

# MODULE 1



## OVERVIEW OF VISITOR CENTRE ACCREDITATION



*... will take you there!*

**New South Wales  
Accredited Visitor Information Centre  
(AVIC) Network MANUAL**

The NSW AVIC Network Program is supported by



**Destination  
NSW**

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## INTRODUCTION

Thank you for your interest in becoming part of the New South Wales Accredited Visitor Information Centre (AVIC) Network.

Accreditation is a process designed to establish and continually improve industry standards for conducting a tourism business. It aims to assist every AVIC to improve the way it operates to meet the increasing demands of domestic and international consumers and stakeholders.

Accreditation also provides consumers and the industry with an assurance that an Accredited Centre is committed to quality business practice and professionalism. The primary focus is to ensure that standards of service delivery meet and, where possible, exceed the visitors expectations.

The AVIC Network bands together Accredited Centres that show a commitment to continuous improvement and customer satisfaction, providing all consumers and travellers with an assurance of delivering quality products and services.

This Manual provides New South Wales AVICs with information, which will assist them to achieve, maintain, and where possible exceed, the standards defined in the New South Wales AVIC Network Manual. AVICs, which display the accredited 'i' sign can therefore be assured that they are operating in a professional manner and are providing visitors to New South Wales with the highest standard of information and assistance in line with the National Industry Standards.

While this Manual provides information, which assists with the process and provides guidelines for the documentation and formal operational procedures of an AVIC, it is not intended to be an instructional manual. AVICs should use this Manual, together with their existing information sources and industry networks as a resource to address day-to-day operational issues outside of the scope of this Manual. It is important to note that the information contained in this Manual is proposed as a guide and, where Local Government Policies and Procedures may be in place, the use of the Local Government systems should be noted as compliance against the respective AVIC Criteria.

### The Manual is broken into Modules:

1. Overview
2. Planning
3. Model Operations Manual
4. Templates
5. Application

We welcome your suggestions for further information and resources that could be included in this Manual. Forward all correspondence to the AVIC Accreditation and Marketing Management at:

Aurora Research~NSW Accredited Visitor Information Centre Accreditation Management  
(AVIC Network)  
P O Box 1000  
DUBBO NSW 2830  
Ph: 02 6885 5558 Fax: 02 6885 5556 Email: [vic@auroraresearch.com.au](mailto:vic@auroraresearch.com.au)

### Disclaimer

The information in this Manual is current at the time of compiling. It can be expected that during the life of the Manual a number of contact details and information sources will change. This document is not an exhaustive list of every resource that an AVIC can access. Whilst every care has been taken in compiling this Manual, Aurora, NSW AVIC Accreditation Management, its officers, servants and agents expressly disclaim all liability for errors or omissions of any kind (whether negligent or otherwise) or for any loss, damage or other consequence, which may arise from any person relying on this publication. Nov 2011, May 2014, Nov 2014

### Acknowledgements

Aurora Research acknowledges extracts from the VIN Network Membership Manual, Victoria's Better Business Tourism Accreditation Program and Country Victoria Tourism Council's Visitor Information Centre sector specific requirements, Tourism Accreditation Board of Victoria (TABV), Tourism Queensland's Queensland Visitor Information Centre (VIC) Signage Policy and Rob Tonge 'How to Establish and Operate a Visitor Information Centre' in the development of this Manual for use by the NSW AVIC Network.

## THE ACCREDITED VISITOR INFORMATION CENTRE NETWORK

Accreditation provides participants with a tool to measure and improve their AVIC's performance over time, with a focus on business planning and operational protocols. The Accreditation Program also involves documenting systems in order to ensure consistent professional standards.

Accreditation is the **consumer's guarantee of quality information about a destination, which is accurate, personally and professionally delivered.**

## BENEFITS OF THE AVIC NETWORK

The development and implementation of the Accredited Visitor Information Centre Network has and will continue to provide a myriad of benefits for AVICs.

### THE KEY BENEFITS FOR ACCREDITED VISITOR INFORMATION CENTRES ARE:

- A recognised and respected Brand
- Improved reputation and higher degree of marketability in the market place
- Improved profitability through the implementation of better operating systems
- Ability to display the accredited 'i' on all promotional, advertising material and building signage
- Access to marketing and promotional opportunities not available to non-accredited Centres
- Increased Local Government recognition for participating in the AVIC Network
- Greater customer confidence and satisfaction, which leads to repeat business
- Improved employee morale and more efficient management
- Destination New South Wales linkages and support
- A competitive advantage over non-accredited Centres
- Mentoring, networking and cooperation between members
- Access to reports and information to enable better management and business decisions
- Integration into the Tourist Signposting Policy
- Improved training and communications
- Greater sponsorship potential through being able to offer Network wide opportunities
- Participation in a self-assessment process that allows you the opportunity to evaluate performance and improve the quality of your operation
- Inclusion on a regular AVIC Network industry newsletter
- Access to all NSW AVICs through a Network Wide email broadcasting service
- Access to Aurora to talk through any day to day issues

### FOR THE TOURISM INDUSTRY

Increased visitation to the area  
Increased demand for local product and services  
Enhanced visitor expenditure in the local area  
Professional support and service from the AVIC Network  
Potential to increase length of stay

### FOR YOUR CUSTOMER

Signals a commitment to quality  
A much improved appreciation of attractions, tours, accommodation, dining & other services on offer  
Consistently friendly and professional information  
Improved access  
Satisfies safety and security needs  
An accessible and effective facility to gather destination information  
A recognised National Program

## THE ACCREDITED VISITOR INFORMATION CENTRE NETWORK SLOGAN



*... will take you there!*

This is the Slogan associated with Accredited Visitor Information Centres (AVICs) across New South Wales. You will see and recognise it in a wide range of tourism, travel and general interest advertisement and promotional materials. The Slogan was developed by Aurora Research Pty Ltd (Aurora) to increase the significance and recall of the accredited 'i' brand.

## THE ACCREDITED VISITOR INFORMATION CENTRE (AVIC) NETWORK BRAND

Accredited Visitor Information Centres are part of a Brand. The Brand fulfils a need, and has a particular set of values and qualities, which make it unique. The accredited 'i' sign is the symbol for the Brand that has been trademarked to Tourism Victoria. The Brand is the consumer's key promise of the provision of quality information about a destination or tourism product or service. The accredited 'i' is a National Brand across Australia and is utilised by more than 350 Accredited Visitor Information Centres, as well as print media and Internet and road signs. With over 170 AVICs and many new enquiries to join the Network, there is the further opportunity to develop new relationships with consumers, increasing the AVIC Network contribution and benefit to local economies across New South Wales.

The accredited 'i' sign now has a prominent place across the landscape of New South Wales and is delivering a purposeful message. The 'i' sign allows for various offers, whether it be destination, information or value-added service. The 'i' will take the consumer where they want to go.

## THE ACCREDITED VISITOR INFORMATION CENTRE (AVIC) NETWORK VISION

The New South Wales Accredited Visitor Information Centre (AVIC) Network and the accredited 'i', is recognised by the travelling public as the consumer's guarantee of quality information about a destination, which is accurate and personally delivered.

## THE ACCREDITED VISITOR INFORMATION CENTRE (AVIC) NETWORK MISSION

To develop Accredited Visitor Information Centres (AVICs) as a primary Brand within the New South Wales Tourism Industry and to develop strategic partnerships, regional networks and delivery of services to visitors for the benefit of local economies and the State of New South Wales.

## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### Destination New South Wales

Destination New South Wales is the New South Wales Government's tourism marketing and policy agency. As well as marketing the destination and its holiday experiences internationally and within Australia, Destination New South Wales provides strategic direction and leadership to the tourism industry to support the development of tourism in the State of New South Wales.

### Aurora Research

Aurora Research Pty Limited (Aurora) manages the NSW Accredited Visitor Information Centre Accreditation and Marketing Management on behalf of Destination NSW and the AVICs of New South Wales. The Program encompasses Marketing, Consumer Market Research, Accreditation Process and Audit and liaison amongst and with the many industry stakeholders. Aurora works with the AVIC Network to create a vibrant and supported Network of AVICs that offer improved services to meet the needs of the travelling public and provide economic benefit to each community it represents. This Manual is one avenue toward achieving overall business operation compliance amongst the AVIC Network whilst bringing New South Wales in line with the Tourism Industry National Standard.

## **Industry Reference Group**

The Industry Reference Group (IRG) was initially set up by Destination NSW to provide input and guidance to Aurora and Destination NSW, in the implementation of the Visitor Information Centre Development Program 2001-2003. The IRG also provides guidance for discussion of the strategic issues relating to the management and development of AVICs in New South Wales. The IRG meet at least 2 times a year and membership appointment is for a term of 3 years.

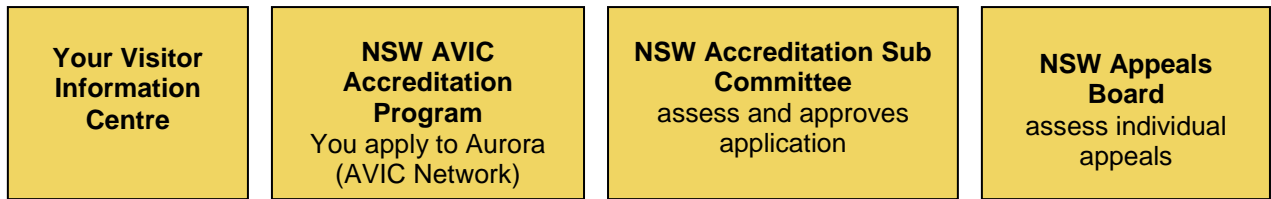
## **Accreditation Sub Committee**

An Accreditation Sub Committee was established to consider Accreditation applications received and to review their guidelines. The Accreditation Sub Committee consists of a representative from Destination NSW, a Regional Tourism Organisation (RTO) representative and a representative from Aurora.

## **Appeals Board**

An Appeals Board has been established to act as an independent arbitrator on appeal matters. The AVIC Appeals Board is responsible for consideration of appeals from those AVICs whose application has been denied.

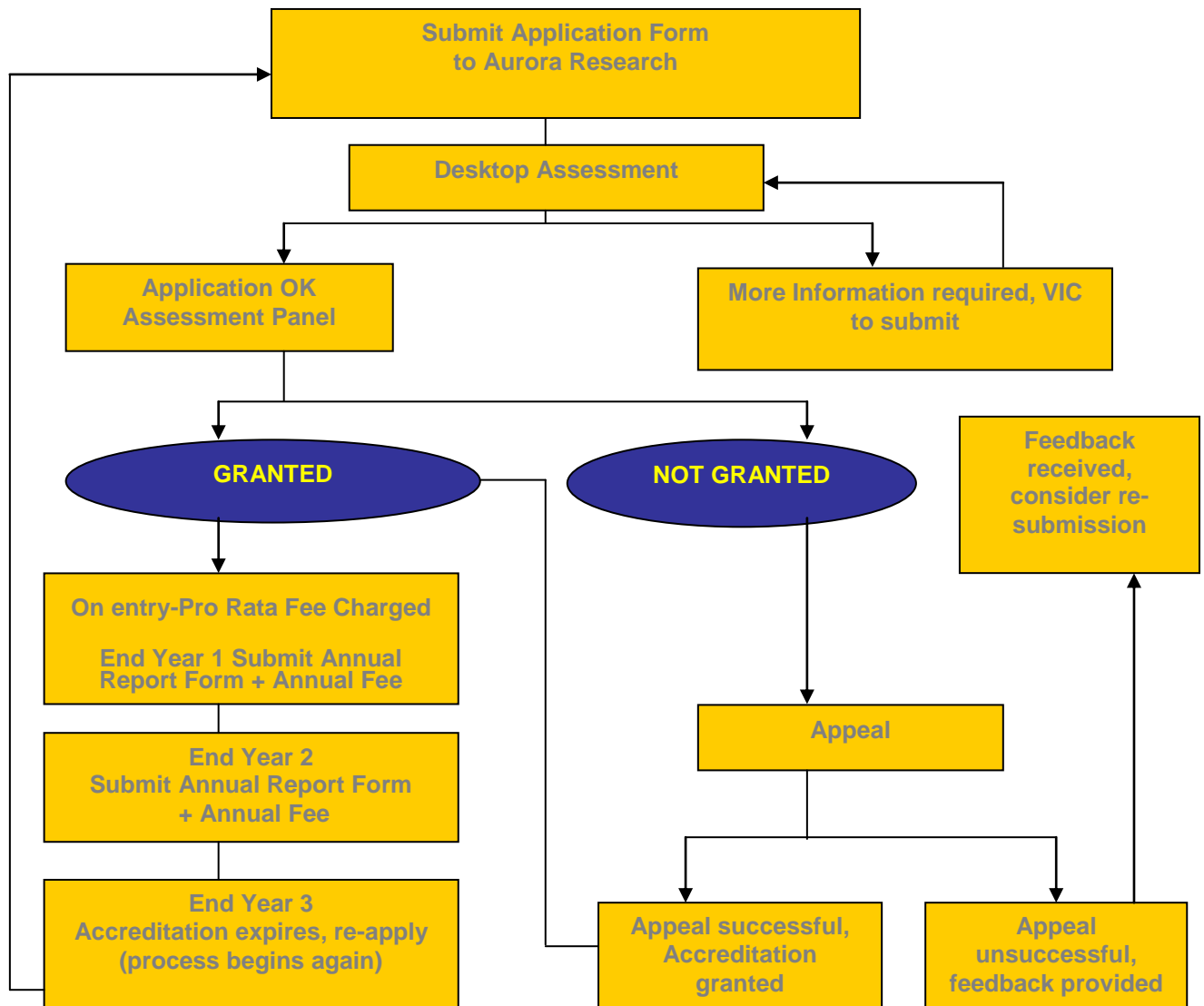
## THE ACCREDITED VISITOR INFORMATION CENTRE NETWORK FRAMEWORK



New South Wales made a commitment to align to National Industry Standards by October 2003.

To become part of the New South Wales Accredited Visitor Information Centre Network, applicants must first complete a self-assessment to ensure they meet the Accreditation criteria. Prospective applicants must complete the Application Form (Module 5) and submit to Aurora with supporting documentation. Each successful applicant will be welcomed as an AVIC and will receive all benefits of the Visitor Information Centre Development Program and AVIC Network.

## THE NSW ACCREDITATION PROCESS



## ACCREDITATION LEVELS - OVERVIEW OF ACCREDITATION CRITERIA

Please read through this document in its entirety to ensure you familiarise yourself with every aspect and requirement of achieving and maintaining Accreditation. The following table briefly outlines the differences between the Levels of Accreditation.

Criteria Area	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
<b>Opening Hours</b>	Open 363 days per year and for a minimum of 56 hours per week	Open 363 days per year for a minimum of 43 hours per week	Open a minimum of 5 days per week (including weekends) for a minimum of 7 hours per day
<b>Primary Function</b>	An Accredited Visitor Information Centre whose primary function is disseminating visitor information.		A business or information centre where the provision of information may or may not be the primary function, can be a mixed or private business (eg. museum, craft shop)
<b>Scope of Information Provision</b>	Local, regional and Statewide information provision.		Local information provision only.
<b>Staffing</b>	A minimum of one full time permanent staff member with appropriate experience.  Ongoing training and professional development for staff.  Training program to include staff induction, customer service ongoing staff training and product familiarisation program.  Maintenance of personnel records		May be staffed by volunteers.  Training program to include staff induction, customer service ongoing staff training and product familiarisation program.  Maintenance of personnel records
<b>Management and Planning</b>	Operates in accordance with a Business Plan and Operations Manual.		Operates in accordance with both Business Plan and Operations Manual and with guidelines set up by the endorsing Level 1 or 2 AVIC or local Council.
<b>Application Requirements</b>	Application direct from the Visitor Information Centre to the Accredited Visitor Information Centre Network Secretariat.  Requires the submission of a Business/Marketing Plan relevant to Visitor Information Centre component of the business		Application must be endorsed by a local Level 1 or 2 AVIC or local Council  Requires the submission of a Business/Marketing Plan relevant to Visitor Information Centre component of the business
<b>Annual Accreditation Fees</b>	\$880.00 inc GST	\$880.00 inc GST	\$385.00 inc GST



## ACCREDITATION CRITERIA

Tabled below is the Accreditation Criteria required to become an AVIC. The complete table applies to Level 1 and Level 2 applicants, whilst the yellow shaded sections apply to Level 3 applicants.

PLEASE COMPLETE ALL CRITERIA. CLEARLY MARK WITH A TICK WHERE APPROPRIATE		Meet Criteria	
		Yes	No
<b>1 Operational Protocol</b>			
<b>1.1</b>	Operate in accordance with a Strategic Business Plan that includes the following or similar elements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Executive Summary</li> <li>• Vision / Mission Statement</li> <li>• Background</li> <li>• Brief Description of Products / Services</li> <li>• Situation Analysis</li> <li>• Objectives</li> <li>• Marketing Plan</li> <li>• Human Resources Plan</li> <li>• Operational Plan</li> <li>• Budget / Financial Plan</li> <li>• Evaluation Mechanisms</li> </ul>		
<b>1.2</b>	Operate in accordance with an Operations Manual that includes the minimums set down in the Model Operations Manual.		
<b>1.3</b>	Operate within the protocols set up by sponsoring Level 1 or Level 2 AVIC or the local Council in the case where no Level 1 or Level 2 AVIC exists.		
<b>2 Networking and Cooperation</b>			
<b>2.1</b>	Liaise with appropriate organisations to manage the integration of visitor information sources within the local area.		
<b>2.2</b>	Liaise with Level 3 applicant in the local area to assist them in meeting the Level 3 Accreditation Criteria.		
<b>2.3</b>	Operate within the guidelines set by the sponsoring Level 1 or 2 AVIC or the local Council in the case where no Level 1 or Level 2 AVIC exists.		
<b>3 Image</b>			
<b>3.1</b>	Include the words 'Visitor' and 'Centre' in the name of the Centre. Additional words may be added where appropriate. The word 'Information' in the name of the Centre is desirable but optional, but it must be used in telephone directory listings.		

3.2	<p>Comply with the signage requirements for Accreditation including:</p> <p>Identification of AVIC with the accredited 'i' sign both on the building and in the grounds in an unobstructed position on the exterior of the building or on a fixture dedicated for the purpose close by.</p> <p>Erection of advance direction accredited 'i' signs on both approaches to the AVIC on the nearest state or regional road or roads. Reassurance 'i' signs on local approach roads to be installed to guide motorist directly to the centre. (Level 3 AVICs located on a state or regional road to display 'i' signs signposting only in the Centre's grounds <u>and not in the road reserve</u>. Where the centre is located on a local road, to display advance direction accredited 'i' signs in the road reserve on the approach roads. In each case approval must be obtained from the sponsoring Centre.)</p> <p>Use of stationery featuring the AVIC 'i' sign. (Level 3 AVICs to use stationery clearly stating that it is a satellite Centre of its sponsoring AVIC or Council).</p> <p><b>Note:</b> Include the words 'Visitor' and 'Centre' in the name. The word 'Information' is optional.</p>		
3.3	Display notices at transport interchanges showing location of AVIC, hours of operation and services provided.		
3.4	Develop and implement procedures to monitor visitor information where it is provided outside of the AVIC to ensure accuracy and currency.		
<b>4 State Tourism Data Warehouse (STDW) Get Connected</b>			
4.1	Operate STDW, maintain current and accurate information on system.		
<b>5 Research</b>			
5.1	Participate in AVIC Network endorsed research programs including collection of AVIC Visitor Data and Customer Satisfaction as required by the Accreditation Program.		
<b>6 Hours of Operation</b>			
6.1	<p>Open for at least 363 days per year for a minimum of 56 hours per week.</p> <p>This criteria applies to Level 1 AVICs only.</p>		
6.2	<p>Open for at least 363 days per year for a minimum of 43 hours per week.</p> <p>This criteria applies to Level 2 AVICs only.</p>		
6.3	<p>Open for at least 5 days per week for a minimum of 7 hours per day- This must include weekends</p> <p><i>This criteria applies to Level 3 AVICs only.</i></p>		
6.4	24hr access to information/display details of after-hours services, including accommodation, attractions, emergency help services, together with a local map in an appropriate location when the AVIC is closed.		

<b>7 Services Offered</b>			
7.1	Display a map of the area within two hours driving radius.		
7.2	Maintain information on coming events. Level 3 applicants to display information on coming events as supplied by sponsoring Level 1 or Level 2 AVIC or with the local Council in the case where no Level or Level 2 AVIC exists.		
7.3	<p>Maintain and provide information on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accommodation</li> <li>• Attractions</li> <li>• Dining</li> <li>• Other visitor amenities, including facilities capable of handling people with disabilities.</li> </ul> <p>Level 3 applicant to display information as agreed with the sponsoring Level 1 or 2 AVIC or with the local Council in the case where no Level 1 or 2 AVIC exists.</p>		
<b>8 Visitor and Operator Enquiries</b>			
8.1	Provide impartial and objective information as required by the Code of Ethics.		
8.2	Maintain a compliments and complaints management system.		
8.3	Develop and adhere to policies relating to customer response times to be noted in Operations Manual.		
8.4	Provide local, regional and Statewide information in response to visitor enquiries.		
<b>9 Accommodation and Other Service Referrals</b>			
9.1	Maintain an accommodation and other services register.		
<b>10 Booking Conditions (if applicable)</b>			
10.1	Hold appropriate licences to operate reservations system (if applicable).		
10.2	Document booking procedures (if applicable).		
10.3	Maintain a peak period accommodation vacancy register system. Level 3 applicant only need to display after hours contact for the accommodation vacancy register.		
<b>11 Merchandise</b>			
11.1	Document and implement merchandising policies and procedures. (Level 3 AVIC-related merchandise only).		
<b>12 AVIC Services to Operators</b>			
12.1	Document services provided by the AVIC to local operators and other organisations.		
<b>13 Brochure Management</b>			
13.1	Display and / or carry brochures from all local operators who meet local quality standards. (Where Membership applies it is understood only members' brochures will be displayed). Level 3 AVICs to display brochures in accordance with guidelines set down by the sponsoring Level 1 or 2 AVIC or the local Council where no Level 1 or Level 2 AVIC exists.		

