



Quilpie Shire Council

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ABN 53 680 434 639

15 April 2024

General Manager
Competition Exemption Branch
Australian Competition and Consumer Commission
GPO Box 3131
CANBERRA ACT 2601

By Electronic Lodgement

Dear Sir or Madam

Quilpie Shire Council - notification of collective bargaining

This is a notification by Quilpie Shire Council ABN 53 680 434 639 of collective bargaining made under section 93AB of the *Competition and Consumer Act 2010* (Cth) (the **Act**) on behalf of itself, Paroo Shire Council and Balonne Shire Council (collectively, the **Councils**). Please find **enclosed** the following:

- 1 Annexure A, being a Notification of proposed exclusive dealing including Declaration by Notifying Party;
- 2 Annexure B, being a copy of the request for 'Expressions of Interest – Development of Outback Car Hire Business Model for Quilpie, Balonne and Paroo Shire Councils' issued by the Councils dated 10 August 2023;
- 3 Confidential Annexure C, being a copy of the 'Expression of Interest' provided in response by The Tourism Group Pty Ltd ACN 155 112 584 trading as Outback Car Hire (**The Tourism Group**) dated 22 August 2023;
- 4 Confidential Annexure D, being a copy of the 'Request for Tenders – Development of Outback Car Hire Model for Quilpie, Balonne & Paroo Shire Councils';
- 5 Confidential Annexure E, being a copy of the Response Schedules to the Request for Tenders submitted by The Tourism Group; and
- 6 a copy of the receipt demonstrating payment of the lodgement fee by electronic funds transfer in the amount of \$1,000 to the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission.

Confidentiality

This letter and Annexure A may be placed on the public register (a separate, public version has been supplied for this purpose).

Pursuant to section 95(2) of the Act, Quilpie Shire Council requests that Confidential Annexures C, D and E not be placed on the public register because they contain confidential information. Other than the ACCC's usual confidentiality requirements, QSC requests that Confidential Annexures C, D and E not be disclosed to third parties without Quilpie Shire Council's prior written consent.

Quilpie Shire Council acknowledges that the ACCC's usual confidentiality requirements are that:

- (a) there be no restriction on internal use, including future use, that the ACCC may make of the information consistent with its statutory functions;
- (b) the confidential information may be disclosed to the ACCC's external advisors and consultants on the condition that each adviser or consultant is informed of the obligation to treat the information as confidential; and
- (c) the ACCC may disclose the confidential information to third parties (in addition to its external advisors or consultants) if compelled by law.

Quilpie Shire Council would be pleased to respond to any further queries that the ACCC may have after reviewing these materials.

Yours sincerely



Justin Hancock
Chief Executive Officer

Annexure A

Notification of proposed collective bargaining including Declaration by Notifying Party

Notifying party

1 Provide details of the notifying party, including:

1.1 Name

Quilpie Shire Council, on behalf of itself, Paroo Shire Council and Balonne Shire Council (collectively, the **Councils**).

Address

50 Brolga Street, Quilpie, QLD 4480

Telephone number

+61 7 4656 0500

1.2 Contact person

c/o Alex Hutchens

Address

McCullough Robertson Lawyers

Level 32, 25 Martin Place, Sydney, NSW 2000

Telephone number

+61 2 8241 5609

Email address

ahutchens@mccullough.com.au

1.3 A description of business activities

The Councils are local governments as defined in the *Local Government Act 2009* (Qld) (**Local Government Act**) that represent local government areas in the South West Queensland region. Under the Local Government Act, the Councils have the power to do anything necessary or convenient for the good rule and local government of their local government areas.¹ Local governments' powers include the power to cooperate with other local governments (**joint government activity**).² Joint government activity may take any form under the Local Government Act, including entering into an agreement for the provision of services or operation of facilities among local governments.³

¹ Local Government Act section 9.

² Local Government Act section 10.

³ Local Government Act section 10(3).

