

National Tourism Incident Response Plan

Background

The National Tourism Incident Response Plan (NTIRP) was developed to facilitate an effective national response to potential major shocks to the Australian tourism industry. The NTIRP sets out a response framework and actions for the Australian, and state and territory governments to pursue in cooperation with industry.

Overall coordination of preparedness, response and recovery activities in relation to crises affecting the national tourism industry is undertaken by the Tourism Division of the Department of Resources, Energy and Tourism which serves as the Secretariat of the NTIRP. The plan covers three main elements:

- monitoring the incident
- day to day management of the incident
- ways of considering possible remedies for recovery.

NTIRP links with states and territories

The NTIRP recognises the importance of close collaboration between government and industry when responding to major incidents. In developing the plan, the government has made a commitment to work closely with industry to ensure the best possible outcome for the Australian tourism industry.

Several interrelated groups serve the various coordinating functions of the NTIRP. These are:

- Central Incident Management Group (CIMG) – high level decision making
- Tourism Communicators' Network (TCN) – communications
- Policy Advisory Group (PAG) – policy advice
- Tourism Research Committee (TRC) – research
- Monitoring Group (MG) – incident monitoring and NTIRP maintenance

Members of these groups are from the Department of Resources Energy and Tourism, Tourism Australia, State and Territory tourism organisations and key tourism industry groups.

NTIRP activation

The NTIRP forms part of a broader whole-of-government framework dealing with safety and security incidents.

When an incident occurs, a member of the Australian Standing Committee on Tourism (ASCOT) or the Monitoring Group identifies and refers it to the CIMG (comprising CEOs and Managing Directors from Tourism Australia, ASCOT and the Head of the Tourism Division of RET).

The CIMG convenes to decide on the appropriate NTIRP activation level. There are four levels of activation set out in the plan:

- Blue – Low Risk;
- Green – Guarded Risk;
- Amber – Medium Risk; and
- Red – High Risk.

A filter matrix is used to determine the recommended activation level, based on an analysis of the anticipated impact of the incident on:

- Brand Australia;
- International and domestic travel patterns;
- Industry profitability;
- Industry's ability to recover; and
- Government financial support.

CIMG then coordinates incident management and response. According to the nature of the incident, it initiates notification protocols, briefs the Tourism Ministers' Council, prepares media responses and convenes the NTIRP subgroups.

Current activation level in response to H1N1 Influenza 09

RET elevated the NTIRP's activation level to amber (medium risk status) in response to the outbreak of H1N1 Influenza 09. This decision was made in consultation with state and territory tourism organisations and industry – represented by the National Tourism Alliance (NTA), Australian Tourism Export Council (ATEC), Tourism and Transport Forum Australia (TTF Australia) and the Australian Federation of Travel Agents (AFTA).

At amber activation level, the CIMG is meeting regularly to manage the incident; sharing information; assessing the situation; and determining the type and frequency of communication activities.

Access to the NTIRP

The National Tourism Incident Response Plan can be downloaded in PDF format from the Department of Resources, Energy and Tourism website at [http://www.ret.gov.au/tourism/Documents/Tourism/Tourism%20Policy/Tourism%20Business%20Continuity/National%20Tourism%20Incident%20Response%20Plan/National Tourism Incident Response Plan.pdf](http://www.ret.gov.au/tourism/Documents/Tourism/Tourism%20Policy/Tourism%20Business%20Continuity/National%20Tourism%20Incident%20Response%20Plan/National%20Tourism%20Incident%20Response%20Plan.pdf), or by contacting ntirp@ret.gov.au.