13.2	Document and implement a brochure management system that includes policies and procedures for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acceptance of brochures</li> <li>• Display</li> <li>• Distribution</li> <li>• Supply (at AVIC and other outlets)</li> <li>• Removal of out-of-date brochures</li> </ul>		
13.3	Display and / or carry regional / Statewide information brochures according to customer demand and space availability. Where space or other limitations apply, alert customers to availability of regional / Statewide information within the AVIC through use of appropriate signage.		
<b>14 Support Material</b>			
14.1	Maintain or have access to material such as videos and photographic libraries to support the operations of the AVIC.		
<b>15 Staffing</b>			
15.1	Employ a minimum of one permanent staff member with at least one year's experience as a Tourism Officer / AVIC Manager, a minimum of one year's relevant management experience or a relevant tourism management, general management qualification or general management or tourism related degree.		
15.2	Develop and implement an Induction Program for all new staff including Customer Service and ongoing training.		
15.3	Comply with the requirements of the Professional Development Program.		
15.4	Maintain a formalised system of ongoing local product familiarisation. Level 3 applicant to consult with their sponsoring Level 1 or Level 2 AVIC or the local Council where no Level 1 or Level 2 AVIC exists.		
15.5	Maintain dress standards, in keeping with local requirements.		
15.6	Ensure all customer service staff wear name badges.		
15.7	Document and implement policies and procedures for human resource management including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff recruitment</li> <li>• Job descriptions, roles and responsibilities</li> <li>• Staff rostering</li> <li>• Maintenance of personal records</li> <li>• Performance management</li> </ul>		
<b>16 Code of Ethics</b>			
16.1	Observe a Code of Ethics that reflects the values of the Accreditation Program		

<b>17 Premises</b>			
<b>17.1</b>	Locate AVIC on the main approach to a town or city, or in a prime position.		
<b>17.2</b>	Occupy shared premises with a compatible business or organisation.		
<b>17.3</b>	Obtain relevant Local Government approvals.		
<b>17.4</b>	Maintain AVIC grounds and premises.		
<b>17.5</b>	Provide adequate disabled access and facilities, as set out in Australian Standard 1428.1. <i>Existing buildings may be exempted, but new buildings to comply.</i>		
<b>17.6</b>	Provide adequate parking facilities, either at the AVIC or in the near vicinity.		
<b>17.7</b>	Provide adequate coach parking and car and caravan facilities that comply with Local Government requirements, either at the AVIC or in the near vicinity.		
<b>17.8</b>	Provide staff facilities that comply with Local Government /industrial relations requirements.		
<b>17.9</b>	Provide adequate brochure and storage facilities to ensure presentation and OH&S standards.(Level 3 highly desirable)		
<b>17.10</b>	Provide an information / enquiry counter. (Level 3 highly desirable)		
<b>17.11</b>	Provide accessible public / staff toilets or access to same in close proximity. (Level 3 highly desirable)		
<b>17.12</b>	Hold relevant Local Government and RTA approval for signage.		
<b>18 Telecommunications</b>			
<b>18.1</b>	Operate telephone systems capable of handling the demands on the AVIC. (Level 3 including fax or email)		
<b>18.2</b>	Operate other telecommunications systems capable of handling the demands on the AVIC including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• After hours telephone answering system</li> <li>• Facsimile</li> <li>• Email</li> <li>• Internet</li> </ul>		

<b>19 Occupational Health and Safety</b>			
<b>19.1</b>	Document, communicate and implement Policies and Procedures for Occupational Health, Safety and Security in accordance with relevant legislation and to include as a minimum: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Risk Management Plan</li> <li>• Roles and Responsibilities of Employer / Employees</li> <li>• Information on Safe Working Practices / Procedures</li> <li>• Emergency / Evacuation Procedures</li> <li>• Incident / Accident Procedures including Log Book</li> <li>• First Aid Kit</li> </ul>		
<b>20 Insurance</b>			
<b>20.1</b>	Hold Public Liability Insurance (must include volunteers) for a minimum of \$5 million.		
<b>20.2</b>	Hold Professional Indemnity Insurance that includes volunteers.		
<b>21 Financial Management</b>			
<b>21.1</b>	Accept credit cards, except where precluded by Council policy, when average merchandise sales exceed \$10.00.		
<b>21.2</b>	Document and implement financial management systems for AVIC operations including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cash handling procedures</li> <li>• Credit card procedures</li> <li>• Details of bank accounts and credit card facilities</li> <li>• Merchandise sales</li> <li>• General bookkeeping processes and systems</li> <li>• Accounts payable</li> <li>• Invoicing</li> <li>• Banking</li> </ul>		
<b>21.3</b>	Provide EFTPOS facilities if applicable.		
<b>22 Asset Management/Equipment Maintenance</b>			
<b>22.1</b>	Maintain an equipment maintenance schedule and a register of all AVIC assets.		
<b>23 Environmental Protection</b>			
<b>23.1</b>	Document policies and practices for sustainable environmental protection.		

## THE LEVELS EXPLAINED

### Level 1

An AVIC whose primary function is disseminating visitor information and marketing the area of its responsibility.

Open for at least 363 days per year for a minimum of 56 hours per week.

Employs a minimum of one permanent staff member with at least one year's experience as a Tourism Officer / AVIC Manager, a minimum of one year's relevant management experience, or a relevant tourism management/general management qualification or general management or tourism related degree.

### Level 2

An AVIC whose primary function is disseminating visitor information.

Open for at least 363 days per year for a minimum of 43 hours per week.

Employs a minimum of one permanent staff member with at least one year's experience as a Tourism Officer / AVIC Manager, a minimum of one year's relevant management experience, or a relevant tourism management/general management qualification or general management or tourism related degree.

### **Level 3**

An AVIC, which offers information services that are secondary to the primary business activity of the organisation within which it is located.

Open 5 days per week (**which must include weekends**) for a minimum of 7 hours per day. They must liaise with a Level 1 or 2 AVIC in their area or their local Council if there is no Level 1 or 2.

The above listed Criteria apply to each level of Accreditation. Those applicants seeking Level 3 Accreditation must obtain endorsement on their Application Form from the Level 1 or 2 AVIC in their area. If there is no Level 1 or Level 2 AVIC, then the applicant's local Council is to provide the endorsement.

Level 3 Accredited Visitor Information Centres are an important part of the New South Wales AVIC Network. They are usually smaller centres or information outlets, which provide mainly local information to the travelling public across New South Wales. Level 3 AVICs operate under the Guidelines of a Level 1 or Level 2 AVIC or their local Council. In general, Level 3 AVICs fall into two categories:

- Dedicated AVICs run by Councils or Local Tourism Associations, offering mainly local information, which may be staffed by volunteers, and meeting the minimum standard – open 5 days (**which must include weekends**) for a minimum of 7 hours per day.
- Private businesses such as retail outlets or tourist attractions where the provision of information is an adjunct to the main business activity.

### **LINKS BETWEEN LEVEL 3 AVICS AND OTHER ACCREDITED VISITOR INFORMATION CENTRES**

The aim of the Accredited Visitor Information Centre Network is to encourage an integrated and planned approach to information provision, and to avoid an unconsidered proliferation of Accredited information outlets displaying the accredited 'i' sign. Level 1 and 2 AVICs are therefore asked to pro-actively identify potential Level 3 outlets in their areas and to work with them to encourage Accreditation where appropriate.

In keeping with this objective, a local Level 1 or 2 AVIC, or local Council must endorse Level 3 applications where no Level 1 or 2 AVIC exists. This allows for situations where local Councils are responsible for information services and may nominate specific outlets that meet Council criteria for Accreditation.

### **DEVELOPING A STRATEGY FOR LEVEL 3 AVICS IN A LOCAL AREA**

Both Level 1 and 2 AVICs and local Councils will need to consider the potential role for Level 3 AVICs. Approaches will vary from area to area, but the sorts of questions to consider include:

- What are the needs of visitors and how might Level 3 AVICs assist in meeting these needs?
- Does the geography of the area warrant a network of Level 3 AVICs? How many, if any, Level 3 outlets are required?
- What are the optimum locations for any Level 3 outlets?
- What criteria should be applied to ensure a professional approach and quality customer service? (The overall AVIC criteria provides guidelines on this and includes items such as brochure display requirements, range of information to be held, premises requirements, etc.).
- How will we maintain contact and co-operation? (eg. regular meetings, reciprocal visits, etc.)
- How will we select any Level 3 outlet?

### **BECOMING A LEVEL 3 ACCREDITED VISITOR INFORMATION CENTRE**

Contact the Level 1 or 2 AVIC in your local area or the Tourism Section of your local Council.

For general information or advice contact Aurora Research on Tel: 02 6885 5558,

Fax: 02 6885 5556 or email: vic@auroraresearch.com.au

## ACCREDITATION FEES

Accreditation Fees will be levied on an annual basis and are based on the Australian Financial Year (July-June). A pro-rata system will be used to calculate Accreditation Fees where necessary. The fees are as follows:

<b>Level 1 and Level 2</b>	<b>\$880.00 inc GST</b>
<b>Level 3</b>	<b>\$385.00 inc GST</b>

In situations where a local Tourist attraction or Council runs more than one Visitor Information Centre, applications must be completed for each proposed AVIC and a fee will apply for each application.

On approval of Accreditation, the applicant will be invoiced with the appropriate Accreditation Fee.

## ACCREDITATION PERIOD

Applicants will be Accredited for a three-year period from the date of approval of the application. However an Annual Report and payment of fees is required annually (see Annual Report form in Module 4).

Conditional Accreditation may be granted to a Visitor Information Centre, which does not yet fully comply with the criteria but undertakes to do so within a six-month period. An Action Plan will be required and evidence of compliance will be requested by Aurora. When renewing Accreditation, each AVIC will need to certify that it still complies with the appropriate Accreditation criteria.

## ANNUAL REPORTING

Applicants will be required to submit a brief report to Aurora on an annual basis. The report will need to include information on general continuous improvement issues and progress with professional development activities. Aurora will automatically send a reminder to each AVIC with a pro-forma to facilitate easy completion of the report (copy in Module 4, this will also be available via email and on disk).

## CONDITIONAL ACCREDITATION

In some instances applicants may not be able to fully meet the Accreditation criteria. The Action Plan should be completed in this case. Conditional Accreditation may be granted to an AVIC that does not yet fully comply with the Accreditation criteria but undertakes to do so within a six-month period. For example, an AVIC may not have completed its Business Plan and evidence of compliance will be requested by Aurora.

## REFUSAL OR CANCELLATION OF ACCREDITATION

The Accreditation Sub Committee has the right to refuse or cancel the Accreditation of an AVIC if it is not operating in accordance with the Accreditation criteria.

**Refusal** action could result from an AVIC's inability to meet a number of Accreditation criteria.

**Cancellation** action could result from:

An AVIC's inability to maintain Accreditation standards.

The receipt of a complaint about the AVIC which has been investigated by Aurora and found to demonstrate a breach of the Accreditation criteria.

Unnotified change of business ownership of the AVIC. Aurora must be notified in writing should the management or ownership of the AVIC change at any time.

Non-payment of Accreditation Fees. *Where an AVIC does not pay their Accreditation Fee within 30 days, a Reminder Notice and copy Invoice will be issued for payment within 7 days. Where no payment is received within the timeframe the AVIC will be given notice to remove the accredited 'i' signage within 30 days of the written notice, cancelling the Centre's Accreditation. The respective AVIC will no longer be part of the AVIC Network.*



If an AVIC's Accreditation is cancelled it will no longer be able to:

Display the accredited 'i' sign at the Visitor Information Centre.

Include the accredited 'i' sign on Visitor Information Centre's stationery, media, brochures, etc.

Be included in AVIC networking functions.

Participate in other Accredited Visitor Information Centre Development Program benefit schemes, marketing and promotional activities.

## RIGHT OF APPEAL

An Appeals Board has been established to act as an independent arbitrator on appeal matters. The AVIC Appeals Board is responsible for considering appeals from those AVICs whose Accreditation has been refused or cancelled. An AVIC making a request to the Appeals Board to reconsider a notice of cancellation or refusal should provide as much material as possible to support its case.

Request for a review of any decision should be made in writing within one month of receipt of notification of refusal or cancellation to the:

Accredited Visitor Information Centre Appeals Board  
C/- Aurora Research Pty Ltd  
PO Box 1000  
DUBBO NSW 2830

## CONFIDENTIALITY

Any documentation and information provided to complete the Accreditation process will be treated as strictly confidential and will only be reviewed as part of the Accreditation process. Any Business/Marketing Plan will be kept strictly confidential.

## RANDOM AUDIT

To ensure the integrity of the AVIC Network, audits on approximately 20% of the AVIC Network will be conducted each year. The audit process will examine compliance with the Accreditation criteria, including examination of the AVIC's Operations Manual, Business Plan and progress with the Professional Development Program.

Aurora recommends the following step-by-step approach for intending Applicants:

- |  |
|--|
| <p>Step 1: Familiarise yourself with all documents on the website <a href="http://www.visitNSW/visitor-information-centres">www.visitNSW/visitor-information-centres</a></p> <p>Step 2: Complete an initial review of the Accreditation criteria to decide which level to apply for.</p> <p>Step3: Work through each section of the Accreditation criteria. The sections will outline the requirements you will need to meet. Refer to the Model Operations Manual for clarification on criteria.</p> <p>Step 4: Develop and review your Business Plan. Remember if you are applying for Level 3 Accreditation, consult with your local Level 1 or 2 AVIC or local Council.</p> <p>Step 5: Develop and review your Operations Manual. Again if applying for Level 3 Accreditation, consult with your Level 1 or 2 AVIC or local Council.</p> <p>Step 6: Develop your approach for a Professional Development Program for your staff.</p> <p>Step7: Complete the Application Form and attach all the requested documents and copies of licenses.</p> <p>Step 8: Sign and date the Application Form and post with all supporting documents to Aurora.</p> <p>Upon receipt of your completed Application Form, a letter of confirmation will be sent to you. Your submission is then assessed by Aurora and forwarded to the Accreditation Sub Committee for approval.</p> <p>Step 9: After successful verification you will receive written confirmation of your Accreditation status.</p> |
|--|

It is strongly recommend that applicants consult with Aurora for assistance in the preparation of their application.

The Accredited Visitor Information Centre Secretariat/ Aurora Research Pty Ltd  
PO Box 1000 Dubbo NSW 2830  
Ph: 02 6885 5558 Fax: 02 6885 5556 Email: [vic@auroraresearch.com.au](mailto:vic@auroraresearch.com.au)

## LEGAL COMPLIANCE

- Submit details of Business Registration and Australian Business Number (*if applicable*)
- Submit copy of your Certificate of Incorporation
- Submit copies of your proof of ownership (*where applicable*)
- Submit copies of relevant licenses (*eg. Travel Agents if required*)
- Submit copies of Business Insurances
- Public Liability (minimum \$5 million, including volunteers)
- Professional Indemnity Insurance (including volunteers)

## STRATEGIC/BUSINESS PLANNING

AVICs must operate in accordance with a Business/Marketing Plan that include the following elements:

### Business Plan

Provide components of your Business Plan that includes:

- An introduction/business profile (50 words)
- A mission/vision statement
- Brief description of products/services
- Your business goals and objectives
- A Situation/SWOT analysis
- Human Resources and Operational Plans
  - *An organisational chart*
  - *Recruitment selection and induction program for new staff*
  - *Job descriptions*
  - *Roles and responsibilities*
  - *Maintenance of personnel records*
  - *Performance management*
  - *Staff rostering*

Operational budget

### Marketing Plans

Provide components of your Marketing Plan such as:

- Market research and competitive positioning
- A Situation/SWOT analysis
- The position, packaging, price and promotion of your product
- Your objectives and goals and how you will implement these
- Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)
- A budget for your Marketing Plan

## SKILLS DEVELOPMENT TRAINING

Detail training procedures such as compliance with the requirements of the Accredited Visitor Information Centre Professional Development Program. AVICs must also maintain a formalised system of ongoing local product familiarisation. (*Level 3 AVICs to consult with their sponsoring AVIC or local Council, where no Level 1 or 2 AVIC exists*).

## FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

Document and implement Financial Management Systems for AVIC operations including:

- Cash handling procedures
- Credit card procedures
- Details of bank accounts and credit card facilities
- Merchandise sales
- General bookkeeping processes and systems
- Accounts payable
- Invoicing
- Banking

## PREMISES

Include external and internal photographs of your AVIC.

Your AVIC must:

- Be located on the main approach to a town or city, or in a prime position.
- If shared premises, occupy with a compatible business.
- Obtain relevant Local Government Approvals.
- Document procedures, records and schedules for maintenance of the AVIC (eg. cleaning of grounds and premises, inspection, servicing, repair and replacement of equipment).
- Provide adequate disabled access and facilities as set out in the Australian Standard 1428.1. Existing buildings may be exempted but new buildings will need to comply.
- Provide adequate car, coach or caravan parking and facilities at or near the AVIC.
- Provide accessible public/staff toilets on-site or nearby.
- Provide staff facilities that comply with Local Government/Industrial Relations requirements.
- Level 1 and 2 applicants must provide an information/enquiry counter. (Level 3 desirable)

## IMAGE

Your AVIC must comply with the signage requirements for Accredited Visitor Information Centres including:

- Identification of the Accredited Visitor Information Centre with the accredited 'i' sign.
- Erection of advance direction accredited 'i' signs on both approaches to the AVIC on the nearest state or regional road or roads. Reassurance 'i' signs on local approach roads to be installed to guide motorist directly to the centre. (Level 3 AVICs located on a state or regional road to display 'i' signs signposting only in the Centre's grounds and not in the road reserve. Where the centre is located on a local road, to display advance direction accredited 'i' signs in the road reserve on the approach roads. In each case approval must be obtained from the sponsoring Centre.)
- Hold relevant Local Government / RTA approval for road signage.
- Use of stationary featuring the accredited 'i' sign.

NOTE: Include the words 'Visitor' and 'Centre' in the name of your AVIC. The word 'Information' is optional.

## RESEARCH

All Levels to participate in AVIC Network / Destination New South Wales endorsed research programs.

## TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Your AVIC must:

- Operate telephone systems capable of handling the demands of the AVIC.
- Have a dedicated phone / fax / email for the Centre.
- Have an after hours telephone answering machine system.

## CUSTOMER SERVICE

Your AVIC must:

- Document a system for answering the telephone.
- Document a system for bookings, checking in and out, for sales procedures, as appropriate.
- Document a cancellation policy.
- Document a system for handling of customer feedback and/or service complaints.
- Maintain dress standards, in keeping with local requirements.
- Ensure all customer service staff wear name badges.

## SERVICES OFFERED

Your AVIC must:

- Display a map of the area within two hours driving radius.
- Display details of after hours services, including accommodation, attractions, emergency help services, together with a local map in an appropriate location when the AVIC is closed.  
*Level 3 AVICs to display information as agreed with the sponsoring Level 1 or 2 AVIC or local Council in the case where no Level 1 or 2 exists.*
- Maintain information on upcoming events.  
*Level 3 AVICs to display information as agreed with the sponsoring Level 1 or 2 AVIC or local Council in the case where no Level 1 or 2 exists.*
- Maintain and provide information on:  
Accommodation  
Attractions  
Dining  
Other visitor amenities including facilities capable of handling people with disabilities  
*Level 3 AVICs to display information as agreed with the sponsoring Level 1 or 2 AVIC or local Council in the case where no Level 1 or 2 exists.*

## ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

Detail procedures and systems for sustainable environmental protection.

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The AVIC Network encourages the ongoing professional development of AVIC management and staff to enhance the overall effectiveness of the Visitor Information Services sector.

A period of time is therefore allowed for the upgrading of skills with the following guideline:

All AVIC Supervisors / Managers and Tourism Managers are expected to undertake assessment and/or training within 3 years of Accreditation being granted. Where changes of personnel occur, the 3 year period will be effective from the date of commencement of employment. Evidence of progressive action will be required through annual reporting.

Within each AVIC, 60% of Information Officers and Information Assistants are expected to undertake assessment and/or training within 3 years of membership being granted. Evidence of progressive action

will be required through annual reporting. **Note that common sense will be applied in application of the 60% guideline, in terms of rounding up or down as required.**

This approach:

- provides a framework for excellence within which all AVICs can seek to upgrade management and staff skills over time.
- takes into account the difficulties in accessing training especially for those in geographically isolated areas.
- allows those who already possess the skills to gather supporting evidence.
- allows for situations where new personnel are employed who need time to upgrade or acquire new skills, eg. a new Tourism Manager may have extensive general management experience but need to acquire tourism specific skills.
- allows time for the assessment process to take place.

## ONGOING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The second component of the Professional Development Program relates to the need for involvement in ongoing professional development activities.

Participation in a program for a minimum of 30 hours professional development activity per year is required for all Tourism Managers and Information Centre Supervisors / Managers.

Note that activities undertaken to meet the skills requirements component of the Professional Development Program will also qualify under ongoing professional development.

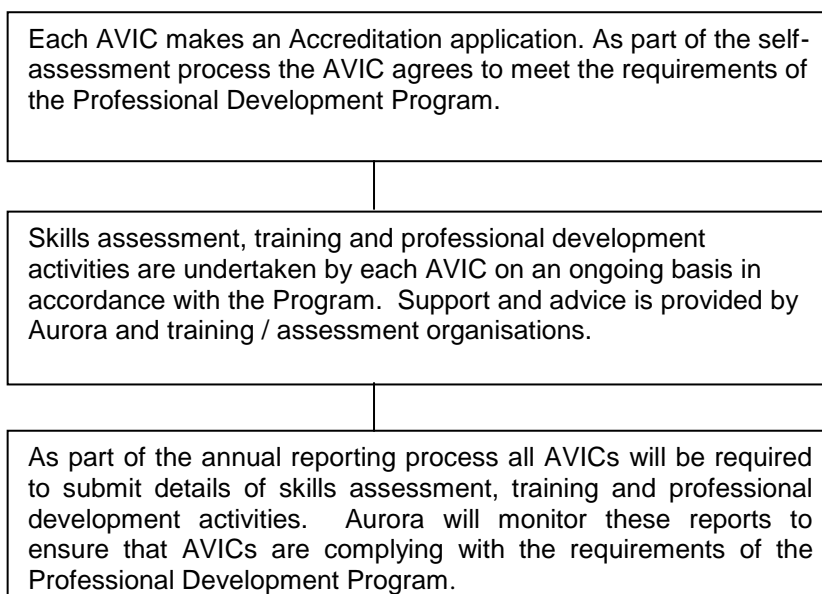
### Professional Development Activities may include:

- face to face education / training in tourism and related disciplines.
- distance education / training in tourism and related disciplines.
- participation in industry committees and associations.
- attendance at conferences related to tourism.
- presentations at industry or related forums.
- acting as a mentor to less experienced industry colleagues.

Each AVIC will include an Annual Report detailing professional development activities undertaken by staff as part of their Accreditation renewal process.

## HOW DOES THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROCESS WORK?

### OVERVIEW



Remember that the Professional Development Program is designed to enhance skills and raise the professional status of the Visitor Information Services sector. Use the Program in a way that provides most benefit to your Centre. The Program gives you the chance to identify training needs, provide training and recognise the skills that people already have.

## IMPLEMENTING THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

**Note: Registered Training Organisations** (TAFE NSW, private colleges, etc.) **can assist AVICs with steps 2-6.** Each AVIC can decide how much involvement to have in the process. Use of the forms suggested here is optional as other recording mechanisms may be more appropriate. *Aurora can provide you with details of the training and assessment options available. These are detailed in Module 3.*

### Step 1

Determine your obligations under the AVIC Professional Development Program

- What qualifications and experience already exists within your Centre? Record these as suggested in the Model Operations Manual.
- What (if any) new qualifications and qualification levels are required within your Centre?
- How many staff will be needed to achieve qualifications?

As you determine your obligations, think about how you can use the Program in your Centre. For example:

- Will all staff be given the opportunity to participate?
- Are there particular staff who would benefit more than others?
- Are there Council requirements or restrictions to consider?
- Can you link this process to your Local Government requirement for training plans for each member of staff?

**Note that from this point forward you can contact a Registered Training Organisation for assistance.**

### Step 2

Where you have identified a need for action:

- Use the *Staff Skills Summary Sheet* in Module 4 - Templates to create a record for each participating staff member (including yourself).
- List the units of competence that are needed to achieve the qualification requirements for each person. Within the qualifications there is some flexibility so you can choose units that best suit your workplace. It is essential for both Managers and staff to be involved in this process.

### Step 3

Complete an initial **informal** skills assessment against the units of competence you have listed and decide on what action needs to be taken. *Use the Staff Skills Summary Sheet and refer to the National Competency Standards as a guideline for this process.*

- What skills does the person already have?
- What simply needs assessing or is training required?
- Are there just some bits and pieces missing to complete particular units?
- Has the person already completed relevant training programs?

### Step 4

Decide on the action required and make it happen.

Contact a Registered Training Organisation to organise assessment or training as appropriate. Aurora can provide general advice in this area.

Complete any administrative details that may be required by your organisation.

### Step 5

Monitor the progress of training and or assessment activities and complete the Staff Skills Summary form on a progressive basis.