The activities of a local government under the Local Government Act are governed by the following principles:

- (a) transparent and effective processes, and decision-making in the public interest;
- (b) sustainable development and management of assets and infrastructure, and delivery of effective services;
- (c) democratic representation, social inclusion and meaningful community engagement;
- (d) good governance or, and by, local government; and
- (e) ethical and legal behaviour of councillors, local government employees and councillor advisors.⁴

1.4 Email address for service

ahutchens@mccullough.com.au

Details of the notified conduct

2 Indicate whether the notified conduct is for:

- 2.1 exclusive dealing (section 47 of the *Competition and Consumer Act 2010* (Cth) (the **Act**))- not applicable.
- 2.2 resale price maintenance (section 48 of the Act) – not applicable.
- 2.3 The notified conduct is for collective bargaining (section 93AB of the Act), that does not include a collective boycott.

3 Provide details of the notified conduct including:

3.1 a description of the notified conduct

- (a) The Councils are considering the development of a dry car hire initiative (**Proposed Initiative**). Under the Proposed Initiative, excess Council owned vehicles would be made available for rent by visitors to the South West Queensland region. Importantly, visitors would be able to rent vehicles for one-way rentals (i.e. a consumer may collect a vehicle in St George and drop it off in Quilpie). There are currently no car rental facilities available in the Council's local government areas and one-way rentals are not available at any nearby existing car rental businesses.
- (b) In 2023, Quilpie Shire Council (on behalf of the Councils) invited expressions of interest (**EOI**) to identify tourism operators who may be willing to assist with administration of the Proposed Initiative. Under the EOI request, Quilpie Shire Council sought a provider that would be responsible for:
 - (i) ensuring compliance of the vehicles for rental;
 - (ii) developing a booking system;

⁴ Local Government Act section 4(2).

- (iii) maintenance and upkeep of hire vehicles, insurances required to operate a car hire business;
- (iv) establishing rental centres in the relevant towns and contracting rental agents, who will manage execution of rental agreements on arrival, carry out inspection of vehicles on return and liaise with the participating Councils to organise maintenance; and
- (v) organising logistics, including safe storage of vehicles and relocation of hire vehicles back to rental depots,

(Services).

- (c) One of the major aims of the Proposed Initiative is to develop short term travel packages for 'fly-in fly-out' tourism to enable visitors to explore more of the South West Queensland region without having to 'backtrack' to return hire vehicles to their original location. In considering responses to the tender process, capacity to deliver one-way hires and to assist in developing itineraries for such packages were therefore key considerations.
- (d) Quilpie Shire Council received only one response to the EOI process, from The Tourism Group Pty Ltd ACN 155 112 584 trading as Outback Car Hire (**The Tourism Group**). Following this, and in accordance with the requirements of regulation 228 of the *Local Government Regulation 2012* (Qld) (**Local Government Regulation**) which prevents the Councils from accepting an EOI directly without a subsequent written tender, Quilpie Shire Council commenced a selective tender process with The Tourism Group to confirm The Tourism Group as the preferred provider.
- (e) Having selected a preferred provider, each Council now intends to enter into a separate agreement with The Tourism Group on similar or substantially the same terms for the performance of the Services, in order to facilitate the Proposed Initiative.

3.2 any relevant documents detailing the terms of the notified conduct

- (a) **Attached at:**
 - (i) **Annexure B** is a copy of the request for 'Expressions of Interest – Development of Outback Car Hire Business Model for Quilpie, Balonne and Paroo Shire Councils' issued by the Councils dated 10 August 2023;
 - (ii) **Confidential Annexure C** is a copy of the 'Expression of Interest' provided in response by The Tourism Group dated 22 August 2023;
 - (iii) **Confidential Annexure D** is a copy of the 'Request for Tender' (**RFT**) document issued to The Tourism Group; and
 - (iv) **Confidential Annexure E** is a copy of the Response Schedules provided by The Tourism Group in response to the RFT.

3.3 the rationale for the notified conduct

- (a) In 2022, the South West Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils (**SWQROC**) (of which the Councils are members) identified a need for the introduction of car hire services in South West Queensland to increase tourism opportunities for the region. Currently, there are commercial car hire businesses that operate from Roma Airport and Charleville Airport, but these depots are located 482km and 214km away from Quilpie respectively.

