

Minister for Human Services
Minister for Housing
Minister for Planning

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23 AUG 2018

Ms Meredith Barton
Tenants' Union of Tasmania
166 Macquarie Street
HOBART TAS 7000

Dear Ms Barton

Thank you for your correspondence regarding short-stay accommodation.

I note your request for access to the data obtained from the data sharing agreement between the State Government and online platforms such as AirBnB and HomeAway.

As you are no doubt aware, since the Housing Summit, the Tasmanian Government has adopted a different approach to ensure compliance of short stay accommodation providers and the online advertising platforms with Tasmania's short stay accommodation regulations.

The Hodgman Liberal Government will introduce legislation and has recently launched a public awareness campaign to address compliance concerns relating to short stay accommodation. Tasmanians have embraced the sharing economy and we are committed to ensuring it continues to play a positive role in our visitor economy and community.

However, it is clear that there is an issue when it comes to compliance that is cause of significant concern for the community sector and the tourism and hospitality industries. To address this, we will introduce legislation by the end of this year to ensure compliance with our existing regulations.

The legislation will serve two important purposes; to ensure everyone is playing by the rules, and to, paint a clear picture of home sharing across Tasmania. This approach will ensure to have meaningful data to fully understand the short-stay accommodation sector in Tasmania.

Property owners and online platform providers found to be in breach of the rules could face penalties, which may include significant fines. It is important that those who benefit from the sharing economy make sure they are doing the right thing.

The visitor economy continues to be regulated in this state. Tasmanians have, by and large, long been able to rent out their investment properties and secondary residences as short stay accommodation. While there were small variations from one Council to another generally a property owner required a permit from Council if the property was less than 160m² and a Council decision if the property was larger.

The regulatory changes that took effect from 1 July 2017, simply made it easier for people to share their primary place of residence, such as rooms in their own house, or to let out their primary residence while on holidays. The current regulations, from 1 July 2018, require that an investment property or secondary residence have a permit from Council up to 200m². Anything larger would still require a Council decision.

These steps will ensure the checks and balances are in place when it comes to short stay accommodation so that Tasmanians and visitors alike can continue to share its benefits.

Thank you for writing to me on this important issue.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'R Jaensch', written over a faint circular stamp or watermark.

Hon Roger Jaensch MP
Minister for Human Services
Minister for Housing
Minister for Planning