### Step 6

Submit the Staff Skills Summary forms as part of your Annual Report to Aurora. These will demonstrate your progress towards meeting the AVIC Network Professional Development requirements.

## ONGOING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR SUPERVISORS / MANAGERS

### Step 1

- Determine what professional development activities are most appropriate for your situation. This could include seminars, involvement in industry associations, attending conferences, etc.

### Step 2

- Undertake the professional development activities.

### Step 3

- Complete the *Summary of Professional Development Activities for Supervisors and Managers* on an ongoing basis for each appropriate staff member.

### Step 4

- Submit the Summary as part of your Annual Report to Aurora.

## Skills Assessment / Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

Many AVIC Managers and staff will already possess a wide range of skills. Skills may have been achieved by:

- work experience
- life experience
- previous courses of study (in both tourism and related disciplines)

Within the AVIC these skills can be formally assessed. Once assessed, individuals may receive national recognition of their skills – ultimately leading to a national qualification up to Advanced Diploma level.

A wide range of different assessment methods may be used including:

- workplace observation
- portfolios of evidence of workplace experience and or / previous study (for example, an individual may submit a copy of a Marketing Plan, Business Plan budget, etc.)
- oral questioning
- peer assessment
- interviews
- projects or assignments

Please note that formal recognition of skills needs to be completed under the auspices of a registered training organisation (TAFE NSW, private college, etc.) It will be these organisations that issue the qualification.

## MENTORING PROGRAM

In line with the concept of promoting an ongoing commitment to professional development, a simple mentoring scheme will operate alongside the AVIC Professional Development Program. This involves experienced Tourism Managers / Information Officers acting as mentors to newly appointed colleagues. Mentors may also assist colleagues in a range of other ways. For example:

- Providing guidance regarding on-the-job training
- Assisting with the preparation of a portfolio of evidence
- Helping people use the industry training materials that are available

While the Program will be largely informal, Aurora will maintain a register of those involved to facilitate contact between mentors and mentorees.

Further details of the Program are available through Aurora. Please contact us by either email [vic@auroraresearch.com.au](mailto:vic@auroraresearch.com.au) or fax 02 6885 5556, as it is best to receive this request/information in writing.

Here are some definitions of a mentor:

- Learned friend
- Helper
- Counsellor, wise and prudent adviser

In essence a mentor is a person with more experience who helps a person with less experience to learn. Mentors could be Managers or operational staff.

## WHAT SKILLS DOES A MENTOR NEED?

If you are considering being a mentor take a few moments to answer the following questions. They are designed so you can think about the skills you need.

	Yes - that's me	Not really me
I support other people in the workplace.		
I communicate well with other people.		
I'm a good listener.		
I'm patient with people learning new skills.		
I'm encouraging and positive.		
Colleagues think of me as a bit of a role model.		
I have skills and experiences to share.		
I enjoy helping other people to achieve their goals.		
I remember what it was like when I was new to my job.		

## ARE THERE ANY GUIDELINES FOR MENTORING?

The relationship between a mentor and mentoree is up to the individuals involved, but the following principles may assist in developing a successful mentoring partnership:

- Build a relationship – establish trust and confidence.
- Agree on how the mentoring relationship will work – how much time, the scope issues to be covered, issues of confidentiality.
- Clarify expectations and goals for both parties.
- Encourage the mentoree to identify and evaluate options to achieve agreed goals.
- Share personal skills and knowledge with the mentoree.
- Ensure the mentoree is encouraged to make their own decisions and take responsibility.
- Ensure open discussion of all issues.

## APPLYING FOR ACCREDITATION

Now that you have reviewed the Accreditation Criteria, please go to the AVIC Website ([www.visitNSW/visitor-information-centres](http://www.visitNSW/visitor-information-centres)) and download the Complete Manual. You will find the Application Form at Module 5. Please contact Aurora Research at any time to discuss your application.

Aurora Research – NSW Visitor Information Centre Development Program  
P O Box 1000  
DUBBO NSW 2830  
Ph: 02 6885 5558 Fax: 02 6885 5556  
Email: [vic@auroraresearch.com.au](mailto:vic@auroraresearch.com.au)





# **MODULE 2**

# **PLANNING**

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For clarification on content, please contact Aurora  
Ph 02 6885 5558 or  
Email [vic@auroraresearch.com.au](mailto:vic@auroraresearch.com.au)

## Disclaimer

The information in this Manual is current at the time of compiling. It can be expected that during the life of the Manual a number of contact details and information sources will change. This document is not an exhaustive list of every resource that an AVIC can access. Whilst every care has been taken in compiling this Manual, the VICDP/AVIC Secretariat, its officers, servants and agents expressly disclaim all liability for errors or omissions of any kind (whether negligent or otherwise) or for any loss, damage or other consequence which may arise from any person relying on this publication.

Nov 11

## Acknowledgements

Aurora Research acknowledges extracts from CTA's VIN Membership Manual, Victoria's Better Business Tourism Accreditation Program and Country Victoria Tourism Council's Visitor Information Centre sector specific requirements, Tourism Accreditation Board of Victoria (TABV), Tourism Queensland's Queensland Visitor Information Centre (VIC) Signage Policy and Rob Tonge 'How to Establish and Operate a Visitor Information Centre' in the development of this Manual for use by the NSW AVIC Network.

## **A BUSINESS PLAN GUIDELINE**

The Business Plan establishes a set of precise actions for the Centre and monitors how the operation is likely to progress over the coming twelve months. A well-prepared Business Plan enables key organisations to more effectively understand the vision, operational aspects and future direction of the Centre. It is a requirement of the Accreditation Criteria that all sections of these guidelines be addressed in the Business Plan. It is also important to note that the information contained in this document is intended as guide and, where Local Government Policies and Procedures may be in place, the use of the Local Government systems should be noted as compliance against the respective AVIC Criteria.

## **B MARKETING PLAN GUIDELINE**

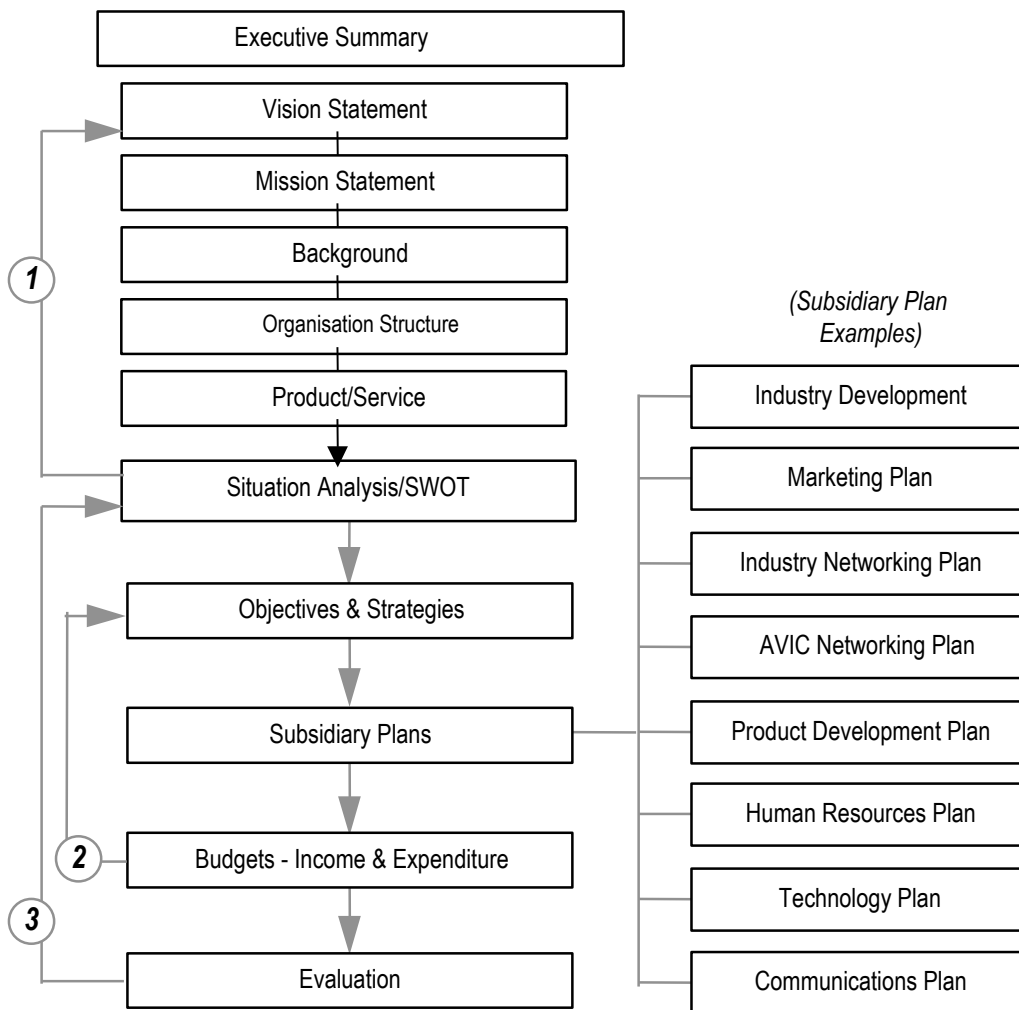
A Marketing Plan is an essential tool for any tourism business because it ensures that your expenditure on attracting customers is both efficient and effective. A well researched and documented Plan will assist with the implementation and control of your Marketing Plan objectives.

# A BUSINESS PLAN GUIDELINE

## THE BUSINESS PLAN FRAMEWORK

There is no single model for a Business Plan, as each case requires some individuality in approach. However, from a general point of view, this document uses the following Business Plan framework, with feedback/review loops where appropriate.

### INTRODUCTION



As an AVIC you are required to have both a Business Plan and a Marketing Plan for your business. These can be in the one document or in a range of documents such as an annual report, a corporate plan or a submission for a major tourism award.

Note the headings on the following pages under Business Plan and Marketing Plan. Make sure that your existing documents **do** cover these headings. If not, then add the extra information required to your plans. If you have no documents at all, follow the instructions to complete the blank templates provided.

### WHY PLAN?

Planning the direction of your AVIC is the key to future success. Studies show, and experts agree, that businesses with formal plans in place are more successful, irrespective of size and type. Planning provides a clear focus for the AVIC and helps identify and solve problems before they cause major

damage. It eliminates guesswork and helps the AVIC to control its own destiny, rather than being at the mercy of external factors. Planning is as important for an AVIC in its first year of operation as it is for more established AVICs.

## WHAT IS A BUSINESS PLAN?

The purpose of the Business Plan is to establish a set of precise actions for the AVIC and to chart and monitor how the operation is likely to progress over the coming twelve months. The Business Plan should include basic financial and operational aspects of the AVIC. A well-prepared Business Plan will enable key organisations including Local Government Authorities (LGAs), Regional Tourism Organisations (RTOs), Tourism New South Wales (TNSW) and local business groups, to more effectively understand the vision, operational aspects and future direction of the AVIC. The Business Plan will also be a valuable item when the Centre is seeking funding from various organisations.

## DEVELOPING THE BUSINESS PLAN

The Business Plan and its development will be useful in discussing with staff and volunteers their role in the organisation and how improvements can be made. Involving as many staff as possible in the preparation of the Plan will assist in making well informed decisions for the Centre and will create a sense of common ownership of the Plan. Once the initial Business Plan has been developed, future revisions and updating of the Plan will be more efficient and effective. It is important to note that the following guidelines for an AVIC Business Plan are just that, **guidelines only**. (The AVIC may be required to prepare a Business Plan in a prescribed format by a funding agency). It is a requirement of Accreditation that all sections of the following guidelines be addressed in the Centre's Business Plan. (*See Business Plan Template - Module 4 - for guidance if required. As a minimum, ensure you have the following headings with an explanation under each*).

### Business Plan

Provide components of your Business Plan that includes:

- An introduction/business profile (50 words)
- A mission/vision statement
- Brief description of products/services
- A Situation/SWOT analysis
- Your business goals and objectives
- Human Resources and Operational Plans
  - *An organisational chart*
  - *Recruitment selection and induction program for new staff*
  - *Job descriptions*
  - *Roles and responsibilities*
  - *Maintenance of personnel records*
  - *Performance management*
  - *Staff rostering*
- Operational Budget
- Evaluation

## BUSINESS PROFILE - DEFINE THE BUSINESS AND ITS DIRECTION

The first section of the Business Plan clarifies the role, function and mission and overviews the background of the Centre. This section should be concise and to the point and limited to half to one page in length. The whole Plan is summarised in the **Executive Summary**. You may need to consider these questions before commencing this document:

- Why the Centre is doing what it is doing.
- What the outcomes should look like.
- How the outcomes will be achieved.

- Who is going to do what-when.
- How the organisation will know whether it achieved its outcomes.

## **Vision Statement**

*A short statement which reflects your Centre's existence.*

To ensure value as a relevant policy and management tool:

- The vision developed is that of the Centre and its stakeholders. It should be specific, have real meaning and not be a modified version of another's.
- Develop the vision in a workshop with key staff, so that input and understanding are maximised.

## **Mission Statement**

*A succinct statement which reflects your broad goals.*

It is important that:

- The mission is developed for and by the Centre.
- It must be focused and state how it is intended to achieve the vision of the Centre.

The vision and mission should also recognise the goals and values of key stakeholders such as local communities, who through industry and Councils, provide much of the Centre's income, and customers who seek a service from the Centre to enrich and maximise their travelling experience.

## **Background**

In this section detail your Centre's history and document your Business Description and products/services (ie. establishment date, location, description of services and products and main achievements to date).

## **Recent Achievements of the Centre**

This section is primarily designed to be a positive introduction to the Business Plan and a means of demonstrating the effectiveness of the Centre to existing and potential funding organisations. This section should also be brief (maximum one page) and describe the achievements of the Centre over the past twelve months. Ideally, it will provide a platform from which to improve the operations and performance of the Centre in the future period. Over time, this component will directly measure outcomes in relation to the actions set in the previous year's Business Plan.

## **Current Performance of the Centre**

In order to accurately determine future actions a clear commencement point is needed. This section acts as a benchmark and should be no longer than one page in length. The Centre's current performance is assessed through an analysis of visitor statistics and data collected by the Centre over the previous twelve to eighteen months. This information will prove valuable, as a basis for providing a broad overview of the Centre's performance. It may be useful, in order to place the Centre in the context of the 'big picture', to include a brief summary of overall visitor activity in the region and likely future growth markets. This information is available from your RTO and/or Tourism New South Wales.

## **Products/Services**

A brief sub-section that should provide an outline of the core Products and Services of the Centre. Write this in no more than four words, and use nouns not verbs. Core functions are a label for the issue to be addressed. It does not go into details of what you actually do.

The following main functions are sample lead-in points:

- Information quality, provision and delivery
- Industry networking
- Visitor enquiry
- Staff development
- Environmental sensitivity
- Technology

## Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) Analysis

A description of the industry and the Centre business now, with implications for the future.

If changes are taking place in the external environment, it is important that Managers re-shape the Centre to suit these changes, so that the Centre can deliver quality and impartial information in a timely manner.

In order for the Centre to perform effectively and be focused on client satisfaction, it must understand the environment in which it operates, have purpose through defined goals and identify sound methods of achieving them. Strategic planning provides long-term targets and directions for the day-to-day management of the Centre. This component of the Business Plan sets the stage for the development of future actions and the associated budget for the Centre over the next year.

Changes may be outlined in the form of a table, against a series of situation sub-headings, as shown. Once again, the content will be specific to the individual Centre, and will not represent a generic situation. Some observations may be based on objective information, other assessments as seen by Centre Managers, staff, and industry members or colleagues. The table below gives an example of areas you will need to consider.

Business Area	Situation	Implications
<b>Visitor Numbers</b>	<i>Growing 14% pa</i>	<i>Potential pressure on accommodation</i>
<b>Key Markets</b>	<i>German, UK Sydney residents</i>	<i>Some need for foreign language guides and services.</i>
<b>Length of Stay</b>	<i>Typically 3 days</i>	<i>Long haul travellers must be seeking other experiences in other locations. What are they?</i>
<b>Attractions &amp; Activities</b>	<i>Whitewater Falls</i>	<i>May be a need for better local signage.</i>
<b>Purpose of Visit</b>	<i>Adventure &amp; Eco-tourism</i>	<i>Opportunities for specialist media in communications.</i>
<b>Information Needs</b>	<i>Insufficient real-life experience material</i>	<i>Video database may be required.</i>
<b>Technological Change Factors</b>	<i>Growth of Internet Video</i>	<i>Participation in Internet with video an opportunity.</i>
<b>Planning Factors</b>	<i>Long lead times</i>	<i>Advance information essential, delivery into other markets including internationally. E-mail response capability.</i>
<b>Timing Factors</b>	<i>Spring and Summer</i>	<i>Seasonal staffing.</i>
<b>Funding</b>	<i>Council funding strong, industry patchy</i>	<i>Better industry participation required.</i>
<b>Council Priorities</b>	<i>Desire to value-add with other attractions</i>	<i>Packaging workshops beneficial.</i>
<b>Community Priorities</b>	<i>Protection of Riverina eco-system</i>	<i>Greater sensitivity and support information necessary.</i>

A SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) Analysis provides a better understanding of the environment in which the industry and Centre operate. It enables the Centre Manager and staff to

set realistic targets given the circumstances that the Centre must operate under. It involves examining the Centre's internal and external work environment.

Strengths and weaknesses are internal characteristics of the Centre (such as resources, skills, equipment, knowledge and staff), whereas opportunities and threats are external to the Centre (such as economic, political, technological and social trends and competitor activities).

The SWOT Analysis should highlight six to twelve key issues or opportunities that will have a significant impact on the Centre's future performance. Examples include:

- Strengths:**                    **Excellent brochure display area and range of information material.**
- Weaknesses:**            **Inexperience of new counter/reception staff.**
- Opportunities:**        **Implementation of the new 'i' sign.**
- Threats:**                    **Possible funding reduction.**

Please note that it is important to regularly review your SWOT Analysis. The tourism industry is constantly changing, making it necessary to continually update the SWOT to keep abreast of what industry changes may mean to the Centre.

SUMMARISE YOUR STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, MARKET OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS	
<i>Which Means</i>	
<b>Strengths</b>	
<b>Weaknesses</b>	
<b>Opportunities</b>	
<b>Threats</b>	



## OBJECTIVES

Using the information gathered in the SWOT Analysis, determine organisational goals and objectives for the Centre, which will:

- Capitalise on its strengths
- Minimise areas of weakness
- Pursue opportunities
- Reduce the impact of potential threats

It is recommended that these goals and objectives be:

- **S** Specific
- **M** Measurable (ie. how will you measure the success of each goal?)
- **A** Achievable within available resources
- **R** Relevant
- **T** Time framed (based on a set time frame and budget)

The organisation and/or individual responsible for achieving each objective should also be identified.

### List your Centre's Objectives - For example:

1. *Market the city and region to local, interstate and international visitors.*
2. *Identify local and regional tourism opportunities.*
3. *Encourage the ecologically sustainable development of the tourism and travel industries.*
4. *Establish and operate tourism events and festivals.*
5. *Provide tourism and travel information and booking services.*
6. *Advise the tourism and travel industry on reducing the environmental impact of tourism related activities.*
7. *Undertake activities in cooperation with other persons where appropriate for the purpose of discharging its other functions.*
8. *Provide information to Tourism New South Wales on matters relating to tourism and the tourism industry of the city and region.*

Objective 1: Market the city and region to local, interstate and international travellers							
Strategy	Time Frame	Responsibility	Budget	Review			
				Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4
Media Campaign involving print, internet and TV	Jan 03	Bob	\$80,000				
Create co-operative marketing partnerships	Jun 03	Claire	\$20,000				

<b>Objective 2:</b> Improve delivery capability for long haul, long lead time holiday planners in eco-adventure market							
Strategy	Time Frame	Responsibility	Budget	Review			
				Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4
Develop New AVIC Website	May 03	Jack	\$40,000				
Secure credit card capability for bookings	Jul 03	Cathy	\$12,000				
<b>Objective 3:</b> Encourage the ecologically sustainable development of the tourist and travel industries							
Strategy	Time Frame	Responsibility	Budget	Review			
				Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4
Develop ecologically sustainable development policy	Mar 03	Bob	\$12,000				
Implement recycling of office material/paper/plastics, etc.	Oct 03	Claire	\$5,000				

## Corporate Objectives

Corporate Objectives can be documented in a similar format. Here are some examples:

1. *Successfully promote this city as a tourism destination, lifting awareness of the appeal of the city and the region.*
2. *Maximise the tourism industry's involvement in the AVIC Network Marketing Program and promotional initiatives.*
3. *Maximise the benefit to this city, region and New South Wales, of revenue generated through the operations of our Visitor's Centre.*
4. *Maximise, through effective and efficient management, the economic, social and environmental benefits to this city of our activities and events.*
5. *Manage events development to maximise the social, cultural and economic benefits of new and existing events for the city and community.*

These objectives reflect the detailed activities and major events for (year) and the next two financial years. They highlight the range of targeted objectives and potential outcomes underpinning the activities.

Detailed objectives and strategies are set out under the headings Marketing and Communications, Events and Tourism Development, etc. reflecting the administrative structure of the Corporation. These objectives and strategies describe our main undertakings and business strategies for (year) and the next two financial years.

## Documenting your Objectives

In the documentation of these objectives and strategies the following list may be useful:

1. *Improve consumer destination awareness.*
2. *Influence travellers to make our city their destination of choice.*
3. *Increase private sector support for Centre's marketing programs.*
4. *Provide information and interpretation services to intending and arriving visitors.*
5. *Provide an accommodation/service provider booking facility for visitors, etc.*

A sample format for documenting your objectives and strategies follows:

<b>OBJECTIVE 1</b>	Increase awareness of ---- as a desirable tourist destination to local, national and international audiences through public relations activity.
<b>STRATEGIES</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Implement a public relations program, which communicates the desirable characteristics of our city and the region, targeting main stream print media and high-reach electronic media such as lifestyle and special interest programs.</li> <li>2. Capitalise on major events for each of our four seasons through main stream media in key target markets.</li> <li>3. Continue to develop close relationships with editors and journalists from key publications and electronic media in order to utilise non-paid press to promote our location as a desirable tourism destination.</li> <li>4. Enhance destination media exposure through the expansion of the Visiting Journalist Program (VJP), continuing to host familiarisations for editors and journalists from strategically important publications and electronic media.</li> </ol>
<b>OBJECTIVE 2</b>	Market ----- as an attractive tourist destination through promotion to the travel trade and manage a comprehensive national and international distribution program.
<b>STRATEGIES</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Promote retail holiday packaging and reservation operations.</li> <li>2. Develop and manage a travel trade wholesale program.</li> <li>3. Undertake promotions at national and international travel trade promotional shows.</li> <li>4. Implement coordinated sales efforts in geographic target markets nationally and internationally.</li> <li>5. Manage domestic and international travel trade familiarisation programs.</li> </ol>

## TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

<b>Research OBJECTIVE 1</b>	Provide our Centre Management, the Government and the tourism industry with easy access to market intelligence
<b>STRATEGIES</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Undertake general analysis of the National Visitors Survey and International Visitors Survey as well as other relevant publications and market information.</li> <li>2. Undertake reviews of general market intelligence of the tourism industry, nationally and internationally, to identify emerging trends and product demands as well as identifying gaps in our local tourism product portfolio.</li> <li>3. Make this information accessible to the industry along with assistance in interpreting the information for their business.</li> </ol>
<b>OBJECTIVE 2</b>	Encourage sustainable growth in the tourism industry through assistance to new operators entering the industry.
<b>STRATEGIES</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Encourage and facilitate new entries to the tourism industry through the development of appropriate start up information and advice.</li> <li>2. Liaise with NSW and Commonwealth Government agencies to identify assistance programs for new businesses.</li> <li>3. Provide the Centre Management with comprehensive briefings on potential new opportunities for the development of tourism in the city.</li> </ol>

## HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Human Resource Management involves engaging employees, volunteers, sub-contractors and agents with the appropriate knowledge, skills, experience and qualifications who, through training and professional development, contribute to the achievement of organisational goals.