- (b) No existing car hire businesses in the South West Queensland region offer one-way rentals, and there are no depot facilities in other regional towns. Due to the geographic expanse of the South West Queensland region and the relative isolation of the more remote regional towns, this limits the opportunities for visitors to the region to visit the more remote areas of South West Queensland, and particularly for visitors who may wish to plan a 'one-way' journey, where they fly in and out of different locations. Currently, the only option for visitors is to drive back to the airport where the car rental originated and potentially pay additional extra daily kilometre costs to accommodate the distances they are required to drive to explore the region.
- (c) The intention behind the Proposed Initiative is to provide a seamless car rental service across the South West Queensland region. Accordingly, it is the Councils' intention that the Services will be provided across each Council's respective local government areas by the same provider under separate contracts with each Council. All Councils are in relatively close proximity and will have similar requirements under the agreements.
- (d) As neighbouring local government areas, the Councils consider it to be efficient and cost effective to work together. As members of the SWQROC, the Councils consider there will be value in developing the Proposed Initiative to promote tourism across the South West Queensland region, for the benefit of the region generally.

3.4 any time period relevant to the notified conduct

- (a) pursuant to Appendix 1 to **Confidential Annexure C** (The Tourism Group EOI Response), the Proposed Initiative is proposed to have an initial term of 2 years. Subject to this notification, the resulting agreements may contain a mechanism to extend the term by a further period of one year, such that the maximum term of the Proposed Initiative shall be no longer than 3 years.

4 Provide documents submitted to the notifying party's board or prepared by or for the notifying party's senior management for purposes of assessing or making a decision in relation to the notified conduct and any minutes or record of the decision made.

- 4.1 The **attached Confidential Annexures C, D and E** have been prepared by or for the Councils' senior management in compliance with the Councils' tendering obligations under the Local Government Regulation (as noted at paragraph 3.1(d) above).

5 Provide the names and/or a description of the persons or classes of persons who may be directly impacted by the notified conduct (including targets in collective bargaining or boycott conduct) and detail how or why they might be impacted.

- 5.1 As noted in paragraph 3.3(a) above, there are currently commercial car hire businesses that operate from Roma Airport and Charleville Airport, but these facilities are located a considerable distance from the Councils' respective local government areas and do not offer one-way car hire opportunities. These commercial car hire businesses were invited to participate in the EOI process, but did not do so.
- 5.2 The Councils consider that the notified conduct will provide significant benefits to each Council's local government area. By utilising excess vehicles owned by Quilpie Shire Council and the Participating Councils but which are currently not in use, Quilpie Shire Council and the Participating Councils are placed to extract revenue from the proposed initiative over the life of the Proposed Initiative. As the Councils are Queensland local government bodies, this represents revenue for the public sector that would not otherwise be realised.

- 5.3 Further, by stimulating tourism within the Councils' local government areas and the South West Queensland region more broadly, the Councils submit that the notified conduct stands to provide economic benefits to the region.

Market information and concentration

6 Describe the products and/or services supplied, and the geographic areas supplied, by the notifying parties. Identify all products and services in which two or more parties to the notified conduct overlap (compete with each other) or have a vertical relationship (e.g. supplier-customer).

- 6.1 The Services are described in paragraph 3.1(b) above. As identified in paragraph 3.3 above, the Councils have identified a gap in the South West Queensland car rental market, which limits tourism opportunities within the region. The Proposed Initiative (and the Services intended to be provided in connection with the Proposed Initiative) intends to directly address this gap by providing prospective tourists with the flexibility to plan holidays through South West Queensland without having to return their vehicle to the same rental depot.
- 6.2 As the Proposed Initiative is a new venture by each of the Councils, the Services are not currently being provided by any of the Councils. However, if the Councils were to individually engage The Tourism Group, the Services that The Tourism Group would provide would be similar, if not the same, for each Council. Accordingly, in those circumstances, it may be possible to argue that each Council would be in competition with each other (notwithstanding that the Services would be geographically limited to each Council's local government area).

7 Describe the relevant industry or industries. Where relevant, describe the sales process, the supply chains or any products or services involved, and the manufacturing process.

