel for communication with other WTA members or wider stakeholders at the national level, and will provide limited administrative support to branches.
8. Each branch is to determine its own priorities and actions, but to get clearance from the national committee for any major decisions or official correspondence (via Secretary k.higginbottom@griffith.edu.au).
9. Limited funds may be available from central WTA funds to support branch functions such as hiring of meeting venues and postage. In particular, WTA funds will cover the costs of venue hire for the annual meeting if no venue can be found free-of-charge. However all efforts should be made by the branch to obtain in kind support from branch members to cover or minimise branch costs. All national funds must be approved in advance by the national committee (via Treasurer Kevin.Markwell@newcastle.edu.au).