In this section of the Plan include details on:

- How the Centre is structured (ie. an Organisational chart).
- Position descriptions for each role in the Centre (for example, Manager/Coordinator, Shift Supervisor, Visitor Information Officer, etc.).
- The Centre's staff recruitment policy.
- The Centre's staff rostering system.
- The Centre's staff training program, including staff induction, customer service, ongoing training and other training (such as workplace health and safety), and professional development.
- Maintenance of the Centre's personnel records (such as where they are stored, who can access them, how often they are updated, etc.).

These details should be addressed for both the Centre's paid employees and volunteer staff and is an Accreditation requirement of all AVIC Levels.

Refer to the Staff Induction, Training and Professional Development section of this Module for further information.

## PROGRAM OF ACTIONS AND BUDGET

On the basis of the information and details reported in the previous sections, **list the actions**, which the Centre intends to pursue over the next twelve months. It is important to remember that the actions should be related directly to resolving the key issues that have been previously identified.

In order to budget for completion of these tasks, identify the costs associated with achieving the tasks. This will assist in guiding the Centre's expenditure over the coming budgetary period. The Program of Actions and Operational Budget format following is an example of the layout that can be used to present the Centre's annual Action Plan and the associated Operational Budget. This is a sample format only. Each Centre may devise a format more appropriate to both its own and its funding agency's needs.

PROGRAM OF ACTIONS	COST
<b>Visitor Information Centre Marketing and Public Relations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Monthly calendar of events</li> <li>▪ Preparation of weekly media release</li> <li>▪ Promotion of accredited 'i' sign and Brand Slogan</li> </ul>	\$
<b>Visitor Information Centre Maintenance and Development</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Installation of new brochure rack and display board for regional brochures</li> <li>▪ Development and installation of an Events Notice Board</li> <li>▪ Development of an After-Hours Display Board</li> </ul>	\$
<b>Staff Training and Development</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Participation in 'Aussie Host' training scheme</li> <li>▪ Professional Development initiatives for Centre Manager and key staff</li> <li>▪ Development of structured staff induction program</li> </ul>	\$
<b>Networking with other AVICs and Industry</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Member of RTO</li> <li>▪ Submission of articles in the AVIC News</li> <li>▪ Attendance at appropriate industry forums and conferences</li> <li>▪ Participation in quarterly industry networking events for the region</li> </ul>	\$
<b>TOTAL BUDGET</b>	\$

**Include an Operational Budget** (see sample)

Operational Budget for _____ Accredited Visitor Information Centre			
For _____ Financial Year			
Income		Expenditure	
Local Government Authority	\$	Program of Actions (as above)	\$
Regional Tourism Organisation	\$	Rent	\$
Income from Brochure Display	\$	Electricity	\$
Chamber of Commerce contribution	\$	Security	\$
Event organisation	\$	Rates	\$
Other Income sources (list)	\$	Operating Costs:	\$
▪	\$	Staff wages and salaries	\$
▪	\$	Volunteer expenses	\$
▪	\$	Telephone, fax, post, etc.	\$
▪	\$	Office equipment rental and maintenance	\$
▪	\$	Program Costs	\$
▪		Other Operational Expenses	
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>\$</b>

The finalisation of the Business Plan cannot be complete without a detailed and balanced budget, covering both sides of the ledger. A general format for Spring Valley and its subsidiary Level 2 Centre may be as follows:

Spring Valley AVIC	
Income	Expenditure
Grants: <i>Council</i> <i>Other</i>	Fixed Costs Of Operation: <i>Rent</i> <i>Electricity, etc.</i>
Membership	Operating Costs:
User Pay Income	<i>Staff</i>
Booking Income	<i>Publications, Materials</i>
Material Sales and Publications	<i>Telephone, fax, etc.</i>
VIC Hire - Commercial activities	Program Costs:
Sponsorship	<i>High Priority Programs</i>
Festival of the Leaves	<i>Medium Priority Programs</i>
	<i>Low Priority Programs</i>
Income from Level 3 AVIC at Gully Springs (See separate schedule)	Expenditure (Summary) applying to Level 2 AVIC at Gully Springs (See separate schedule)
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>Total Expenditure</b>

In the above model it can be seen that there exists a separate schedule for the Level 3 Centre at Gully Springs. As it falls under the accountability of the Spring Valley Centre, it is consolidated into the Spring Valley budget in summary form. The cost of monitoring has to be included in the budget for operational costs. If Expenditure and Income do not balance, a checking process will be required:

	Expenditure too high for income	Income higher than expenditure
Options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review additional means of obtaining higher income</li> <li>Review program priorities - consider the impact of delaying or dropping lower priority programs or those which may not be urgent</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accumulate funds</li> <li>Expand programs</li> <li>Improve delivery quality</li> <li>Reduce membership, service or other fees or charges</li> </ul>

## EVALUATION

It is important to conduct performance evaluations or reviews on a regular basis. This will allow management to determine if performance objectives (or standards) have been met and then take appropriate action.

As noted, objectives set should be measurable in terms of dollars, percentages, ratios or any other objective measure. In other words, by looking at these measures, Managers should be able to objectively determine if their targets have been met. Data gathered through customer interviews and monitoring of Centre enquiries are obviously a useful evaluation tool.

Other examples of measurements could include:

- Number of visitors to Centre
- Number of phone enquiries to Centre
- Sales of accommodation, attractions, events, souvenirs
- Customer satisfaction surveys

The table below illustrates an improvement cycle, which should be considered for implementation by AVICs.

Plan	Do	Review	Improve
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Determine and document current processes</li> <li>Determine current performance of the process</li> <li>Determine customer expectations of the process</li> <li>Determine the gaps between expectations and process capability</li> <li>Find the cause</li> <li>Propose possible solutions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trial solution (on small scale)</li> <li>Collect data to determine if changes have occurred in the process</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analyse data</li> <li>Determine if changing the process has resulted in an improvement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement and standardise the change if there was improvement</li> <li>Repeat the process again if there was no improvement</li> </ul>

## **OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES**

To ensure high quality visitor information provision, the day-to-day operations of an AVIC require careful consideration, planning, organising and recording. It is a requirement of Accreditation that a separate Operations Manual be prepared by the AVIC for this purpose. AVICs should refer to the Accredited Visitor Information Centre **Model Operations Manual** (Module 3 of this Manual) when preparing this document.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS**

The tourism industry is committed to environmental best practice so there is an industry-wide expectation that tourism businesses will take measures to prevent unnecessary environmental degradation and will implement identified environmental improvement practices.

In this section of the Business Plan include the Centre's policies for recycling, no smoking, energy saving, staff training (for example, to encourage staff to qualify visitors' needs to ensure that they are not provided with unnecessary materials) and visual impact of signage (in keeping with the character of the environment). It is also advisable that Centres become aware of the Codes of Sustainable Practice and other industry codes of conduct that may be relevant, not only to the Centre, but to tourism products promoted by the Centre.

## **COMMUNICATING THE PLAN**

As considerable resources have been devoted to preparing the Business Plan, it is highly recommended that it be communicated to all relevant internal and external stakeholders (including paid and volunteer staff, Local Government Authorities, Regional Tourism Organisations, tourism operators, etc.).

It is recommended that the Plan be communicated to stakeholders when it is in a draft format, (to enable input from these stakeholders before finalising the Plan), and upon its finalisation. This section of the Plan should therefore include information on to who the Centre will communicate the Plan to and how and when it intends to do so.

The Centre's Annual Report is an important communication medium to provide existing and potential stakeholders with an overview of the operations of the Centre for the previous financial year. Ideally, it will give a comprehensive overview of the success of the Centre in achieving its stated objectives and actions over the past financial year. It is recommended that Centres prepare an Annual Report for each financial year of operation.

## **APPENDIX**

### **Regulatory Compliance Issues**

Any business must comply with a range of regulatory standards as required by Local, State and Federal Governments as well as controlling industry bodies. AVICs should have an understanding of the regulatory compliance issues which are relevant to their business and be able to demonstrate compliance with these regulations.

Accompanying the Business Plan should be a table including the following regulatory compliance details (where applicable to the Centre):

- Workplace Registration
- Business Name Registration
- Certificate of Incorporation
- Australian Company Number
- Australian Business Number
- Insurance - Public Liability (minimum of \$5m including volunteers), Professional Indemnity, Workers Compensation
- Compliance with all relevant licences and permits; Codes of Conduct/Ethics and tax requirements
- Compliance with all staffing and employment regulations

Refer to the Regulatory Compliance and Insurance sections of this Manual for further information on these requirements.

## **B      MARKETING PLAN**

### **CREATING A MARKETING PLAN**

A Marketing Plan is an essential tool for any tourism business because it ensures that your expenditure on attracting customers is both efficient and effective. It is also useful because it focuses your budget on the most likely customers or “target markets” and the most productive ways of promoting your business. In other words, you can develop your marketing strategy to fit the direct needs of your business.

It is also helpful for your local and State tourism industry to be aware of your target market. This way they can recommend your business to the appropriate customers and include your business in future promotions that are suitable to your product.

It is an Accreditation requirement that a statement of “truth in advertising and marketing” be included in your Marketing Plan.

### **MARKETING PLAN GUIDELINES**

#### **Executive Summary**

Include an Executive Summary, a brief half to one page on the overall contents of the Marketing Plan.

#### **Target Market Analysis**

Describe the main type of customers, or market groups, attracted to your business - age, gender, origin, and their likes/dislikes, etc. For example, ‘retired couples from Melbourne’; ‘German backpackers 18-25yrs, walkers, kayakers’. Also, describe any other groups you now hope to attract to your business in greater numbers. Your marketing strategies (below) should describe your tactics for attracting these new groups.

#### **Situation Analysis**

An analysis of your past marketing effectiveness will help you decide on your marketing strategies for the future. In this space please briefly describe the marketing activities that worked or did not work in the past year, and why. Also, what has customer feedback indicated to you?

#### **Products, Price, Position and Packaging**

This section of the Business Plan should include the Centre’s marketing objectives and strategies in the following areas:

- Products and services which the Centre provides
- Pricing of product/souvenir sales, reservations commissions, brochure display fees, etc.
- Advertising, promotion and public relations strategies
- Distribution strategies (ie. does the Centre distribute visitor information in locations other than the Centre itself? How does it manage this?)

A Centre has an ethical and professional responsibility to ensure that its marketing and promotional materials, including its advertising, collateral, images and claims, are a true and accurate representation of the Centre. This should be considered by the Centre at all times when planning its marketing activities.



## Marketing and Public Relations

Marketing and public relations activity will assist in the attraction of new visitors to the Centre (and to the region) and help to maintain the existing visitor base. Planning for these activities will ensure maximum outcome from dollars spent in these areas. In this section of the Business Plan include details on:

### Target Markets

Identify, describe and analyse the Centre's target markets (ie. residents, daytrippers, intrastate visitors, interstate visitors, international visitors, operators, the community, etc.).

### Market Research and Competitive Positioning

Market research is undertaken to answer questions such as:

- Who are the Centre's (and the region's) target markets?
- What do the Centre's target markets expect from the Centre?
- How satisfied are the Centre's target markets with the Centre's facilities, products and services?
- Who/what are our competitors? Who is doing what in tourism in our region?
- What changes are occurring in the marketplace and in the target markets?

Include a brief overview of market research activities which the Centre could undertake in the next 12 months to answer these questions.

Market research need not be a costly exercise. Market research activities include surveying current and potential visitors, reading trade magazines, speaking to local and Regional Tourism Organisations (RTOs), industry associations, other tourism businesses and visitors and attending industry forums and conferences.

### Marketing Objectives / Strategies/ Activity/ Budget/ Timeframe

List here what you plan to do over the next year or so in marketing. For example:

- Promotions
- Regional marketing campaigns
- Local tourism association activity
- Trade events
- Distribution of brochures, eg. to Centres, other outlets
- Signs
- Visiting Journalists Program
- Customer database
- Website development
- Advertising

List how much money you will allocate to each activity. Indicate the dates by which this activity will be completed.

### Implementation and Control

Describe how you measure your marketing performance, that is, how you evaluate whether your marketing is achieving sales and customers for you.

For example:

- Do you record how customers hear about your business and where they come from?
- Do you calculate the cost of a particular marketing activity versus the dollar return for your business?

A simple table is needed to show all areas clearly.

MARKETING OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIES	ACTIVITY	BUDGET	TIMEFRAME

When you have completed all the above topics you have the makings of a detailed Business and Marketing Plan for your Centre. It is important to review these plans on a regular basis.



## MODULE 3

# MODEL OPERATIONS MANUAL



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#### Disclaimer

The information in this Manual is current at the time of compiling. It can be expected that during the life of the Manual a number of contact details and information sources will change. This document is not an exhaustive list of every resource that an AVIC can access. **It is important to note that the information contained in the AVIC Manual is intended as a guide and, where Local Government Policies and Procedures may be in place, the use of the Local Government systems should be noted as compliance against AVIC Criteria.** Whilst every care has been taken in compiling this Manual, the VICDP/AVIC Secretariat, its officers, servants and agents expressly disclaim all liability for errors or omissions of any kind (whether negligent or otherwise) or for any loss, damage or other consequence which may arise from any person relying on this publication.

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## **SECTION A OPERATIONS MANUAL GUIDELINES**

An Operations Manual establishes the day-to-day basic operational procedures to be followed by Accredited Visitor Information Centre (AVIC) staff and volunteers. This guideline provides a framework for AVIC Managers in developing an Operations Manual. It is an Accreditation requirement that all sections of this guideline be addressed in the Operations Manual.

## **SECTION B REGULATORY COMPLIANCE**

This section provides further information on regulatory compliance issues that must be addressed in the AVIC's Business Plan (where appropriate). Issues include:

- Workplace Registration
- Business Name Registration
- Certification of Incorporation
- Australian Company Number (ACN)
- Australian Business Number (ABN)
- Insurances
- Licenses and Permits
- Codes of Conduct
- Staffing
- Employment regulations
- Taxation requirements

## **SECTION C STAFF INDUCTION, TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

This section provides information on the staff induction process, the staff training process, qualifications in the tourism industry, training requirements of AVICs, Tourism Training Provider listing, on-going professional development and roles and responsibilities of AVIC personnel.

## **SECTION D CUSTOMER SERVICE**

This section includes information on customer service policies and procedures, handling customer complaints and feedback and booking, confirmation and cancellation policies and procedures.

## **SECTION E COLLECTING VISITOR DATA**

This section includes information on three methods by which to collect visitor data - a Visitor Data Form, Guest Book and a Visitor Profile. The completion and submission of the Visitor Data Form is a requirement of Accreditation.

## **SECTION F FINANCE**

This section provides details on the finance requirements for Accreditation.

## **SECTION G ENVIRONMENT**

This section provides details on the environmental consideration requirements of Accreditation.

## **SECTION H WORKPLACE HEALTH AND SAFETY**

This section provides further information on Workplace Health and Safety issues of which AVICs must be aware of, including Workplace Health and Safety Legislation, specific safety details which must be included in the Operations Manual and the role of Health and Safety Officers.

## **SECTION I INSURANCE**

This section provides detailed information on three types of insurances that are essential to an AVIC:

- Professional Indemnity Insurance
- Public Liability Insurance
- Workers Compensation Insurance

## **SECTION J EQUIPMENT / MAINTENANCE**

This section provides details on the equipment and maintenance requirements for Accreditation.

## **SECTION K SIGNAGE**

This section provides details on the signage requirements for Accreditation.

## **SECTION L FUNDING, ASSISTANCE AND INFORMATION SOURCES**

This section provides information and contact details for a range of funding bodies.

- Assistance and information sources (organisations that provide assistance to the tourism industry)
- Published tourism data sources
- Tourism industry information sources
- Financial assistance schemes available to tourism organisations

## **SECTION M SAMPLE CODE OF CONDUCT/ETHICS**

## A OPERATIONS MANUAL GUIDELINES

To be compliant with the National Standard, all New South Wales AVICs are to develop and implement an Operations Manual which incorporates the following elements: Business Information; Legal Compliance; Human Resource Management; Training; Environmental Management; Business Planning/Financial Procedures and Operating Procedures

An Operations Manual establishes the procedures to be followed by AVIC staff and volunteers. It should systematically outline the day-to-day basic operational procedures required for a business facility to perform its basic function. In this instance, it is the provision of information in a manner that supports best practice principles, quality information services and improved efficiencies in AVIC operations.

### WHY PREPARE AN OPERATIONS MANUAL?

An Operations Manual assists each Centre in delivering a range of services to its customers in a unified and quality controlled manner. With the significant presence of part-time and volunteer staff in AVICs, a comprehensive understanding of the Centre's procedures is essential. This formal listing of activities is important in the event of the absence of staff due to unforeseen circumstances, which is not an uncommon event given this segment of the industry's reliance on volunteer staff. Experience dictates that where the appropriate procedures are not systematically recorded in written form, reliance on verbal instructions can lead to misinformation, costly errors and a failure to accurately convey necessary details.

### WHAT IS THIS DOCUMENT?

This document provides a framework for AVIC Managers in developing an Operations Manual to contribute to the professional provision of information to visitors. It will assist AVICs in developing a procedural approach that furthers their efforts to obtain the accredited 'i' sign and improve their operational performance.

Each AVIC has its own requirements and operational protocols that will vary in nature from other AVICs, therefore AVIC Managers may choose to modify and enhance the following guidelines where necessary to ensure development of a comprehensive operational document tailored to their Centre's demands.

**It should be noted that all sections of the following guideline be included in the AVIC Operations Manual. Just how detailed your Manual becomes is up to you. Please endeavour to document a Manual that is reflective of your Centre's operations and allows for continual improvement.**

### TIPS FOR PREPARING AN OPERATIONS MANUAL

When preparing the Operations Manual it is important to remember that the information must be readily understood by anyone who works in the AVIC. Any individual who refers to the Manual must be able to quickly grasp an understanding of the Centre's procedures. In this context, the main objectives are:

- Accuracy
- Brevity
- Clarity
- Logic
- Never assume
- When developing the procedures, break the procedures into a series of steps and ensure these steps are in the correct sequence.
- Use short, familiar words and where possible, use short paragraphs, either numbered or with 'dash' points.
- Allow ample margins for a binding edge and ensure all text is well spaced and not congested.
- A Master Copy must be kept in a centrally located folder for general reference by all staff. It is recommended the Manager or Centre Coordinator have their own copy on hand at all times in case the Master is misplaced.
- Each staff member, as part of their induction training, should review a copy of the Manual.
- Each Manager will need to consider presenting individual sections of the Manual to new staff and volunteers as an introduction to the Centre.



- It is essential that the Manual be updated IMMEDIATELY following any change to operations or procedures. Regular review of the document is advised, perhaps at staff meetings, with the intention of an 'overhaul' every 12 months.

These guidelines have been largely adopted from a report prepared by Rob Tonge and Associates for the Country Victoria Tourism Council (CVTC), and the VIN Model Operations Manual.

## OVERVIEW OF OPERATIONS MANUAL FOR LEVEL 3 AVICS

For ease of reference for **Level 3 AVICs** who run their AVIC as part of another business, please refer to the list below and ensure that a paragraph for each dot point is included in your AVIC Operations Manual.

### LEVEL 3 OPERATIONS MANUAL INCLUSIONS

#### COMPANY INFORMATION

- All relevant business information including address, phone /fax/email; business name; date established; proprietor name; etc.

#### LEGAL COMPLIANCE

- Details of business registration; Australian Business Number (if applicable).
- Details of licences and copies of specific industry association agreements on standards, and/or codes of practice.
- Details of your sponsoring AVIC or local Council.
- Details of insurance's - general, fire/burglary - Public Liability (\$5 million minimum cover), Workers Compensation and Professional Indemnity where appropriate.
- Copy of plans showing location of fire extinguishers.
- Copy of **Code of Ethics**, (which includes a Statement of Truth in Advertising and Marketing).

#### HUMAN RESOURCE, MANAGEMENT AND TRAINING

- Record of Human Resources (Staff must have an individual personnel file containing current address, telephone number, person to contact in emergency, any sick notes, leave applications, copy of current drivers licence any other employee specific information, including training and professional development activities).
- System for roster maintenance, how is it controlled and when is it amended or re-issued and who is it done by.
- Written procedures for staff recruitment and selection (written Job Descriptions for all key staff).
- An Organisational Responsibility and Authority Chart.
- Written Basic Induction Training Policy and Procedure (including workplace safety procedures and dress standards).
- Written Customer Service Training and Ongoing Development. (Past experience and training to be recorded).
- Schedule of ongoing professional development activities for all staff. Training Program for current year to be provided.

#### ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

- Document policies and practices for sustainable environmental protection.

#### BUSINESS PLANNING (see template in Module 4)

- Documented Business Plan which includes background and history of business, an overview of future objectives and priorities, with documented strategies and actions to achieve those objectives.
- A SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) Analysis addressing both internal and external factors that may affect the business.
- A Marketing Plan supported by market research that identifies how the product is positioned and what channels of distribution are employed. The Plan should also be supported by appropriate actions and budget allocations.

#### OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES

##### CUSTOMER SERVICE PROCEDURES

- Include a written Quality Policy. Recommend that it is also displayed for all staff to view; a written system for answering the telephone that is used by all employees; a written system for Booking /Reservations or sales of any goods and services; a documented Cancellation Policy and/or Refund Policy, and a documented system in place for handling complaints and feedback. (Who does this, how and what is the follow up process. Provide method and evidence of recording customer feedback and/or service complaints).
- Document a merchandising policy and procedure and brochure management policy.

**FINANCIAL PROCEDURES**

- Copy of financial management procedures, banking, invoicing and record keeping.

**MAINTENANCE PROCEDURES**

- A written system for ordering and storage of all regularly used AVIC-related products.
- A written system for regular cleaning of facilities, vehicle/s and /or surrounding area as appropriate.
- A written system for regular servicing and maintenance of all equipment, machinery and vehicles.

**OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY PROCEDURES**

- Documented Risk Management Policy
- Documented and displayed written Emergency Evacuation Procedure
- (Copies of First Aid Certificates in HR File)
- First Aid equipment checklist
- List of potential hazards and potential risks for consideration. Assess methods of overcoming risks on a regular basis. List of hazardous chemicals, usage, storage, handling and disposition.

**ADMINISTRATION AND OPERATIONS**

- Process for collection of visitor data. Include procedure to send to Aurora.
- Brochure acceptance policy
- Operations Manual
- Notation of telephone, fax, and email address for your AVIC
- Noted area for brochures displays and storage
- Documentation of Opening hours (must meet visitor demand) (minimum 5 days per week for minimum 7 hours)
- Document after hours services and local map (24hr access to information)
- Map showing location of public toilets
- Provision of adequate car, coach and caravan parking
- AVIC signage (high profile signage). Include photos if possible
- Process for periodic evaluation of customer feedback and follow up mechanisms

**RISK MANAGEMENT**

- Disabled access into and within the Centre. Must include strategies to overcome physical barriers to access (disabilities).
- Internal controls that ensure food and products are safe and fit for purpose (if applicable).

## B REGULATORY COMPLIANCE

Any business must comply with a range of regulatory standards as required by Local, State and Federal Governments as well as controlling industry bodies. An AVIC should have an understanding of the regulatory compliance issues which are relevant to their business and be able to demonstrate compliance with these regulations.