- 7.1 The industries relevant to the notified conduct are the domestic and intra-state tourism and travel industries which involve the following:
- (a) arrangement of transportation;
 - (b) booking of accommodation;
 - (c) organisation of itineraries; and
 - (d) arrangement of activities and experiences.
- 7.2 The Services the subject of the notified conduct currently concern only 7.1(a) above, however as noted at paragraph 3.1(c) above, one of the long-term aims of the Proposed Initiatives is to develop and promote short term travel packages to allow visitors to explore more of the South West Queensland region, which will involve the other activities identified in 7.1 above. The Councils anticipate that the development of such packages will necessarily involve collaboration between not only the Councils and The Tourism Group but also with existing tourism operators, accommodation providers and other businesses in the South West Queensland region.

8 In respect of overlapping products and/or services identified, provide estimated market shares for each of the parties where readily available.

- 8.1 The Proposed Initiative is a new venture, and the Services contemplated by it have not previously been provided by any of the Councils. That said, the Councils consider that the relevant area of competition is at least as large as the market for tourism experiences in and around the geographical area within which the Councils are located.
- 8.2 The Quilpie Shire Council local government area covers an area of 67,415 square kilometres. The Paroo Shire Council local government area is adjacent to the Quilpie Shire Council local government area and covers an area of 47,633 square kilometres. The Balonne Shire Council local government area covers a further area of 31,150 square kilometres. As identified above, there are currently no commercial car hire businesses that operate within the combined local government area of the Councils.

9 Describe the factors that would limit or prevent any ability for the parties involved to raise prices, reduce quality or choice, reduce innovation, or coordinate rather than compete vigorously. For example, describe:

9.1 Existing competitors

- (a) While the Proposed Initiative may compete with existing commercial car hire businesses in Charleville and Roma, these businesses operate at a considerable geographic distance from the Councils' local government areas. Further, these existing competitors do not offer one-way hire services, which is the gap the Proposed Initiative seeks to address. In any event, these existing commercial car hire businesses were invited to participate in the EOI process but did not do so.
- (b) In acquiring the Services from The Tourism Group, the Councils may compete with other potential acquirers of such services including other local governments across Queensland and Australia. The Councils consider that The Tourism Group is capable of offering similar services to other local governments across Australia. The Councils have also invited certain neighbouring local governments (including those that are members of the SWQROC) to participate in the Proposed Initiative, noting that the ultimate aim of the Proposed Initiative is to stimulate tourism to the region more broadly, however those invitations were declined by those neighbouring local governments. As such, the Councils do not consider that there will be any change in competitive constraints as a result of the proposed conduct.

9.2 The likelihood of entry of new competitors

- (a) The Councils consider that the proposed conduct will not have any impact on the number of competitors for the supply of services similar to the Services as such suppliers would likely be able to supply multiple customers, including other local governments across Queensland and Australia. It is difficult to consider how the impact of a joint tender outcome by the Councils would have any influence on the ability of other customers (both in the public and private sector) to obtain competitive car hire administrative services.
- (b) In addition, the Councils consider there is limited likelihood of entry to the market by new local governments, as local government areas are determined by proclamation under legislation.

9.3 Any countervailing power of customers and/or suppliers

- (a) There is currently no real alternative supplier of services similar to the Services proposed to be supplied by The Tourism Group under the Proposed Initiative within the South West Queensland region.

- (b) Any alternative suppliers had the opportunity to consider the EOI requirements and whether they wished to submit a response. As noted at paragraph 3.1(d), the Councils received only one response to the EOI process.

9.4 **Any other relevant factors**

- (a) If Councils separately called tenders for the services, the scope of the services required (and the number of responses received) would likely be the same given the similar nature of the Councils and the proposed operations. Further, the aim of the Proposed Initiative is to facilitate a seamless car hire service across South West Queensland in areas where there is currently no (or no adequate) alternative offering. Therefore, while the intent of a group tender was in part to obtain a competitive offering, it was equally to ensure an efficient process (compared with each Council carrying out their own processes) and to deliver a seamless solution that operated consistently across local government areas.
- (b) On this basis, while the notified conduct is likely to be considered collective bargaining, the Councils are confident that the Proposed Initiative will not substantially lessen competition, on the basis that it addresses an identifiable gap in the market which is currently not provided by any competing service provider, and the Councils have complied with their obligations under the Local Government Act and Local Government Regulation in relation to the EOI and tender processes.