Accompanying the AVIC's Business Plan should be a table including a number of regulatory compliance details (where applicable to the AVIC). This section of the Manual provides an overview of each of these regulatory requirements.

### WORKPLACE REGISTRATION

Workplace registration applies to all workplaces, including businesses operating from home, which have more than two persons employed between 1 February of one year and 31 January of the next year. If a fee is required, the Division of Workplace Health and Safety will forward applicants an invoice after submitting their application.

Workplace registration cannot be transferred.

For further information, contact:

Fair Trading on Ph: 13 32 20; <http://www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au>

WorkCover for Workplace Health and Safety  
<http://www.workcover.nsw.gov.au>

### BUSINESS NAME REGISTRATION

All AVICs must provide evidence of Business Registration. AVICs should register their name as a business name.

The prime purpose of the Business Names Act is the protection of the public, by compelling people who do not carry on the business under their own name to register and thus provide a means whereby their identity and whereabouts can be readily ascertained. Registering a business name also provides protection for the business, as it ensures that no two businesses have the same name, or even similar sounding names. This is particularly beneficial for AVICs, to ensure that 'unofficial' AVICs do not establish businesses with the same name as 'official' AVICs.

An initial registration fee (payable on application) and an annual renewal fee are applicable to business name registration. If payment has not been made within four months after the due date, a business name will be de-registered and another business will be free to use it. The business could then be stopped from using the name it has been trading under.

For more comprehensive information please refer to the ASIC website:  
<http://www.asic.gov.au/asic/asic.nsf>

To register a business name:

Contact Fair Trading or access the Business Licence Information Service website:  
<http://www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au>

## CERTIFICATE OF INCORPORATION

All Level 1 and Level 2 AVICs must provide evidence of Incorporation.

There are many associations formed for all sorts of reasons. Associations are not required by law to become Incorporated but if they are not formed for the financial gain of members, they may choose to become Incorporated under the Associations Incorporation Act 1981.

Once Incorporated under that Act, an association is recognised as a legal entity separate from its members. The association then has all the powers of an individual and is legally able to do things in its own name such as own land, sign a lease or appear in court.

Incorporation provides fairly inexpensive protection for members against the possibility of being held personally responsible for the association's debts or liabilities.

A Certificate of Incorporation is issued to Incorporated associations.

For further information on the rights and responsibilities involved in the Incorporation of an association, contact: Fair Trading Centres on Ph: 13 32 20 from Monday to Friday between 8:30am and 5:00pm.  
<http://www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au>

## AUSTRALIAN COMPANY NUMBER (ACN)

All Level 1 and 2 AVICs must provide evidence of an ACN if applicable.

A company must operate under the Corporations Law which is administered by the Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC) - a Commonwealth Government agency.

Registration provides an applicant with a number called the Australian Company Number (ACN) which, together with the name and the status of the company, serves to identify it. Business name or company registration does not automatically allow applicants to use that name as a trademark. Company registration cannot be transferred.

### How to obtain registration

Submit a completed "Application for Registration of an Australian Company" to your regional ASIC Business Centre. If reservation of a name is desired, a completed "Application for Reservation of a Name" should also be lodged.

For further information, contact:

The Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC)  
Ph: 1300 300 630 for information or on the web at <http://www.asic.gov.au>

## AUSTRALIAN BUSINESS NUMBER (ABN)

All AVICs must provide evidence of their ABN. Eventually your ABN will become the only number you will need for all your business dealings with government. For example, if you want to change your address you will only need to notify one government agency.

Not everyone will be entitled to an ABN. To be entitled to an ABN, you must be:

- a company registered under Corporations Law in Australia.
- a government entity.
- an entity that is carrying on an enterprise in Australia.

For further information:

- Telephone the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) Business Tax Reform Infoline on Ph: 13 24 78.
- Download information from the ATO's website at [www.ato.gov.au](http://www.ato.gov.au).
- Write to the ATO at PO Box 9935 in your capital city.

ATO call centre staff will have phone lists of appropriate ATO specialist staff (ABN, Business Registration Staff, GST, etc.) to whom detailed calls may be forwarded.

## LICENCES AND PERMITS

All AVICs must provide evidence of Licences and Permits.

It is important to ascertain whether there are any licensing requirements, permits or regulations applicable to your AVIC.

For example, if an AVIC establishes or operates a booking service, it may need to become licensed as a Travel Agent. **Any person or company whose business involves selling or arranging for the sale of travel or travel and accommodation must be licensed as a Travel Agent.** This includes general sales agents, tour operators, wholesalers and consolidators as well as retail agents.

The following people are not required to be licensed as a Travel Agent:

- Any person whose business is restricted to the sale of domestic travel and the annual turnover of the business does not exceed \$30,000.
- Owners of vehicles and/or accommodation. However, if travel and accommodation is sold on behalf of other persons or organisations, owners of vehicles and/or accommodation will be required to be licensed.
- Employees of licensed Travel Agents.
- Any person who sells day tours only.

The simplest way to obtain information on all business licensing requirements is to contact Fair Trading <http://www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au> 133 220

Also check with your local Council for any necessary requirements, such as:

- Town Planning approval
- Building approval
- Regional Health Licensing requirements
- Food Safety Regulations

## CODES OF CONDUCT

All AVICs must document and observe a Code of Conduct /Ethics which reflects the values of the AVIC. Codes of Conduct, Codes of Practices and/or Codes of Ethics are sets of guidelines and/or instructions concerning business activities or activities performed while doing business. Codes can range from setting out general statements of principle about how a business or industry will operate (such as the Franchising Code of Conduct), to the detailed listing of business practices that require compliance with specific standards (such as for the handling and disposal of hazardous chemicals).

Governments in Australia are increasingly using Codes of Practice in legislation to prescribe Australian standards, technical requirements and other specifications that business must use. Codes are usually developed by industry, or industry and Government working together, and reflect "best practice". A Code called up in legislation can contain many cross-references to other codes and/or standards and compliance with these codes may also be required.

AVICs should be aware of Codes of Conduct that may be relevant to not only the AVIC, but also to tourism ventures promoted by the AVIC.

Some organisations, such as the Australian Tourism Export Council (ATEC), has a Code of Conduct which its members must abide by. It is therefore expected that if an AVIC is a member of any such organisation, it will abide by such Codes of Conduct.

Accreditation programs may be considered to be Codes of Conduct as they establish operational standards and guidelines which Accredited businesses agree to abide by. Some programs in which AVIC members may be involved include:

- National Ecotourism Accreditation Program (Ecotourism Association Australia)
- The Australian Duty Free Association (ADFA) Accreditation Scheme
- Gold Licence Caterers' Accreditation Program (Restaurant and Catering Australia)
- Caravan Parks Accreditation Program (Caravan Industry of Australia)
- Bed and Breakfast Council of NSW Standards and Guidelines

These Programs have been designed to improve the professionalism and operational standards of these sectors of the industry, and to acknowledge those operators which do so.

See Sample Code of Conduct listed in TEMPLATES -Part 4

## **STAFFING AND EMPLOYMENT REGULATIONS**

### **REGISTRATION AS A GROUP EMPLOYER**

Under the Income Tax Assessment Act this registration is required by a person or company who employs one or more people during the course of the year. There are no fees payable for this registration. This authority remains in effect indefinitely.

### **SUPERANNUATION GUARANTEE SCHEME**

All employers are required under provisions of the Superannuation Guarantee (Administration) Act 1992 to provide a prescribed minimum level of superannuation support for each eligible employee or pay a charge to the Australian Taxation Office.

The level of support for each employee is based on two factors:

- the base year annual payroll
- the employee's base earnings

The superannuation scheme is self-assessing, therefore there is no need for employers to fill in any forms or lodge returns as long as they provide minimum superannuation. However, employers need to keep adequate records to prove they have given their employees the minimum support required. If the employer wishes to pay the charge, they must complete a 'Superannuation Guarantee Statement'.

Contact:	The Australian Taxation Office The Superannuation Guarantee Co-ordinator Ph: 13 10 20
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### **WORKERS COMPENSATION POLICY**

This policy requires workers/labour, including casual employees, to be engaged in accordance with the WorkCover NSW regulations.

The Workers Compensation Policy remains in effect to 30 June of the following year. A renewal form must be lodged by 31 August each year.

Contact: WorkCover Information Centre

Ph: 13 10 50 Fax: 02 9370 6150 (Hours: 8:30am to 5:00pm weekdays)

<http://www.workcover.nsw.gov.au>

## CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT - AWARD INFORMATION

An award sets out minimum conditions of employment for employees in particular jobs. An award prescribes such things as:

- Rates of wages
- Hours of work
- Payment of overtime
- Annual leave
- Sick leave
- Long service leave
- Provisions for meal breaks/rest pauses
- Occupational superannuation

## TIME AND WAGES RECORDS

Every employer is required to keep a time and wages book (or similar record) and have this available for inspection during hours of operation by an industrial inspector.

For further information, contact NSW Industrial Relations (IR). IR provides information on what hours your business can trade, minimum award pay rates, working conditions and WorkCover requirements.

NSW Industrial Relations

Ph: 13 16 28 (in NSW or the ACT) or Ph: 02 9243 8900 (for callers outside New South Wales)

NSW State links <http://www.industrialrelations.nsw.gov.au/>

To learn about Fair Work Australia :

[http://www.industrialrelations.nsw.gov.au/oirwww/About\\_NSW\\_IR/National\\_Fair\\_Work\\_system/Fair\\_Work\\_videos.page?](http://www.industrialrelations.nsw.gov.au/oirwww/About_NSW_IR/National_Fair_Work_system/Fair_Work_videos.page?)

Award finder :

[http://www.lawlink.nsw.gov.au/lawlink/irc/ll\\_irc.nsf/pages/IRC\\_procedures\\_legislation\\_awards\\_index\\_all](http://www.lawlink.nsw.gov.au/lawlink/irc/ll_irc.nsf/pages/IRC_procedures_legislation_awards_index_all)

## STAFF ROSTERS

Explain methods you use to prove that your staff have worked, or are rostered to work, on a particular day/week. For example, do you use a notice on the kitchen wall, diary entry or spreadsheet roster on computer? If you do not have any staff, write 'not applicable'

## TAXATION REQUIREMENTS

Operating a business involves complying with a range of taxation requirements and record keeping responsibilities. The information below will assist you with these obligations.



## **GOODS AND SERVICES TAX (GST)**

In June 1999, the Commonwealth Government passed legislation, enabling a GST to come into effect in Australia. You should contact the Australian Taxation Office or your tax adviser to clarify your particular requirements on Ph: 13 24 78.

## **PAY AS YOU EARN (PAYE) TAX**

All employers must register for PAYE tax with the Australian Taxation Office. The PAYE system (Pay As You Earn or Group Tax) is the way salary and wage earners pay their tax and Medicare levy through instalments deducted from their pay. Employers make these deductions from the employee's salary or wages and pay them directly to the Tax Office. At the end of the financial year, employers provide each employee with a group certificate that details the employee's earnings for the year and the tax instalments deducted. Upon registration with the Australian Tax Office, you will receive a Group Employer's Payment Book and Guide.

For further information on PAYE Tax, contact the Australian Taxation Office on Ph: 13 28 66.

## **RECORD KEEPING**

Under tax law, a person carrying on a business must keep records that record and explain all transactions. These records include all documents that are relevant for the purpose of ascertaining the income and expenditure of the business. A person must keep their records in written English or enable the records to be readily accessible and convertible into written English.

## **INSURANCE**

As listed in the Accreditation Criteria, all AVICs must carry Public Liability insurance to a minimum value of \$ 5 million and this cover must cover volunteers.

Please refer to Section I of this Module for detailed explanation on this and other Insurance cover.

## C STAFF INDUCTION, TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

### STAFF INDUCTION

Induction is the process of introducing new employees to the organisation, to their supervisors and co-workers (if there are any), and to their jobs. After you have completed the necessary paperwork, you may want to concentrate on bringing your employee into your organisation by arranging an induction.

Whatever form it takes, an induction session serves several purposes:

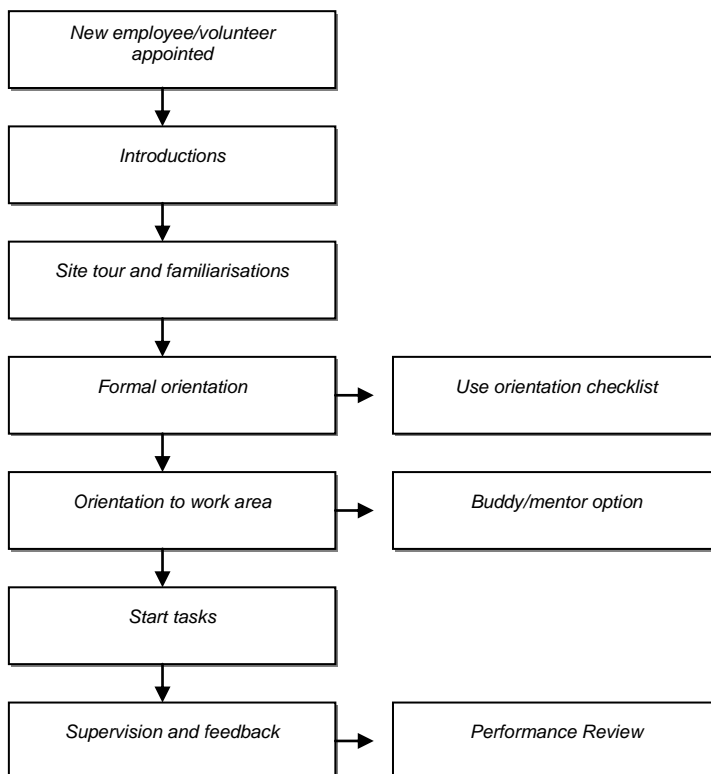
- It orientates the new worker into your organisation.
- It starts the new worker on productive activity.
- It ensures that new employees receive accurate information. Co-workers do not always give the right answers, for whatever reasons.
- It can help the newcomer feel welcome, relieve anxiety and start the person toward being a loyal, productive member of your organisation.

You should consider including the following items in an induction program:

- A review of the job description with the new employee, so he or she knows what the specific duties will be (although the employee should have a general idea from the interview), some discussion of what your business does and what your organisation's goals are. An overview of the performance review procedures (ie. how often, by whom, preparation required, etc.) may also be useful.
- How the employee's job fits into the overall picture.
- Basic work rules
- Compensation and benefits
- A tour of the workplace.

The following diagram provides an example of the induction process of a new employee or volunteer.

#### STAFF INDUCTION PROCESS



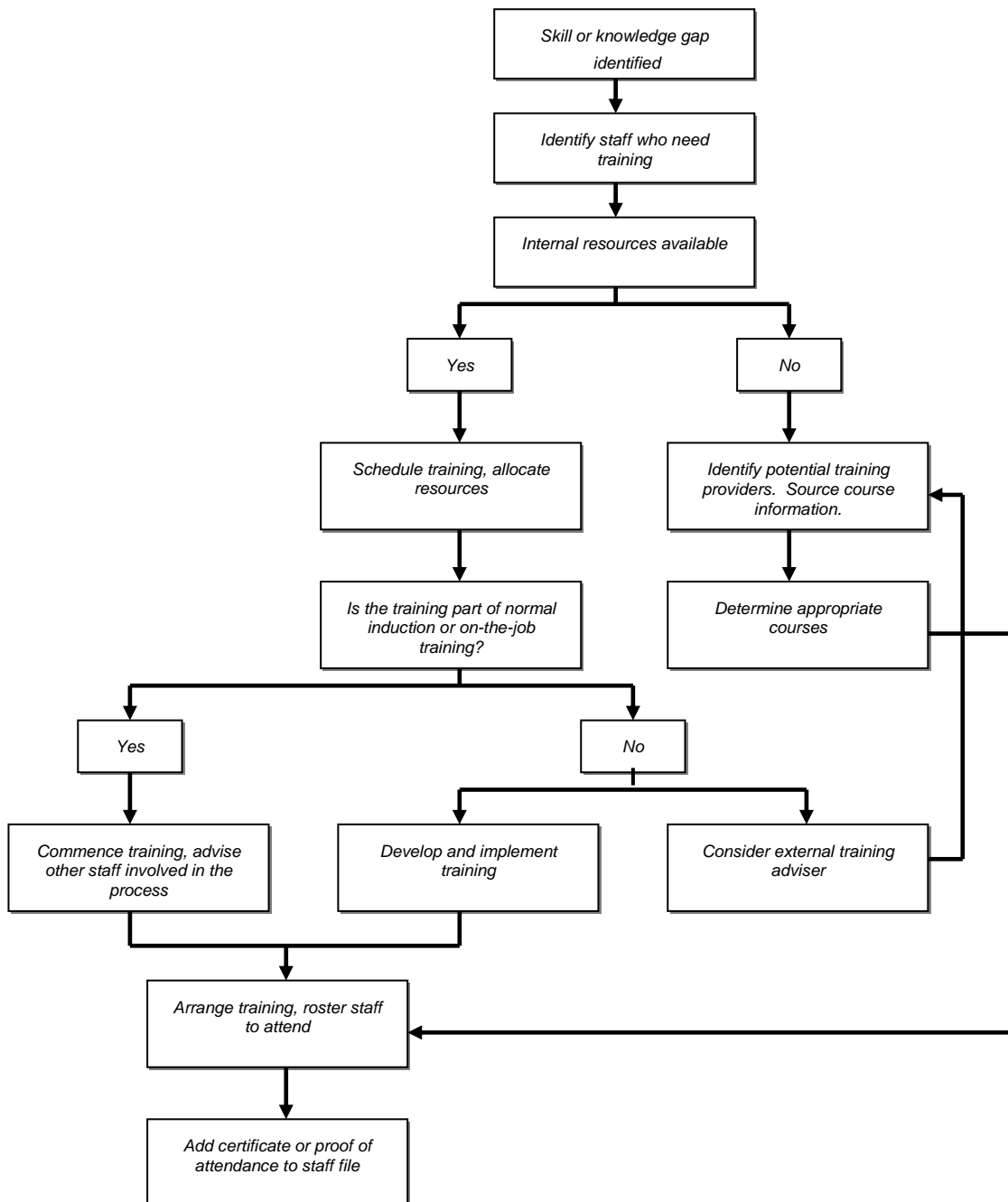
- Contract signed
- Select person to undertake orientation
- Other Personnel
- Special equipment
- Work area
- Safety features
- Organisational overview
- Philosophy, mission
- Business Plan
- Operations Manual
- Key contact numbers
- Name badge
- Staff amenities
- Standard of dress
- Safety and emergency procedures
- Customer service policy
- Provide reading/background materials
- Probationary period (if any)

## INTRODUCTION TO STAFF

An official 'welcome' letter personally signed by the Manager explaining the purpose and reasons behind the Manual is recommended. At the same time, the Manager will note the Centre's expectations of the staff member in adhering to its contents and their obligation to identify operational improvements as they arise.

## STAFF TRAINING PROCESS

Through the normal operation of your AVIC (and as a result of business planning) gaps will be identified in staff skills and knowledge. To enable you and your staff to complete tasks well and with confidence, training may be required. The following diagram illustrates the process by which training needs are identified and actioned.



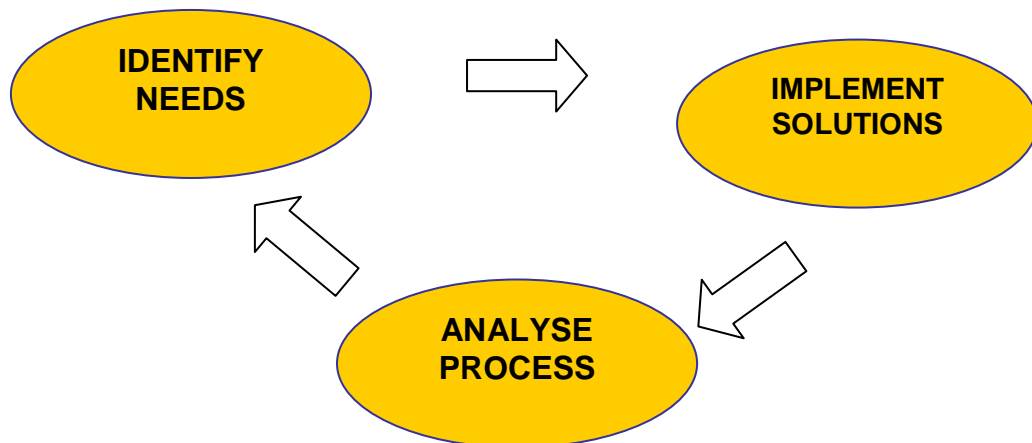
## TRAINING/CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Remember that you must plan for continuous improvement in your AVIC. You may not need to write additional information for this topic.

Your written Business, Marketing and Risk Management Plans provide evidence of your compliance to the Accreditation requirements and also shows that your business is committed to continuously improving your products and service. Your commitment to continuous improvement is evidenced in the following ways:

- Compliance with both business and industry specific regulations
- Adherence to industry sector standards and codes of practice
- Corporate, Strategic, Business and Marketing Plans
- Human resource management policy and procedures
- Customer service policy and procedures
- Environmental management policies and procedures
- General maintenance schedules and procedures

## THE CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT CYCLE



## AREA OF TRAINING

Most AVICs conduct their own internal training programs, such as basic induction training and identify other areas of interest or need as required. For example, this may include individual training in the areas of:

- customer service
- computer training
- induction, management and training of volunteers
- regular industry familiarisation events
- staff team building exercises
- interpretive presentation
- Travel Agent's training
- marketing, communications and public relations skills
- specific visitor information services training

Generally, each AVIC develops its own preferred training which will be influenced by such factors as:

- the AVIC's size, location and access to resources
- costs and time constraints associated with external training
- the willingness of staff to participate in training programs (eg. volunteers)

It must be remembered to comply with the professional development requirements of Accreditation - that is, each 60% of Information Officers and Information Assistants are expected to undertake assessment and/or training over the 3 years of Accreditation coverage. Ongoing professional development activities must be undertaken to a minimum of 30 hours activity per year for all Tourism Managers and Information Centre Supervisors/Managers.

#### **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES MAY INCLUDE:**

- Face to face education/training in tourism and related disciplines
- Distance education/training in tourism and related disciplines
- Participation in industry committees and associations
- Attendance at conferences related to tourism
- Presentations at industry related forums
- Acting as a mentor to a less experienced industry colleague

The table below provides examples of the types of training courses which may be undertaken by AVIC staff at various levels of the organisation. It is based on the skill requirements for the National Tourism Training Package qualifications at different levels. These are the qualifications that best reflect the skills needed by individuals working in the Visitor Information Services sector. People who have gained the skill and knowledge through experience can obtain these qualifications without the need for further study.

<b>Position</b>	<b>Recommended Qualifications</b>
Information Assistant	Components of Certificate II in Tourism (Sales/Office Operations), as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Work with colleagues and customers</li> <li>▪ Work in a socially diverse environment</li> <li>▪ Follow health, safety and security procedures</li> <li>▪ Communicate on the telephone</li> <li>▪ Perform clerical procedures</li> <li>▪ Process financial transactions</li> <li>▪ Develop and update local knowledge</li> </ul> This partial achievement of a national qualification reflects the very defined customer service role played by Information Assistants, especially those working on a voluntary basis.
Information Officer	Certificate III in Tourism (Visitor Information Services)
Information Centre Supervisor/ Manager/Tourist Officer	Certificate IV in Tourism (Team Leading) or a Certificate IV in Tourism (Sales and Marketing)
Tourism Manager	Diploma of Tourism (Marketing and Product Development) or Diploma of Tourism (Operations Management)

NB: Tourism Training Australia can assist with further information on these qualifications.