Public benefit

10 Describe the benefits to the public that are likely to result from the notified conduct. provide information, data, documents or other evidence relevant to the ACCC's assessment of the public benefits.

10.1 The Councils consider that the notified conduct will result in significant public benefits as follows:

- (a) Public sector revenue
 - (i) As noted at paragraph 5.2 above, the Councils are placed to generate new public sector revenue from the Proposed Initiative by utilising existing but unused Council assets, that would otherwise not be realised.
- (b) Regional economic stimulation
 - (i) The Proposed Initiative also aims to stimulate tourism for more remote towns in Queensland that tourists would otherwise be unlikely or unable to visit. Importantly, by enabling tourists to arrange one-way hires, tourists are in a better position to explore more of the South West Queensland region during their visits, without having to worry about returning their vehicles to the same depot. As a result, the Proposed Initiative aims not only to bring a greater amount of tourism revenue to the South West Queensland region, but to distribute that tourism revenue amongst regional and remote communities.
- (c) Improved economic outcomes and cost efficiency
 - (i) The joint contracting process between the Councils will be cost-efficient by reducing the negotiating, contracting and administrative costs for each of the Councils. This will lead to cost savings to the Councils which will result in cost savings for rate payers in the relevant Council local government areas.

- (ii) In particular, the Councils expect savings in respect of administration, legal, preparation and evaluation costs. The time and costs saved will allow the Councils to focus their efforts and resources on other Council activities and functions.

10.2 The efficacy of the Proposed Initiative in light of the current South West Queensland car hire market is strengthened by the significant support already indicated by various commercial and government stakeholders. For example, in its EOI submission (**attached as Confidential Annexure C**), The Tourism Group confirms that it has applied for and received \$100,000 in funding under the Queensland Government 'Tourism Experience Development Grant' to develop the 'Outback Car Hire' pilot project. The Tourism Group has also secured a partnership arrangement with Rex Airlines whereby Rex Airlines will provide \$30,000 in kind support to enable the relocation of hire vehicles between regional depots.

Public detriment (including likely competitive effects)

11 Describe any detriments to the public that are likely to result from any lessening of competition. Provide information, data, documents or other evidence relevant to the ACCC's assessment of the detriments.

- 11.1 The Councils consider that the notified conduct is not likely to result in any public detriment from any reduction in competition between the Councils to acquire the Services or from alternative contractors to bid for the provision of the Services for the reasons identified in section 9 above.
- 11.2 As already stated above, The Tourism Group was the only prospective provider who responded to the EOI process, and the Councils do not anticipate any additional suppliers would have submitted a response had the Councils individually carried out their own tender processes.
- 11.3 If there is a public detriment, it is likely to be insignificant and outweighed by the public benefit.
- 11.4 In any event, the intention of the notified conduct is economic and is not to limit competition.

Contact details of relevant market participants

12 Identify and/or provide contact details (phone number and email address for likely interested parties, such as actual or potential competitors, customers and suppliers, trade or industry associations and regulators.

The Tourism Group
Address: Level 5, 189 Grey Street, Southbank, QLD 4101
Phone number: +61 408 228 041

Avis Car & Truck Rental Charleville
Address: Terminal Building, 1 Qantas Drive, Charleville, QLD 4470
Phone number: +61 7 4638 2999

Hertz Charleville Airport
Address: Terminal Building, 1 Qantas Drive, Charleville, QLD 4470
Phone number: 13 30 39

Budget Car & Truck Rental Charleville
Address: Terminal Building, 1 Qantas Drive, Charleville, QLD 4470
Phone number: +61 7 4632 8598

Avis Car & Truck Rental Roma
Address: Roma Airport, Airport Dr, Carnarvon Hwy, Roma QLD 4455
Phone number: +61 7 4638 2999