#### **ONGOING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Professional development activities may include:

- face to face education/training in tourism and related disciplines

- distance education/training in tourism and related disciplines
- participation in industry committees and associations
- attendance at conferences related to tourism
- presentations at industry or related forums
- acting as a mentor to less experienced industry colleagues

It is important that AVIC staff be given the opportunity to undertake professional development activities on a regular basis and that these be recorded on the staff member's training file.

## WHO PROVIDES THE TRAINING?

Formal recognition of skills should be completed under the auspices of a Registered Training Organisation (RTO). It will be these organisations that issue the qualification. This approach:

- provides a framework for excellence within which all AVICs can upgrade management and staff skills over time.
- takes account of the difficulties in accessing training, especially for those in geographically isolated areas.
- allows those who already possess the skills to gather supporting evidence.

Training can occur on-site (provided by you, the employer) in the form of induction, mentoring and on-the-job training. Training can also be provided on-site or off-site by Registered Training Organisations such as TAFE institutions and private providers.

For access to the current list of providers see the National Training Information Service website: [www.ntis.gov.au](http://www.ntis.gov.au)

A number of training institutions and private providers deliver a range of competencies applicable to AVIC staff either as individual specialised units or more comprehensive certificate and graduate programs. TAFE NSW, for example, deliver a range of programs that accommodate a number of staff levels in New South Wales AVICs. These range from a Certificate II in Tourism (Sales/Office Operations) which may be particularly relevant to an Information Officer, to a Diploma of Tourism which may be appropriate for an AVIC Manager or equivalent Tourism Officer.

## AUSSIEHOST

The AussieHost Program is a community based training program that focuses on interpersonal communication, customer relations and customer service. It examines attitudes to service, relating to customers and turning relationships with customers into better business.

AussieHost is a Program in which participants consider the way they communicate with customers and define who the customer is. During the AussieHost Program participants begin to hear what their customers want.

To find a listing of NSW AussieHost Providers use this link to log onto [AussieHost - NSW](#)

## PRIVATE PROVIDERS

Many private Registered Training Organisations also offer qualifications within the tourism industry. Many of these private RTOs have exceeded the standard requirements for delivering tourism training, and have achieved the additional criteria required for recognition by the Australian Tourism Training Review Panel (ATTRP).

## AURORA TRAINING

Aurora offer a range of training relevant to all activities undertaken and the Visitor Information Centre, including specific Volunteer Training, and tailored customer service, staff motivation, product and package development for all staff. Ph 02 6885 5558 Email [vic@auroraresearch.com.au](mailto:vic@auroraresearch.com.au)

## TECHNICAL AND FURTHER EDUCATION (TAFE NSW)

TAFE NSW is the largest provider of post-secondary education in New South Wales. TAFE NSW Accredited courses can help people to enter the workplace, upgrade existing skills or prepare for further studies.

To find out more about TAFE NSW either telephone: TAFE NSW Information Centre on Ph: 131 601, or visit their website at <http://www.tafensw.edu.au/>

## TOURISM TRAINING AUSTRALIA (TTA)

Tourism Training Australia supports a National Training Network, which can provide you with assistance and advice on tourism, hospitality and caravan training issues in each State/Territory.

The TTA Network maintains close links with the industry, Federal and State Government, public and private training providers, industry associations, unions and students/trainees.

Tourism Training Australia - GPO Box 2493, Sydney, NSW, 2001  
Ph : 02 9286 3944 Fax : 02 9290 1001 Email : [reception@tourismtraining.com.au](mailto:reception@tourismtraining.com.au)

## VOLUNTEERING NEW SOUTH WALES

Volunteering New South Wales offers education and training as well as being a source provider of volunteers.

Volunteering New South Wales - Level 2, 228 Pitt Street, Sydney NSW 2000  
Ph: 02 9261 3600 Fax: 02 9261 4033 email: [info@volunteering.com.au](mailto:info@volunteering.com.au)

## TRAINEESHIPS

Traineeships involve paid work and structured training. They are underpinned by a training agreement which is registered with the relevant State Training Authority and leads to a nationally recognised qualification. They can cover full or part time work and the part time arrangements are also available to school students.

Contact DET (Department of Education and Training) for more details <http://www.det.nsw.edu.au>

## QUALIFICATIONS IN THE TOURISM INDUSTRY

Qualification levels define skills and knowledge required in the workplace. These skills may be gained through a range of avenues including formal study through to work experience and general life. The activities indicated in qualification levels are as follows:

### ***Certificate I***

Performance of a defined range of activities, mainly routine and predictable

### ***Certificate II***

Performance of a range of functions involving known routines and procedures with some complex non-routine activities

### ***Certificate III***

Performance of a defined range of skilled operations, use of discretion and judgement and ability to select, adapt and transfer skills to different situations

### ***Certificate IV***

Performance of a broad range of skilled applications, evaluation and planning, some leadership and guidance to others, some responsibility for others



### **Diploma**

Self-directed application of knowledge and skills with substantial depth in some areas, planning, initiation of new approaches, judgement in selecting courses of action for self and others

### **Advanced Diploma**

Application of significant range of Diploma fundamental principles and techniques, significant judgement in planning, design, leadership, responsibility for self and others

Noted below are direct links of courses and course modules relevant to AVIC education and training:

## **[Certificate I in Tourism \(Australian Indigenous Culture\)](#)**

(Course code: SIT10112) <http://www.myskills.gov.au/courses/details?Code=SIT10112&distance=250&locationId=4679>

This qualification reflects the role of individuals who participate in a range of routine and predictable tourism work activities. They work under close supervision and are given clear directions to complete tasks.

This preparatory qualification provides individuals with knowledge and skills for initial work, community involvement and further learning.

### **Job roles**

This qualification provides a pathway to work in a range of job roles in the tourism, travel and hospitality industries in organisations with an Indigenous focus. Individuals may have a very specific role, as an Australian Indigenous person or other individual approved of by local elders, to share aspects of their culture with visitors in an informal way. Employers include tour operators or operators of a site or cultural or heritage centre.

Possible job titles include:

- assistant in an Indigenous cultural centre
- assistant Indigenous guide
- Indigenous storyteller.

[View providers](#)

## **[Certificate II in Tourism](#)**

(Course code: SIT20112) <http://www.myskills.gov.au/courses/details?Code=SIT20112&distance=250&locationId=4679>

This qualification reflects the role of individuals who use a defined and limited range of operational skills. They are involved in mainly routine and repetitive tasks using practical skills and basic industry knowledge. They work under direct supervision.

### **Job roles**

This qualification provides a pathway to work in many tourism and travel industry sectors and for a diversity of employers including retail travel agencies, tour wholesalers, tour operators, attractions, cultural and heritage sites and any small tourism business requiring multi-skilled employees.

Work could be undertaken in an office environment where the planning of tourism and travel products and services takes place, in the field where products are delivered or a combination of both.

Possible job titles include:

- documentation clerk for a tour wholesaler
- museum attendant
- office assistant for a small tour operator

- receptionist and office assistant in a professional conference organiser
- receptionist and office assistant in a retail travel agency
- retail sales assistant in an attraction
- ride attendant in an attraction.

[View providers](#)

### **Certificate III in Tourism**

(Course code: SIT30112) <http://www.myskills.gov.au/courses/details?Code=SIT30112&distance=250&locationId=4679>

This qualification reflects the role of individuals who use a range of well-developed tourism service, sales or operational skills. They use discretion and judgement and have a sound knowledge of industry operations. They work with some independence and under limited supervision and may provide operational advice and support to team members.

#### **Job roles**

This qualification provides a pathway to work in many tourism industry sectors and for a diversity of employers including tour operators, inbound tour operators, visitor information centres, attractions, cultural and heritage sites and any small tourism business requiring multi-skilled employees.

Work could be undertaken in an office environment where the planning of tourism products and services takes place, in the field where tourism products are delivered or a combination of both.

Possible job titles include:

- attraction or theme park attendant
- booking agent
- cellar door salesperson and guide in a winery
- guide and salesperson in an Indigenous cultural centre
- inbound tour coordinator
- museum attendant
- operations consultant for a tour operator
- reservation sales agent for a tour operator
- sales consultant
- senior ride operator in an attraction or theme park
- visitor information officer.

[View providers](#)

### **Certificate IV in Travel and Tourism**

(Course code: SIT40212) <http://www.myskills.gov.au/courses/details?Code=SIT40212&distance=250&locationId=4679>

This qualification reflects the role of individuals who use a broad range of sales and marketing or operational skills combined with sound knowledge of industry operations. They operate independently or with limited guidance from others and use discretion to solve non-routine problems. Many people have supervisory responsibilities and plan, monitor and evaluate the work of team members.

#### **Job roles**

This qualification provides a pathway to work in any sector of the tourism and travel industry as a supervisor or senior operations or sales coordinator. This qualification allows for multiskilling and for specialisation in operations or marketing.

Possible job titles include:

- account manager
- assistant manager
- marketing coordinator
- operations supervisor
- product coordinator
- promotions officer
- reservations sales or call centre supervisor
- senior operations coordinator
- senior or supervisory retail consultant
- sales coordinator
- sales executive.

[View providers](#)

## **[Diploma of Travel and Tourism](#)**

(Course code: SIT50112) <http://www.myskills.gov.au/courses/details?Code=SIT50112&distance=250&locationId=4679>

This qualification reflects the role of individuals who use sound knowledge of industry operations and a broad range of managerial skills to coordinate tourism and travel operations or marketing and product development activities. They operate independently, have responsibility for others and make a range of operational business decisions.

### **Job roles**

This qualification provides a pathway to work in any sector of the tourism and travel industry as a departmental or small business manager. This qualification allows for multiskilling and for specialisation in either operations management or marketing and product development.

Possible job titles include:

- manager:
- inbound groups
- inbound sales
- incentives
- tour operations
- marketing
- operations
- product
- reservations
- retail travel agency
- sales
- visitor information.

[View providers](#)

## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF AVIC PERSONNEL

A clear, written job description defines tasks and responsibilities and establishes staff expectations. They also provide valuable information for job applicants during the recruitment process. It is therefore highly recommended that AVICs prepare a position description for all positions within their Centre.

The following is an example of a typical Position Description:

### 1. Position identification

- Position title
- Employment type (eg. Permanent, Full-time, Part-time, Casual, Volunteer, Contract)
- Length of tenure
- Probationary period (if applicable)
- Performance review

### 2. Position objectives

- A succinct statement of the key objectives of the position

### 3. Key responsibilities and duties

- A summary of all responsibilities undertaken by the staff member

### 4. Organisational relationships

- To whom the position reports, and who reports to them

### 5. Accountability and extent of authority

- Clear guidelines as to the boundaries of authority and accountability in the position, including budgetary authority

### 6. Key selection criteria

- Specialist skills and knowledge
- Management skills
- Interpersonal skills
- Qualifications and experience

## LINKS BETWEEN AVIC STAFF POSITIONS, TASKS AND APPROPRIATE SKILLS

The table below provides a brief overview of the types of tasks performed by various AVIC staffing positions and the skills required for these positions. Although position titles vary slightly between AVICs, a number of skills and tasks are common to these positions and it is reasonable to assume these are a fair representation of industry expectations.

This table will assist in preparing position descriptions for AVIC staff (paid and volunteer).

Position	Tasks	Skills
<i>Centre Manager</i>	<p>Ensure AVIC operates as efficiently and cost effectively as possible (preferably on a self-funding basis), achieving all standards and targets.</p> <p>Develop and pursue policies, activities and operations consistent with the goals and resources of the Centre and the Centre's funding agencies.</p> <p>Oversee recruitment, training and</p>	<p>Highly developed organizational, managerial, interpersonal and leadership skills.</p> <p>Excellent oral and written communication and presentation skills.</p> <p>Ability to establish and expand industry networks.</p> <p>Proven experience in handling the media.</p>

	<p>supervision of AVIC staff.</p> <p>Apply for relevant Government funds.</p> <p>Maintain a close relationship with the local and regional tourist association and industry.</p> <p>Develop good working relationships with community and business groups.</p> <p>Promote the AVIC to media, Government and industry.</p> <p>Establish sound accounting procedures and statistical information collection techniques.</p> <p>Produce monthly report.</p> <p>Represent the AVIC at board and/or management committee meetings.</p>	<p>Proven performance in developing and maintaining cooperative working relationships.</p> <p>Relevant tertiary qualifications in tourism, accounting or related discipline.</p> <p>Understanding of tourism information distribution techniques.</p> <p>Understanding of tourism context in which the AVIC operates.</p> <p>Experience in the tourism industry.</p>
<p><i>Coordinator/ Supervisor</i></p>	<p>Manage the day-to-day operation and budgetary performance of the Centre.</p> <p>Ensure all visitors to the AVIC are serviced with pride, professionalism and efficiency.</p> <p>Maintain a strong relationship between paid staff and volunteers.</p> <p>Recruit, train, support, coordinate, supervise and review performance of all staff (paid and volunteer).</p> <p>Ensure AVIC is attractively and informatively presented.</p> <p>Ensure established procedures are adhered to.</p> <p>Monitor visitation trends to AVIC.</p> <p>Prepare and distribute calendar of events.</p> <p>Set up tourism displays and roster staff at events.</p> <p>Coordinate and attend trade shows.</p> <p>Operate electronic booking service</p> <p>Initiate and conduct regular familiarisations of regional destinations and products.</p> <p>Coordinate and supervise banking and booking processes</p> <p>Maintain accurate financial records of booking and commission payments.</p> <p>Ensure ongoing compilation of records relevant to the AVIC</p> <p>Develop and maintain volunteer rosters.</p> <p>Maintain the Day Book.</p> <p>Oversee maintenance of AVIC.</p> <p>Actively encourage new members and support existing members.</p>	<p>Demonstrated leadership abilities.</p> <p>Excellent oral and written communication, organisational, interpersonal and presentation skills.</p> <p>Proven performance in developing and maintaining cooperative working relationships.</p> <p>Experience in working with volunteer programs, tourism and community groups.</p> <p>Excellent customer service skills.</p> <p>Understanding of tourism information distribution techniques.</p> <p>Ability to display and present information in an attractive and productive manner.</p> <p>Excellent knowledge of local tourism products and operators or ability to develop same.</p> <p>Ability to understand, source and promote tourism products.</p> <p>Excellent sales skills with proven ability to convert sales</p> <p>Ability to coordinate staffing. Proven experience in sourcing and delivering staff induction and training programs.</p> <p>Identify and put in place improved administrative systems.</p> <p>Ability to liaise with tourism members and organise familiarisations.</p> <p>Ability to monitor visitation and other tourism trends.</p> <p>An effective, empathetic listener.</p> <p>Develop conflict resolution skills</p> <p>Understanding of budget process or ability to develop same quickly.</p> <p>Ability to use a computer and a variety of computer packages.</p>

		Committed approach to teamwork principles. Experience in the tourism industry (desirable).
<i>Information Officer</i>	<p>Provide information and advice on, and promote, products and services within the region.</p> <p>Present visitor information in a stimulating and organised manner.</p> <p>Process telephone, mail, fax and email enquiries.</p> <p>Enter enquiries into database.</p> <p>Daily and weekly maintenance of members' brochure supplies in the AVIC.</p> <p>Operate cash register, EFTPOS facility, credit card payments and booking service.</p> <p>Monitor visitation to the Centre and trends in information sought.</p> <p>Identify gaps in information provision</p> <p>Participate in product familiarisations.</p> <p>Attend product and service presentations.</p> <p>Assist with tourism marketing projects.</p> <p>Foster and contribute to a team approach.</p>	<p>Ability to understand, source and promote tourism products.</p> <p>A good knowledge of the region, including local products and operators.</p> <p>Understanding of tourism information distribution techniques and flair for the presentation of printed tourist information.</p> <p>Ability to display and present information.</p> <p>Excellent customer service skills.</p> <p>Excellent sales skills with proven ability to convert sales.</p> <p>Well developed oral and written communication, organisational and presentation skills.</p> <p>Ability to communicate with different cultures and/or languages.</p> <p>Ability to monitor visitation and other tourism trends.</p> <p>Ability to use a computer and a variety of computer packages.</p> <p>Outgoing, friendly personality and a positive attitude.</p> <p>Committed approach to teamwork principles.</p> <p>A desire to learn and improve oneself.</p> <p>Experience in tourism industry (desirable).</p>
<i>Administration Officer</i>	<p>Provide secretarial and administrative support.</p> <p>Ensure all policies and recommendations of the AVIC Manager are adhered to.</p> <p>Actively encourage and seek membership for the RTO or LTA.</p> <p>Maintain effective liaison with Manager and staff.</p> <p>Maintain efficient administration practices (includes maintaining visitor request figures, brochure monitoring, etc.).</p> <p>Maintain, collate and distribute meeting minutes and records.</p> <p>Maintain up-to-date information in the AVIC.</p> <p>Distribute information from phone, fax and email enquiries.</p> <p>Maintain membership database.</p> <p>Update calendar of events.</p>	<p>High level of verbal and written communication skills.</p> <p>High level of organisational skills.</p> <p>High level computer skills, including experience with Microsoft software, eg. Powerpoint, Word, Access, Excel, etc.</p> <p>Ability to be a team player.</p>

Providing excellent customer service is the foundation of an AVIC's activities and should be the focus of staff induction and on-going training. The implementation of this process will largely impact upon the ability of the Centre to perform to a professional standard and be acknowledged by the new accredited 'i' sign.

While the Operations Manual guidelines within this Manual include a section on Customer Service, this section of the Manual expands upon this very important topic.

## D CUSTOMER SERVICE

### CUSTOMER SERVICE POLICY AND PROCEDURES

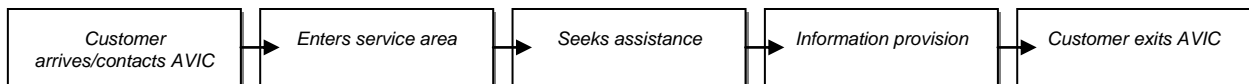
This is the foundation of the Centre's activities and should be the focus of staff induction and on-going training. The implementation of this process will impact upon the ability of the Centre to perform to a professional standard and be acknowledged by the accredited 'i' sign.

As a general guide, this section needs to include instructions on the following:

- Counter enquiries
- Telephone enquiries (including telephone answering procedures)
- Mail enquiries
- Email enquiries
- Travel and trade enquiries
- Qualifying enquiries
- What to do when you do not know the answer
- Handling complaints and compliments
- Sales Representative calls
- Dealing with VIPs and other influential people, eg. Local Council members, RTO Managers and Board Members, etc.

The text under each section will need to detail the preferred and correct ways to deal with each customer. There are a number of appropriate phrases that can be included. The composition of this section will need to link closely with customer service training given to all AVIC staff.

A simple flow chart can help in identifying the critical tasks and problem areas associated with any customer contact:



#### Issues:

- |                             |                               |                                 |                                   |                            |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| ▪ Adequate parking          | ▪ Greeting                    | ▪ Staff manner/ professionalism | ▪ Brochure quantity and quality   | ▪ Other on-site facilities |
| ▪ Signage                   | ▪ Signage                     | ▪ Staff response time           | ▪ Facilitation of booking process | ▪ Distance to car/coach    |
| ▪ Access to facilities      | ▪ Ambience                    | ▪ Adequacy of staff training    | ▪ Staff knowledge                 |                            |
| ▪ Telephone manner of staff | ▪ Safety                      |                                 |                                   |                            |
|                             | ▪ Layout of pace/traffic flow |                                 |                                   |                            |

Factors to consider at each stage of the customer service process include:

- Ensuring customer needs and expectations, including those with specific needs, are correctly identified and appropriate products and services are provided.
- Ensuring all communication with customers is friendly and courteous
- Ensuring all reasonable needs and requests of customers are met within acceptable time frames
- Opportunities to enhance the quality of service are identified wherever possible.
- The issue of 'misinformation' and possible litigious situations arising requires that staff are clear on their approach to delivering information. It would be prudent to clarify with the Centre's insurance representative suggested approaches to customer enquiries, eg. providing 'advice' or 'recommendations'. This section is important when considering Professional Indemnity Insurance and the handling of visitor complaints.

Truth in Advertising – Your AVIC must prepare a signed statement regarding Truth in Advertising. The Centre should establish a Code of Conduct for delivery of quality customer service. When preparing this Code consider that the AVIC's customers include not only visitors, but also operators and the community, and include all staff in the development process. This Code may include guidance for providing customer service in the following situations:



- Counter enquiries
- Telephone enquiries (including telephone answering procedures)
- Mail enquires
- Email enquiries
- Travel and trade enquiries
- Qualifying enquiries
- What to do when you do not know the answer
- Sales Representative calls
- Dealing with VIPs or other influential people, eg. RTO Managers, Local Council members, RTO Board Members, etc.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY REQUIREMENTS**

Specific details are required on what information can and cannot be passed to the public by volunteers and staff, and on data collection confidentiality. This will include restrictions on such things as private telephone numbers, addresses, etc.

## **CUSTOMER COMPLAINTS AND FEEDBACK**

Customer feedback allows a business to continually improve its products and services and understand customer needs, values and expectations.

Handling complaints well and providing opportunities for customer feedback is essential for the successful operation of any tourism business. It is likely that 95% of customers whose complaints are handled well will become loyal and recommend the business to five others - through resolving a complaint efficiently and fairly you will return that customer's loyalty and potentially gain new customers.

To establish a complaints handling system:

- 1 Decide how your AVIC should handle complaints:
  - involve staff in developing the policy.
  - decide who will handle complaints, and how they may be followed up.
  - anticipate possible problems or mistakes in advance and work out possible solutions with staff.
- 2 Write down your new policy and how it will work in practice.
- 3 Make sure all staff understand the new policy and why it was introduced. Some training may be necessary.
- 4 Encourage and reward staff for successfully assisting disgruntled customers.
- 5 Make it easy for customers to complain if they are dissatisfied:
  - Publicise the system to your customers.
  - Invite them to let you know if they were satisfied with the way their complaint was handled.
- 6 Trial the system for a set period, say two or three months, and then review.
- 7 Assess how well the new system is working and make any necessary changes - discuss possible solutions with staff.

A method by which AVICs can collect information on customer satisfaction with their Centre is to conduct regular Customer Satisfaction Surveys.

## **BOOKING, CONFIRMATION AND CANCELLATION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

For some AVICs, an essential part of their operation is the receipt of bookings, providing confirmations and, where necessary, processing cancellations.

Bookings often follow enquiries, and developing systems to support enquiries and encourage staff to 'up-sell' is essential.

When developing a booking, confirmation and cancellation system, AVICs must consider the following:

- How will customers contact you? In person, phone, fax, email, etc.
- What will customers request? Can they book product?
- How will you publicise your fair and equitable terms and conditions for bookings and cancellations?
- How will a request be processed? Is it a direct booking or through an agent?
- How will you know if the product or service is available?
- How will you know prices, including seasonal variations and specials?
- How will you make sure a space, room or seat is kept for the customer?
- What will be your procedure for acknowledging receipt of the booking through confirmation?
- What will be your procedure to receive a deposit or full payment?
- What commission, if any, will the AVIC receive?
- How will the AVIC forward payment to the tourism product?
- What will be the AVIC's cancellation procedure, including refunds if due? How will this procedure take into account cancellation policies of the operator?

The AVIC's procedures and policies for handling bookings, confirmations and cancellations should be clearly documented in the AVIC Operations Manual.

## **AFTER HOURS INFORMATION**

The AVIC should display comprehensive after hours information such as:

- emergency contact details
- 24hr contact numbers for NRMA official road reports
- the AVIC's opening hours
- contact details for weather, accommodation, food/dining
- after hours shopping (if available) and services

Locality maps should be clearly displayed and visible from outside the AVIC building.

The AVIC's after hours answering machine/service should also provide the AVIC's opening hours and important after hours information.

## **CUSTOMER GREETING PROCEDURES**

Document your Customer Greeting Procedures for reference in the Operations Manual. You may already have these written out at your front desk.

## **BROCHURE DISPLAY AND MANAGEMENT**

Clearly, this section will be specific to each individual Centre however consideration should be given to the following issues:

- Ordering of brochures
- Brochure acceptance policy, including:

- The AVIC's commitment to provide, as a minimum, information on the local area, local region and neighbouring regions, and in addition (where possible), basic information on all RTO regions across the State.
- Details on fees and membership requirements
- Details on brochure quality requirements
- Receipt and storage of brochure stock
- Stocktake of brochures
- Review of the 'use-by-date'
- Brochure presentation within the Centre
- Re-stocking of display outlets
- Positioning of the regional brochures for New South Wales
- Positioning of brochures from other States

**Note:** All AVICS in NSW have a web presence, therefore if a Visitor requests information that you don't have a brochure for you can access info via the web, or use the pocket guide to source the phone number to contact the relevant area and request that they supply the visitor with a copy of their brochure or specific information directly either by email or post.

## **PERSONS WITH ACCESS KEYS TO THE CENTRE**

List the names and telephone numbers (business and after hours) of each individual holding keys to the Centre. This list must be reviewed regularly and copies may be given to the Police if this is deemed necessary. If a security firm patrols the Centre the appropriate contact personnel is to be provided.

## **OPENING PROCEDURE**

Obviously this section will be specific to each AVIC. Comprehensive details need to be provided and allowance must be made for alterations or adjustments to the process during 'unusual' periods, such as peak periods.

For example:

- Collect keys and cash box.
- Check messages on answering machine and switch off.
- Update display board and weather chart.
- Obtain information on road conditions from RTA website <http://www.rta.nsw.gov.au/trafficreports/>.

## **CLOSING PROCEDURE**

As per the Opening Procedure.

## **HOURS OF OPERATION**

Include in this section the hours of operation for the AVIC. This will vary from Centre to Centre.

Detail the Centre's policy for public and religious holidays. It is also necessary to identify in what situations the Centre would stay open outside normal hours, as may be the case in peak visitor periods, eg. school holidays.

There needs to be strict indication on when the Centre could be closed early (if this is permitted under the Centre's policy).

It may be appropriate to mention the New South Wales Visitor Information Centre Accreditation Policy and the 'ESSENTIAL' requirement for AVIC opening hours.

Note where the AVIC's opening hours sign is located on the AVIC's premises.

## **DAY BOOK**

Used for daily recording of enquiries, brochure re-orders, souvenir stock requirements and any enquiries for information and items that require further attention or for the information of other staff. It is a valuable form of information exchange between staff and volunteers on a daily basis.

Staff should read this book at the commencement of their shift and record any actions that are undertaken on their shift.

The Day Book must be located at a central area (eg. front counter) and only removed under the Manager's instruction.

It is important that emergency numbers and procedures be listed in the book for quick reference when required.

## **DIARY OF COMING EVENTS**

Regularly updated, this Diary records details of local and regional events compiled from appropriate sources and confirmed by the event organisers. Once events are confirmed, please list them on the AVIC Network website ([www.auroraresearch.com.au](http://www.auroraresearch.com.au)) or email vic@auroraresearch.com.au.

## **NOTICE BOARD**

The purpose of the Notice Board is to display only current local posters and notices of interest. This would need to be reviewed daily and would also include details on regional events to be held in the near future.

## **FACT FILES**

These are almost an emergency reference point should brochures and other product and print material be depleted. It is essential that Fact Files contain relevant local information and contact details that visitors require, eg. accommodation, attractions, activities, etc.

Fact Files are a quick reference point for general information on regional product and items of interest. Ideally, they should include a map.

## **INFORMATION HANDOUT SHEETS**

Similar to the Fact Files these sheets should cover the most frequently asked questions. The procedure for handing these out to visitors should be stated, eg. how many can be given to any one visitor, mail-out quantities and procedures, etc.

## **MAPS**

- AVICs should prominently display in the Centre, and provide visitors with, good quality, easy to read, local and regional maps. The Operations Manual should provide details as to where the AVIC obtains its maps, where they are displayed and stored and when they should be replaced.
- The AVIC's policy on displaying and distributing advertising/promotional maps should also be noted here.

## **SOUVENIRS, PUBLICATIONS AND OTHER ITEMS FOR SALE**

A clear policy on returns and recording of sales is relevant to this section, including all terms and conditions of sale items. This is especially useful when there may be a period of high turnover of volunteers.

## **BOOKING PROCEDURES FOR TOURISM PRODUCT**

- Given that this will involve the exchange of money, credit purchases and commission from sales, it is imperative that this section includes clear direction and policy on the booking, cancellation and referral of tourism product (ie. all terms and conditions of bookings). This policy should be fair and equitable.

- It may be wise to confer with the Centre's insurance representative concerning protection for staff should there be a complaint or problem with a product.
- Ensure that the policy is also made clear to the customer making the booking. It may be useful to display a formal policy statement at the front counter or where bookings can take place (disclaimers).
- Given that RTOs are membership based and that each region generally has a number of products competing for visitors' business, there must be clear policy concerning staff responsibilities in relation to the recommendation of one operator/business over another. A full range of options available should be provided and staff should avoid being drawn into stating which product they prefer.

## **NETWORKING POLICY**

- This section needs to state the Centre's full support and cooperation for networking with other local and regional Centres, the AVIC Network, the tourism industry and other organisations requiring information and assistance.
- It would be useful to include a full list and contact details of other AVICs in the region and neighbouring regions.

## **OTHER**

The following sections require only minimal advice or detail in the Operations Manual:

- Window displays
- Staff roster
- Staff amenities
- Hygiene and grooming
- Staff contact numbers
- Special static displays in the Centre
- Use of interpretative/interactive facilities, eg. computer terminals

## **E COLLECTION OF DATA**

The collection of accurate, timely information is an essential role of AVICs and it is important that this function is undertaken in a professional, high quality manner. It is recommended that AVICs use, at a minimum, two methods by which to collect visitor data:

- Visitor Data Form
- Guest Book

Each AVIC is required to collect statistics of the number of walk-in customers, telephone calls and emails received each month and forward them to Aurora. Aurora will email a template for this purpose once your accreditation has been formalised

The Guest Book template is highly recommended, as it will enable AVICs to gather useful information from their Guest Book in an easy, inexpensive manner.

The following sections provide further information on the Visitor Data Form and Guest Book.

### **RECORDING VISITOR ENQUIRIES - PROVISION OF STATISTICS**

Recording visitor data and enquiries is an important task for Centre staff. This information provides valuable statistical information that can be used by Destination NSW (TNSW), Regional Tourism Organisations (RTOs), Local Tourist Associations (LTAs), Local Government Authorities (LGAs) and Centre Managers to better plan for the marketing and development activities of the Centre and the regional industry.

AVICs may use their Visitor Book as one method of recording data and visitor enquiries. However, ALL staff and volunteers should be familiar with the research tally sheets used by the Centre.

It is recommended that over time, the AVIC and AVIC Network will instigate other customer and performance evaluation research.

### **VISITOR DATA FORM**

The data collected via the Visitor Data Form benefits New South Wales as a whole by providing some very timely indicators regarding travel patterns across the regions. It assists the industry to better understand visitor trends, particularly in relation to where visitors are coming from and when.

Entering data into this form is simple. For each face-to-face visitor enquiry (ie. do not include telephone, fax, mail or email enquiries), simply record the visitor's origin either on this form or in a separate location. At the end of each day, add the number of visitors from each origin and record the total in the row corresponding to the date. Then add the totals from each origin to produce a grand total of visitors to your AVIC for each day. At the end of the month, calculate the total number of visitors from each origin and the grand total.

Please note that AVICs may choose to collect data in addition to that on the Visitor Data Form. This may include information on, for example:

- Total number of enquiries to the AVIC (ie. telephone, fax, mail, email, in-person, etc.)
- Postcode of visitor/enquirer
- Where visitors have travelled from (the previous night)
- Where visitors are travelling to
- Type of information requested by the visitor

The Visitor Data Form has been designed to ensure a minimum level of consistency in data collected across all New South Wales AVICs, which display the accredited 'i' sign. However, AVICs are strongly encouraged to consider if the AVIC and other local and regional stakeholders require additional data, this data should also be collected if possible. Also, if AVICs are presently collecting data in addition to that on the form, they are strongly encouraged to continue to do so.

## OBTAINING BETTER DATA FROM YOUR GUEST BOOK

To assist AVIC staff and management to service the needs of tourism businesses at the local and regional levels, it is important to maximise the value of information gathered from the Centre's Guest Book. Good market information is a well-known and highly regarded management tool. The proposed template will help AVIC management to, not only provide local businesses with valuable information, but also help them review their Centre's performance. Information derived from the proposed format could be incorporated into monthly and quarterly reports.

It is recognised that intelligence derived from Guest Books is generally limited by small and unrepresentative samples of all visitors to an AVIC. However, in conjunction with other data collection methods, it is a cheap and easy way of obtaining visitor information which can be used by AVIC Managers, local businesses and regional tourism authorities. Please adhere to confidentiality requirements where appropriate to do so.

The following table explains some of the benefits from the Guest Book template which is provided in the template section at Module 4.

<b>Guest Book Heading</b>	<b>How it helps: AVIC Centre</b>	<b>How it helps: Local Tourism Business</b>	<b>How it helps: Regional Tourism Business</b>
<b><i>In which town/place did you stay last night?</i></b>	Identify where brochures, etc. can be more effectively displayed outside of local area.	Identify local marketing opportunities.	Identify regional marketing opportunities.
<b><i>In which town/place are you planning to stay tonight?</i></b>	More effective use of shelf space for non-local brochures. Better focus on information provision and services.	Strategic links/packages and promotions	Identify regional marketing opportunities. Strategic links/packages and promotions
<b><i>What is your home postcode (Aust.), or country of origin (international)?</i></b>	Where is the AVIC's market coming from? How does the AVIC's visitor profile differ to that of the local area or region overall?	Target/direct marketing	Target/direct marketing Assess marketing programs.
<b><i>Have you enjoyed your visit to _____? Why?</i></b>	AVIC can provide feedback to members and/or those products which display info in the AVIC.	Market intelligence and strategies Product and service development	Market intelligence and strategies Product and service development
<b><i>What services would you like to see in this Centre?</i></b>	Management tool to identify new opportunities for the Centre	Value and support	Value and support
<b><i>Name and Address (optional)</i></b>	Potential follow up surveys and market research	Potential follow up surveys and market research	Potential follow up surveys and market research

## GUEST BOOK TEMPLATE

Welcome to the \_\_\_\_\_ Accredited Visitor Information Centre. We hope you have an enjoyable and pleasant stay in \_\_\_\_\_.

To help us understand more about visitors to \_\_\_\_\_ could you please fill in our Guest Book. Thank you.

<i>In which town or place did you stay last night?</i>	<i>In which town/place are you planning to stay tonight?</i>	<i>What is your home postcode (Aust), or country of origin (international)?</i>	<i>Have you enjoyed your visit to .....? Why?</i>	<i>What services would you like to see in this Centre?</i>	<i>Name and Address (optional)</i>

## VISITOR DATA FORM - TEMPLATE

On the following page is the Visitor Data Form, each row represents one day of each month. Each column represents a visitor category (place of origin) for each day and, when tallied, each month.

Match entries only with available categories, for example, local visitors (from immediate community) are from 'NSW' a\*, Italians are from 'Other Europe'.

Please tally columns (for monthly counts) and rows (for daily counts).



### AVIC VISITOR DATA FORM

*Please complete for (month/year) and return by (month/year)*

<b>To:</b> Aurora Research <b>Fax:</b> 02 6885 5556 <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:vic@auroraresearch.com.au">vic@auroraresearch.com.au</a>	<b>From (Contact Name)</b> _____ <b>AVIC Name</b> _____ <b>Date (month/year)</b> _____
--	--

		Australian States or Territories				Overseas Visitors						
Date	NSW		QLD	VIC	Other	NZ	Japan	Other Asia	UK	Other Europe	Other O'seas	Total
	a*	b*										
1												
2												
3												
4												
5												
6												
7												
8												
9												
10												
11												
12												
13												
14												
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16												
17												
18												
19												
20												
21												
22												
23												
24												
25												
26												
27												
28												
29												
30												
31												
Total												

a\* = visitors from NSW who reside within 400 kilometres of the AVIC  
 b\* = visitors from NSW who reside outside 400 kilometres of the AVIC

## **F FINANCIAL PROCEDURES/RECORDS**

### **FINANCIAL SYSTEM**

As an accredited AVIC you are required to show that you have a reliable and valid financial system that is appropriate to the size of your Centre.

This can be demonstrated by:

- The system you use to record financial transactions and to track expenditure and income, for example handwritten ledgers, or computerised systems such as Quickbooks or MYOB.
- The fact that you have a book-keeper / accountant / auditor to maintain your financial records and ensure they meet legal obligations.
- Your regular completion of Business Activity Statements (BAS) for the Australian Taxation Office.
- Your Business and Marketing Plan and/or your Risk Management Plan which might identify financial issues impacting upon your business and budgets for future operation. You can include a brief written description of your chosen financial system under the Financial Analysis heading in your Business Plan.

### **CASH REGISTER OPERATION**

Include if appropriate. It would be useful to include in this section a contact number for a repair firm should the register break down. Alternatively, a manual may be provided for staff reference. Any other detail that is required for the register to function should be noted here, eg. paper availability.

### **CASH BALANCING PROCEDURE AFTER CLOSURE OF THE CENTRE**

It is essential that the procedure and the staff responsible for balancing the float is comprehensively outlined. Include details of contacts, should problems occur, with the balance (eg. contact AVIC Manager). This is often an area of procedural concern in AVICs.

### **PURCHASING POLICY**

This section should include details such as the AVIC's purchasing procedures, frequency of purchasing products and services, purchasing methods, purchasing records and preferred suppliers.

## **G ENVIRONMENT**

In this section you are required to document policies and/or procedures regarding how your AVIC protects the local environment. If you have these in the form of submissions for environment awards or projects, educational resources offered to customers or manuals provided by environmental organisations, please reference their location in this section of the Manual.

Your procedures might cover:

- • Waste management
- • Recycling
- • Conserving energy and natural resources
- • Protecting and sustaining the natural environment

An outline of requirements are:

### **WASTE MANAGEMENT AND RECYCLING**

Describe your waste management procedures. For example, if waste is collected or you need to dispose of it yourself, or your guests are required to take it away with them, etc. Describe your recycling procedures. For example, if you re-use containers, books or brochures, and if you recycle garden waste, bottles and plastics, etc.

### **CONSERVATION OF WATER AND / OR POWER**

Describe whether you use devices such as timers, water flow reducers, recycling of waste water, power saving devices.

### **MINIMISATION OF DAMAGE TO ENVIRONMENT AND WILDLIFE**

State here how you stop visitors and staff from causing damage to the local environment, eg. pathways, fencing, and signs advising not to feed the wildlife, handouts on caring for bushland, reducing emissions or harmful products. Add here if your business supports, or is a site for, any environment management program, eg. LandCare, Clean Up Australia, Greening Australia, local school or community program.

## H WORKPLACE HEALTH AND SAFETY

### WORKPLACE HEALTH AND SAFETY

AVICs need to be familiar with the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2000 and Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2001 (also in Local Government operated AVICs). AVIC staff should be made aware of workplace health and safety issues through an education and training program.

A copy of the OH&S Act and relevant WorkCover information should be included in the AVIC's Operations Manual.

The AVIC must appoint a qualified person as a Health and Safety Officer -

- when there are 30 or more workers normally employed at a workplace (ie. for a total of 40 days or more per year), or
- if there are fewer than 30 workers and the employer or principal contractor considers it.

### OH&S

#### [Duty of care](#)

Discover what duty of care is, the legislation which covers duty of care, and what issues fall under duty of care.

#### [Your rights and responsibilities](#)

New work health and safety (WHS) laws commenced in NSW on 1 January 2012. The WHS laws replaced the occupational health and safety (OHS) laws in NSW.

The WHS laws were developed using the model WHS laws developed by Safe Work Australia.

From 1 January 2012, WorkCover administers and provides advice on the:

- [Work Health and Safety Act 2011](#) (WHS Act)
- [Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011](#) (WHS Regulation).

The WHS Act sets out the legal obligations that must be complied with to provide for the health and safety of workers.

The [Guide to the model Work Health and Safety Act](#) provides an overview of the WHS Act. It is designed to help people generally understand their health and safety duties, rights and responsibilities at work. It is not intended to be read in place of the WHS Act.

The WHS Regulation expands on the requirements of the WHS Act by providing further details on how the Act is to be complied with.

The [Guide to the model Work Health and Safety Regulations](#) provides an overview of the structure of the WHS Regulation. Cross references to relevant additional regulations are provided, as are references to provisions of the WHS Act. This guide will help readers identify what duties or rights are contained in each part of the Regulation. It is not intended to be read in place of the WHS Regulation.

[Compliance and enforcement](#) of WHS legislation in NSW is the role of [WorkCover NSW](#) and the [Department of Trade and Investment](#) for mining workplaces.

The work health and safety legislation is supported by the [WorkCover compliance policy and prosecution guidelines](#) that supplement the [National compliance and enforcement policy](#).

### General

It's in everyone's interests to do everything reasonably practicable to protect their own health, safety and welfare at work and that of others. Due diligence, ie. what a person can be reasonably expected to know or do,

requires that anyone should be fully aware of their obligation to ensure the health and safety of anyone working on or visiting their property/premises.

Each individual must understand the obligations placed on them by the State's OHS legislation and ensure that employees and contractors do likewise in accordance with the principle of shared responsibility.

**Understanding and practising good OHS makes Accredited Visitor Information Centres a safer and more efficient place to work. AVICs need to be familiar with the OH&S Act and OH&S regulations. Even if the Local Government operates your AVIC, you need to be aware of the regulations.**

## **WORKPLACE HEALTH AND SAFETY ISSUES TO BE INCLUDED IN THE AVIC'S OPERATIONS MANUAL**

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT AVIC STAFF ARE AWARE OF WORKPLACE HEALTH AND SAFETY ISSUES AND THAT A COPY OF THE AND NEW OH&S LEGISLATION 2012 RELEVANT WORKCOVER INFORMATION BE INCLUDED IN THE AVIC'S OPERATIONAL MANUAL.

**Emergencies: This section MUST be displayed in a prominent position and easily located.**

***Specific safety issues that should be addressed include:***

*Fire Emergency Plan:* AVICs are to develop a fire emergency plan consistent with Local Government and WorkCover requirements.

*Fire Extinguisher Register:* AVICs must have a Fire Extinguisher Register which provides details on the type of fire extinguishers, when they were purchased and the service company.

*Risk Management:* AVICs are to develop a Risk Management Plan consistent with Local Government and WorkCover and Work Place Health and Safety requirements. Examples of the general risks that need to be managed include:

- Mechanical: tripping hazards
- Physical: inappropriate furniture, eg. chairs
- Chemical: paints, cleaners and solvents
- Psychological: working under pressure and stress

Other Workplace Health and Safety issues that need to be referenced in the Operations Manual include:

- *First Aid Manual:* An approved St John's Ambulance or other endorsed First Aid Manual must be available and accessible at all times.
- *First Aid Training:* Names and contact details of AVIC staff who are trained in First Aid are to be included in the Operations Manual and displayed where the First Aid Manual is located.
- *Accident Log Book:* An Accident Log Book is to be kept by the AVIC. Staff must register and record all injuries and First Aid treatment that occur in the AVIC or on the grounds. It must be designed in a fashion to ensure consistency with the requirements of Local Government and the AVIC's insurer.
- *Emergency Procedures:* An Emergency Procedures plan is to be developed to meet Local Government, WorkCover and Workplace Health and Safety requirements.
- *Emergency Evacuation Chart:* Emergency Evacuation charts must be prominently displayed within the AVIC. Contact your insurance broker to ensure that correct information is displayed for safety and insurance policy requirements.
- *Emergency Telephone Numbers:* Emergency telephone numbers are to be kept current and prominently displayed close to all telephones, including public telephones in and outside the AVIC. As a minimum, these must include:
  - Police
  - Ambulance

- Hospital
- Fire Brigade
- Local Council
- AVIC Manager (after hours - staff use only)
- State Emergency Service.
- *Security Plan:* AVICs must document their security procedures. Security Plans are to be developed consistent with Local Government, Workplace Health and Safety and WorkCover requirements. Issues to be covered include:
  - Break-in procedures
  - Working alone guidelines
  - Reporting of suspicious behaviour
  - 'Out of bounds areas' for the public.

## APPOINTMENT OF A WORKPLACE HEALTH AND SAFETY OFFICER

Workers can elect co-workers to represent them on health and safety issues and no special qualifications or experience are required to be a representative.

A qualified person must be appointed by an employer as a Health and Safety Officer:

- when there are 30 or more workers normally employed at a workplace (ie. for a total of 40 days or more per year)
- if there are fewer than 30 workers and the employer or principal contractor considers it necessary.

Both of these conditions have implications for AVICs. The AVIC Operations Manual should include details on the AVIC's Health and Safety Officer (if required) and appropriate training for this Officer.

## EMERGENCY AND EVACUATION PROCEDURES

You need to have written information for customers and staff regarding **what** to do and **who** to tell in case of emergency such as illness, threat or fire and **how** to get out of the area in case of imminent danger. Check with your local Police and Country Fire Authority/Metropolitan Fire Brigade for advice.

Where appropriate, customers should be made aware of, or provided with a list of relevant emergency phone numbers such as Police, Ambulance, Poisons Centre, Helicopter Rescue, nearest neighbour, etc.

All the above information may be in the form of a handout, an insert in a compendium, a notice displayed behind a door, or instructions communicated to participants on an outdoor tour (these instructions should be written down somewhere). Your instructions to staff could be placed in the AVIC Operations Manual and any training done, eg. fire drills or First Aid courses, might be noted in your personnel files, minutes of meetings or diary.

**An additional requirement of Accreditation** is that you have a First Aid kit suitable to the size and nature for your AVIC.

## FIRST AID

Clearly identify where the *First Aid Manual* is located. It is highly recommended that an approved St John's Ambulance or other endorsed First Aid Manual be available and accessible at all times. Any items used from the Manual must be noted in the 'Day Book' and replaced as required.

*First Aid Training:* Names and contact details of AVIC staff who are trained in First Aid are to be included in the Operations Manual and displayed where the First Aid Manual is located.

*Accident Log Book:* An Accident Log Book is to be kept by the AVIC. Staff must register and record all injuries and First Aid treatment that occur in the AVIC or on the grounds. It must be designed in a fashion to ensure consistency with the requirements of Local Government and the AVIC's insurer.

## **SECURITY WHILE ON DUTY**

Security guidelines are to be developed consistent with Local Government, Workplace Health and Safety and WorkCover requirements.

Obviously each Centre will have its own specific protocols for this section but precise details should be provided concerning:

- Doors and entrances that should be kept locked.
- Policy on situations should a staff person or volunteer be working alone, particularly at night.
- Action to be taken in the case of suspicious or unusual behaviour by the public.
- Areas of the Centre that are 'out-of-bounds' for the public.
- Clear procedure in case of a break-in, eg. notify Police, Manager, keep Centre closed, etc.

## RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN

AVICs should develop guidelines (which adhere to Local Government, WorkCover and Workplace Health and Safety requirements) for managing risks such as:

- *Mechanical*: tripping hazards
- *Physical*: inappropriate furniture, eg. chairs
- *Chemical*: paints, cleaners and solvents
- *Psychological*: working under pressure and stress

The guideline should include internal controls, which ensure the AVIC's products, premises, and equipment are safe and 'fit for purpose', and are stored safely.