Hertz Roma Airport
Address: Roma Airport, Airport Dr, Carnarvon Hwy, Roma QLD 4455
Phone number: +61 7 4622 5120

Budget Car & Truck Rental Roma
Address: Roma Airport, Airport Dr, Carnarvon Hwy, Roma QLD 4455
Phone number: +61 7 4632 8598

SIXT Car & Truck Rental Roma Airport
Address: Roma Airport, Airport Dr, Carnarvon Hwy, Roma QLD 4455
Phone number: +61 7 5658 4910

Thrifty Car Rental Roma Airport
Address: Roma Airport, Airport Dr, Carnarvon Hwy, Roma QLD 4455
Phone number: 13 61 39

Any other information

13 Provide any other information you consider relevant to the ACCC's assessment of the notified conduct.

13.1 No additional information.

Additional information for collective bargaining (with or without a collective boycott) conduct only

14 Confirm that the notifying party is not a trade union, an officer of a trade union or acting at the direction of a trade union.

14.1 The notifying party is not a trade union, an officer of a trade union or acting at the direction of a trade union.

15 Provide details (name, phone number, email address) of the persons who are current members of the group (contracting entities) on whose behalf the notification is lodged. If relevant, identify the classes of persons who may become contracting parties in the future and on whose behalf the notification is lodged.

15.1 Balonne Shire Council

ABN: 49 655 876 831

Phone: +61 7 4620 8888

Email: council@balonne.qld.gov.au

15.2 Paroo Shire Council

ABN: 70 534 069 238

Phone: +61 7 4655 8400

Email: council@paroo.qld.gov.au

15.3 Quilpie Shire Council

ABN: 53 680 434 639

Phone: +61 7 4656 0500

Email: admin@quilpie.qld.gov.au

15.4 In the future (and subject to this notification), it is possible that other local governments in the region (including other members of the SWQROC) may become contracting entities on terms substantially similar or the same as those to be agreed between The Tourism Group and the Councils.

16 Confirm each contracting party reasonably expects to make one or more contracts with the targets for the supply or acquisition of the relevant goods or services and that the value of each contract will not exceed A\$3 million (or any other amount prescribed by regulation) in any 12 month period. Provide details of the basis for that expectation.

16.1 The Councils confirm that they each reasonably expect to enter into one contract with The Tourism Group for the supply of the Services, and that each of these contracts will not exceed A\$3 million in any 12 month period.

16.2 The expectation described above is based on calculations of the number of excess Council-owned vehicles that each Council has available to contribute to the Proposed Initiative, the estimated lease amount that each Council stands to receive in respect of each excess Council-owned vehicle contributed to the Proposed Initiative, and the commercial rates at which such vehicles may be hired by customers.

17 If the contracting parties propose to engage in a collective boycott with respect to targets, provide details of:

17.1 The event/s that would trigger a collective boycott

Not applicable. The notified conduct does not include a collective boycott.

17.2 The process that would be followed

Not applicable.

17.3 Any proposed notice to be given to the target/s prior to commencing a collective boycott

Not applicable.

17.4 Any proposed dispute resolution procedure between the contracting parties and the targets

Not applicable.

Declaration by the notifying party

Authorised persons of the notifying party must complete the following declaration.

The undersigned declares that, to the best of their knowledge and belief, the information given in response to questions in this form is true, correct and complete, that complete copies of documents required by this form have been supplied, that all estimates are identified as such and are their best estimates of the underlying facts, and that all the opinions expressed are sincere.

The undersigned is aware that giving false or misleading information is a serious offence and is aware of the provisions of sections 137.1 and 149.1 of the *Criminal Code* (Cth).

Signed by
Quilpie Shire Council ABN 53 680 434 639 by its
duly authorised officer in the presence of:

^  _____
Signature of witness

^ **Janelle Menzies** _____
Name of witness (print)

 _____
^ Signature of Authorised Officer

^ **Justin Hancock** _____
Full Name of Authorised Officer

^ **Chief Executive Officer** _____
Office Held

Annexure B

Request for Expressions of Interest – Development of Outback Car Hire Business Model for Quilpie, Balonne and Paroo Shire Councils

See attached.



EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST - DEVELOPMENT OF OUTBACK CAR HIRE BUSINESS MODEL FOR QUILPIE, BALONNE & PAROO SHIRE COUNCILS.

10 August 2023

BACKGROUND

In 2022, the South West Queensland Regional Organisation of Council (SWQROC) identified a need for the expansion/ introduction of car hire services in South West Queensland. There are not that many options for car hire in many outback towns of Western Queensland. There are car hire businesses that operate out of Roma Airport which is located in Maranoa Shire Council and Charleville Airport which is located in Murweh Shire Council.

None of these rental companies provide one-way rentals as they have no depot facilities in each town leaving only return to base hire options, which does not always provide the best solution to people travelling to the Regions. Visitors may want to fly into one airport and fly out of another but this option is not currently available. Currently the only option is to drive back to the where the car hire originated and pay the extra daily kilometre costs.

Quilpie Shire Council, Balonne Shire Council and Paroo Shire Council have all expressed an interest in supporting the development of a car hire business in St George, Cunnamulla and Quilpie by providing excess Council owned vehicle fleet for dry hire to support a new initiative.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) will be created between the successful company and each Council which will set out the expectations and the operational responsibilities of each party. It is envisaged that a central booking website would be established to take car hire bookings.

Each airport or rental centre will have a contracted rental agent. They will be responsible for getting the Rental Agreement (RA) correctly executed on arrival and carrying out the condition check on the vehicle upon return. They will also work closely with the appointed Council Manager responsible for the maintenance of the vehicles.

Each region has a number of breakdown services operating within its boundaries. Each Council will appoint a recovery company in each town to assist as required with any retrievals or support services. The costs associated with this service is factored into the insurance premiums and excess paid by both the rental hirer and the operator.

Councils will maintain the insurance, registration and ownership of the vehicles for the duration of the Leasing period. The successful company will ensure compliance of vehicles via a reporting schedule as part of the MOU.

The successful company will develop a booking system to allow direct booking of vehicles. This platform and booking system will have the functionality to allow date range selection for vehicles, to a lesser extent vehicle selection, including pick up and drop off locations.

While initially it will be Business Travellers/Consultants who will most likely utilise this service, one of the major aims of this project is the ability to provide short term travel packages for travellers keen to see the Outback who are potentially time poor or who would like to experience more elements of our region without having to backtrack to return a hire vehicle to the original location.



MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS

The successful company will be required to conform with the following terms and conditions:

- 1) Vehicles are to be leased from Balonne Shire, Paroo Shire and Quilpie Shire on a dry hire bases for the purpose of an Outback Car Hire scheme;
- 2) Councils are to retain ownership of the vehicle for the duration of the arrangement and will be responsible for the vehicle registration and insurance costs;
- 3) The successful company will be responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of the vehicle (approved by Council), insurances to perform a car hire business, arranging the safe storage of vehicles and engaging a contact officer in each town for the pick up and drop off services;
- 4) The service must allow for the pick up and drop off of vehicles in St George, Cunnamulla and Quilpie (at a minimum) which will include one way car hire (e.g. Pick up Cunnamulla and Drop off Quilpie).
- 5) Collaboratively work with Council to establish tourism packages for fly-in fly-out tourism utilising the car hire scheme to support the development of tourism.

PROCUREMENT PROCESS

In accordance with Council's Procurement Policy and Part 3 of the Local Government Regulation 2012, Council will undertake an Expression of Interest Process as follows:

Description	Details
Advertising	Quilpie Shire Council Website
EOI Open	10 August 2023
EOI Close	5 September 2023
Submission	EOI's are to be lodged with ceo@quilpie.qld.gov.au

Annexure C

Expression of Interest provided by The Tourism Group – 22 August 2023

See attached.

Annexure D

Request for Tenders – Development of Outback Car Hire Moel for Quilpie, Balonne & Paroo Shire Councils

See attached.

Annexure E

The Tourism Group Response Schedules - Request for Tenders – Development of Outback Car Hire Moel for Quilpie, Balonne & Paroo Shire Councils

See attached.