The AVIC should establish policies and procedures for identifying physical barriers to entry into the AVIC for existing and potential customers (particularly those with disabilities) and identifying strategies to improve access.

You can complete the template provided or write your own Risk Management Plan – in a list of dot points if you wish. The aim of your Plan is to assess and identify the major risks to your business operation and note the action you are taking to minimise or eliminate those risks. You should also note the likelihood of the risk occurring and where you can find written evidence of that action, eg. in your maintenance schedule or instructions in your Operations Manual.

Detail the Centre's policies, procedures and planning to minimise the likelihood of risk to human, physical and/or informational resources to include:

- Internal controls that ensure products, equipment and food are safe and fit for purpose
- Known hazard management procedures in the workplace (physical, chemical, and biological)
- Maintenance of safe storage of goods, plant and equipment, particularly of perishables
- Workplace safety procedures known by employees
- Prominently displayed emergency staff and customer evacuation procedures

Examples of risks are falls/injuries to staff or customers; food poisoning of customers; residents trapped by fire; hold-up or abusive behaviour; loss of computer files or programs; bankruptcy; serious illness of proprietor or close family.

<b>RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN</b>	<b>Date: 12 January 2010</b>	<b>Review Date: 12 January 2011</b>
<b>Potential Risks</b>	<b>Action Taken to Reduce Risk</b>	<b>Proof of Action</b>



## INCIDENT REPORT FORM

Again, you do not need to write long policies here. You can use the template provided or write your own Incident Report Form (IRF). The aim of your IRF is to document and cover all appropriate information. As a minimum the information below should be recorded.

INCIDENT REPORT FORM	
<b>Your Name:</b> _____	<b>Date:</b> _____
<b>DETAILS OF WHAT HAPPENED</b> Time and date, injury if any, activity being undertaken at the time - equipment, substance or place involved: _____ _____	
<b>DETAILS OF PERSON/S INVOLVED</b>	
<b>Name/s</b> _____	
<b>Residential Address:</b> _____	<b>Postcode</b> _____
<b>Telephone:</b> _____	<b>Facsimile:</b> _____
<b>Mobile Number:</b> _____	<b>Email Address:</b> _____
<b>Employee / Contractor / Customer, etc.</b>	
<b>Name and phone contact of Witnesses (if any)</b> _____	<b>Phone:</b> _____
<b>Any other details, eg. Employer contact? Contact details whilst on holiday?</b> _____ _____	
<b>ACTION TAKEN – attach photos, statements, etc. to this sheet</b> IMMEDIATE ACTION TAKEN to prevent recurrence of incident, to contact anyone involved or authorities _____ _____	
<b>LATER, FOLLOW UP ACTION (include dates)</b> _____ _____ _____	

## I INSURANCE

*The Manual is to include a table listing relevant details of:*

- insurance coverage, including the insurer
- policy numbers
- issue and expiry dates and value

Insurance protects you, your business, your staff and your customers. The three main types of insurance that an AVIC must consider are Professional Indemnity Insurance, Public Liability Insurance and Workers Compensation Insurance, which are addressed in detail in this section of the Manual.

Note that volunteers must be included in all relevant insurances. Check that all staff, including volunteers, are covered even when off-site (for example, on a familiarisation tour).

### PROFESSIONAL INDEMNITY INSURANCE

Professional Indemnity Insurance covers wrongful acts, errors, omission and advice. AVICs should be aware of several important points relating to Professional Indemnity Insurance and their operation.

#### ***Are AVICs exposed to potential litigation arising from their activities?***

**Yes** AVICs provide a wide variety of services for both the travelling public and to other organisations wishing to promote themselves or their region to the travelling public in some way. In addition to providing a convenient outlet for brochures and the like, Centres' activities range from the more common booking service to arranging conferences or special events to acting as tour operators or guides.

If a Centre provides information or advice to others knowing that the information or advice will be or is likely to be relied upon, that Centre has a duty of care under both the common law and the Trade Practices Act to ensure that the information or advice is free from errors or omission and is not misleading.

If the recipient of that information or advice suffers a loss as a result of relying upon that information or advice, the Centre may be held liable to pay 'damages' to the recipient for that loss.

#### ***Do AVICs have adequate resources to fund and manage any such litigation?***

**Probably not** - Professional liability litigation is usually a complex, time-consuming process involving many hours of specialist legal advice. It is not unusual for even relatively 'simple' Professional Indemnity claims to last for two or even three years. As one can easily imagine, legal costs incurred run into the tens of thousands of dollars very quickly.

Most AVICs operate on a fairly tight financial budget, with little room for the type of 'contingency funds' required to defend a Professional Indemnity claim.

#### ***Is appropriate Professional Indemnity Insurance available?***

**Yes** - AVICs can obtain Professional Indemnity Insurance cover in respect of the Centres' 'civil liability' arising in their conduct as an AVIC. Cover includes claims which allege:

- Breach of duty (including a duty of confidentiality)
- Defamation (libel and slander)
- Loss of or damage to documents in the Centre's physical custody or control
- Dishonest, fraudulent, criminal or malicious acts or omissions of an Employee or Principal of the Centre (no cover to person committing such acts or omissions)
- Infringement of patent copyright, design or trademark

- Breaches of the Trade Practices Acts 1974, Including Section 52 regarding misleading or deceptive conduct

A Professional Indemnity Insurance policy can also provide cover for 'Claim Investigation Costs' and costs associated with Disciplinary Proceedings and Enquiries. If the Courts determine that a Centre was liable to pay damages to an aggrieved customer in respect of a claim arising from information or advice provided by the Centre, the Centre's Professional Indemnity Insurance policy would indemnify them for that liability. The Centre's Professional Indemnity Insurance could also indemnify the Centre for the cost of defending that legal action.

### ***Are AVICs owned/operated by a Local Government Authority covered by their Professional Indemnity Policy?***

**Maybe** - This would depend on the individual Insurer's policy. It is recommended that any AVIC which is depending on this arrangement gain confirmation, in writing, that the particular AVIC has been included in the Local Government Authority's policy.

## **TYPES OF CLAIMS**

There is always the possibility that errors or omissions may occur, such as a double booking or a conference centre not being the most appropriate venue, and so the need for this type of insurance certainly exists to cover the genuine mistake.

However, in considering the issue of claims, it is worth commenting on the not so obvious, yet equally distressing topic of 'spurious' claims, often referred to as 'ambit' claims. These are the claims brought by 'vexatious' customers who feel that they have been unjustly dealt with or that the Centre caused their loss. Examples might include: a tour operator's financial failure, or personal injury sustained while on an excursion advertised by the Centre.

To all concerned it may be clear that the allegations made against the Centre are totally unfounded. Unfortunately, if the customer does service a writ upon the Centre (which is often the case), the claim must be defended - which as everyone knows is a costly process. The Court may decide in favour of the Centre and award 'costs' against the customer/plaintiff (ie. direct the customer/plaintiff to pay the Centre's legal costs), but if the customer/plaintiff is unable to pay (ie. short of money), the Centre would be left out of pocket. The burden of those defences may, in turn, prove too great and create significant financial distress for the Centre, possibly causing it to close.

The AVIC should check that their Professional Risks Insurance policy also indemnifies the Centre against such 'spurious' claims.

## **PUBLIC LIABILITY INSURANCE**

### **WHAT IS PUBLIC AND PRODUCTS LIABILITY INSURANCE?**

Public and Products Liability Insurance is designed to protect your business against claims by third parties for negligent acts, caused by you or your employees, which result in bodily injury to members of the public or damage to their property.

### **DO AVICS NEED PUBLIC AND PRODUCTS LIABILITY INSURANCE? HOW MUCH?**

Public Liability Insurance is required by any business, profession or organisation which can directly or indirectly pose a danger to members of the public or their property. **It is an Accreditation requirement that AVICs must have a minimum of \$5 million Public Liability Insurance cover.**

The type of cover required depends on your AVIC. You may require Public Liability only or both Public and Products Liability. Public Liability protects against claims for bodily injury or damage to property, occurring in connection with your business, where you have a legal liability to pay. Products Liability, on the other hand, protects against claims for bodily injury or damage to property resulting from goods manufactured, sold or supplied, where you have a legal liability to pay.

Generally speaking, the insurance company will pay for all legal costs incurred, with their consent, in the settlement or defence of your claim. Your legal liability, as owner or operator of machines while on your premises, is covered. If you have other people's goods in your legal and physical control, your policy can be extended to cover your liability for damage to goods other than your own, which are in your legal or physical control.

This advice is of a general nature. For more specific information contact your insurance agency or broker.

## **WORKERS COMPENSATION INSURANCE**

### **WORKCOVER**

WorkCover is overseen by a Board of Directors which reports to the Minister for Industrial Relations. Under WorkCover, an employer is legally obliged to hold a WorkCover Insurance Policy for Workers to cover the cost of compensating a worker who is injured at work.

By paying a premium each year, a WorkCover Insurance Policy for Workers covers the employer for statutory compensation claims and damages claims.

A Worker is defined as a person who:

- performs work under a contract of service for another person
- is a pay-as-you-earn (PAYE) taxpayer for this work.

### **WORKERS COMPENSATION INSURANCE**

Workers Compensation Insurance is applicable to AVICs and the volunteer component of their operation. Under the WorkCover 1996, WorkCover may enter into a contract of insurance with a non-profit organisation, eg. Visitor Information Centres. This coverage includes 'a person in a voluntary or honorary position with the organisation (ie. a volunteer)'. However, WorkCover has indicated that they do not, as a matter of course, insure volunteers or volunteer organisations. They assess the risk and other factors and then determine whether cover will be provided. There are private companies who do provide cover for volunteer organisations.

For further information on Workers Compensation Insurance contact:

WorkCover Information Centre: Ph: 13 10 50 Fax: 02 9370 6150

Hours: 8:30 am to 5:00 pm weekdays <http://www.workcover.nsw.gov.au>

## **J EQUIPMENT/MAINTENANCE**

An AVIC must document procedures, records and schedules for cleaning, inspection, servicing, repair and replacement of equipment, buildings, transport and signage. (See section 22 Asset Management of the Accreditation Criteria).

This section should include the procedures, records and schedules for cleaning, inspection, servicing, repair and replacement of equipment, buildings, transport and signage.

The AVIC's policy on personal use of telephone and office equipment may be included in this section if desired.

## K SIGNAGE

Signs for the Accredited Visitor Information Centre (AVIC) Network incorporate a yellow italicised 'i' on a blue background.

As a minimum an AVIC must adhere to and document the Signage Policy relating to both Accreditation signage and the signage for the Centre itself.

Individual Centre documentation is broadly outlined in section D of this Operations Manual. For clarity, the signage requirements of an **Accredited VIC** are:

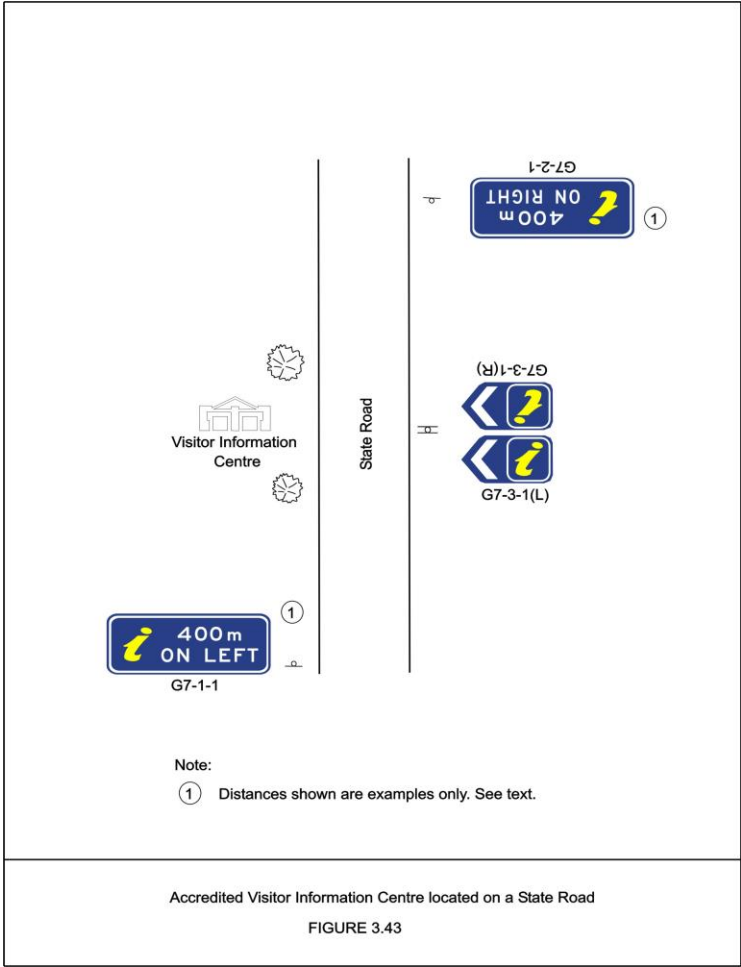
- Identification of VIC with the accredited 'i' sign both on the building and in the grounds in an unobstructed position on the exterior of the building or on a fixture dedicated for the purpose close by.
- Erection of advance direction accredited 'i' signs on both approaches to the AVIC on the nearest State or regional road or roads. (Level 3 AVICs to display advance warning accredited 'i' signs only in the Centre's grounds and not in the road reserve, and must gain approval of sponsoring Centre or local Council, where no sponsoring Centre exists.
- Use of stationery featuring the AVIC 'i' sign. (Level 3 AVICs to use stationery clearly stating that it is a satellite Centre of its sponsoring AVIC or Council).
- The word 'Information' is optional on AVIC signs which do not use or include any aspect of the Accredited Visitor Information Centre Network identity.

The AVIC Style Manual with complete specifications is currently being redesigned. If signage 'specs' are required in the meantime, please contact Aurora on Ph: 02 6885 5558 Email: [vic@auroraresearch.com.au](mailto:vic@auroraresearch.com.au), or keep a watch on the AVIC Network Website [www.auroraresearch.com.au](http://www.auroraresearch.com.au)

The 2003 Tourism Signposting Manual is available from the Roads and Traffic Authority (RTA). Summary information can be found on the Destination NSW Site (see [http://archive.tourism.nsw.gov.au/About\\_TASAC\\_p849.aspx](http://archive.tourism.nsw.gov.au/About_TASAC_p849.aspx))

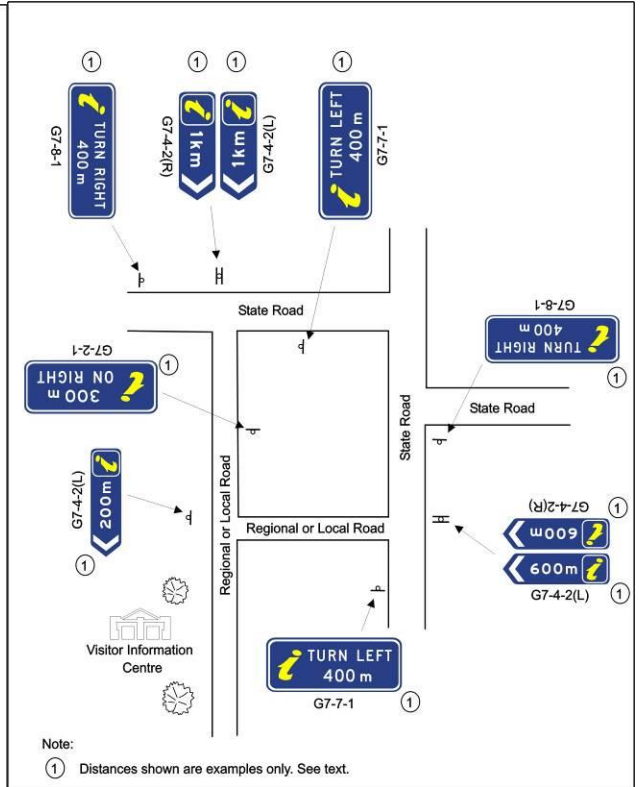
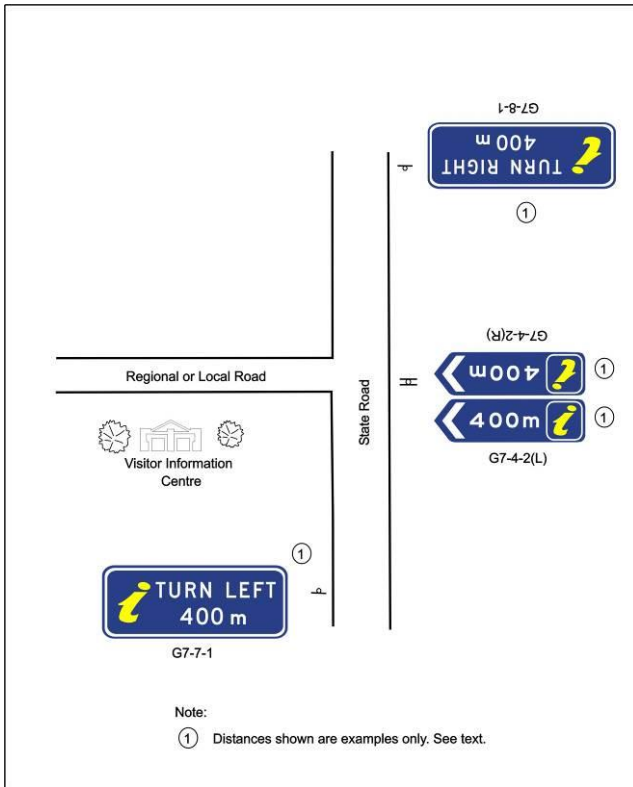
The Style Manual relates to the 'i' sign for use on buildings and associated internal signposting and also for use on collateral material. AVIC Network applicants will be forwarded a copy on approval of their application.

Please see attached figures 3.43 to 3.45 which detail the signposting arrangements for these Centres. The distances shown on these figures are examples only. ADVANCE (G7-1-1, G7-2-1, G7-7-1 and G7-8-1) signs are generally placed no further than 500m from the Centre, with 300-400m being ideal, and 200m the desirable minimum.



Accredited Visitor Information Centre located on a State Road

FIGURE 3.43



## L FUNDING, ASSISTANCE AND INFORMATION SOURCES

In establishing or expanding an AVIC, assistance may be required in the form of funding, business advice, statistical data and/or industry information.

A snapshot of information sources available to AVICs from both Government and industry organisations are described in this section of the Manual.

### ORGANISATIONS THAT PROVIDE ASSISTANCE TO THE TOURISM INDUSTRY

#### DESTINATION NSW

Destination NSW (DNSW) operates as a statutory authority of the New South Wales Government, and its primary goal is to develop and market tourism destinations in New South Wales in partnership with the industry, Government and the community.

DNSW offers assistance in areas such as:

- Destination development, research and planning
- Tourism policy and working with Government
- Domestic marketing
- International marketing
- Creative marketing services
- E-Marketing

Destination NSW website contains extensive information across all areas of the tourism industry.

Destination New South Wales - GPO Box 7050, Sydney, NSW 2001  
Ph: 02 9931 1111 Fax: 02 9931 1490 Web: <http://corporate.tourism.nsw.gov.au/>

#### REGIONAL TOURISM ORGANISATIONS (RTOS)

New South Wales' network of 15 Regional Tourism Organisations (RTOs) plays a major role in the success of the State's tourism industry. RTOs are a valuable resource for operators and provide their members with a range of services including marketing, promotion and distribution. DNSW encourages all operators to become active in their regional organisation.

Contact details for the RTO Executive Officers are as follows:

##### Blue Mountains

Michael Sperling  
Executive Officer  
Blue Mountains, Lithgow and Oberon Tourism  
Tel: 02 4567 0300  
[ceo@visitbluemountains.com.au](mailto:ceo@visitbluemountains.com.au)  
Website: [www.visitbluemountains.com.au](http://www.visitbluemountains.com.au)



<p><b>Central Coast</b></p>	<p>Robyn Abernethy  Chief Executive Officer  Central Coast Tourism  Tel: 02 4343 4400  <a href="mailto:rabernethy@centralcoasttourism.com.au">rabernethy@centralcoasttourism.com.au</a>  Website: <a href="http://www.visitcentralcoast.com.au">www.visitcentralcoast.com.au</a></p>
<p><b>Central NSW</b></p>	<p>Lucy White  Executive Officer  Central NSW Tourism  Mob: 0447 322 999  <a href="mailto:info@centralnswtourism.com.au">info@centralnswtourism.com.au</a>  Website: <a href="http://www.centralnswtourism.com.au">www.centralnswtourism.com.au</a></p>
<p><b>The Hunter</b></p>	<p>Will Creedon  Chair  Tourism Hunter  Tel: 02 4929 3333  <a href="mailto:willcreedon@yahoo.com.au">willcreedon@yahoo.com.au</a>  Website: <a href="http://www.tourismhunter.com.au">www.tourismhunter.com.au</a></p>
<p><b>Inland NSW</b>  (formerly New England North West;  Outback NSW and Capital Country)</p>	<p>Graham Perry  Chief Executive Officer  Inland NSW Tourism  Mob: 0418 777 373  <a href="mailto:gperry@inlandnswtourism.com.au">gperry@inlandnswtourism.com.au</a>  Website: <a href="http://www.inlandnswtourism.com.au">www.inlandnswtourism.com.au</a></p>
<p><b>Lord Howe Island</b></p>	<p>Lauren Douglass  Executive Officer  Lord Howe Island Tourism Association  Tel: 02 6563 2066 ext 31  <a href="mailto:lauren@lordhoweisland.info">lauren@lordhoweisland.info</a>  Website: <a href="http://www.lordhoweisland.info">www.lordhoweisland.info</a></p>
<p><b>Murray</b></p>	<p>Mark Francis  Executive Officer  Murray Regional Tourism Board  Tel: 03 5480 7110  <a href="mailto:ceo@mrtb.com.au">ceo@mrtb.com.au</a></p>

<p><b>North Coast Destination Network</b> (formerly Mid North Coast and Northern Rivers)</p>	<p>Belinda Novicky Executive Officer North Coast Destination Network Tel: 02 6645 3174 <a href="mailto:belinda.novicky@ncdn.com.au">belinda.novicky@ncdn.com.au</a> Website: <a href="http://www.ncdn.com.au">www.ncdn.com.au</a></p>
<p><b>Riverina</b></p>	<p>Sonia Casanova Executive Officer Riverina Regional Tourism Mob: 0427 630 349 <a href="mailto:admin@riverinatourism.com.au">admin@riverinatourism.com.au</a> Website: <a href="http://www.riverinatourism.com.au">www.riverinatourism.com.au</a></p>
<p><b>Snowy Mountains</b></p>	<p>Neil Thew Executive Officer Tourism Snowy Mountains Tel: 02 6457 2751 <a href="mailto:neil@snowymountains.com.au">neil@snowymountains.com.au</a> Website: <a href="http://www.snowymountains.com.au">www.snowymountains.com.au</a></p>
<p><b>South Coast</b> (includes Illawarra)</p>	<p>Catherine Shields Chair South Coast Regional Tourism Organisation Tel: 0412 292 917 <a href="mailto:catherine.robin@bigpond.com">catherine.robin@bigpond.com</a> Website: <a href="http://www.southcoast.net.au">www.southcoast.net.au</a></p>

### **AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS (ABS)**

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) is Australia's official statistical organisation. It publishes an extensive range of publications relating to the tourism industry. These include statistical bulletins about international travellers arriving in Australia and occupancy figures for accommodation in local Government areas. The ABS website has information about the ABS, the main statistical features of many current publications and other summary statistics.

Ph: 1300 135 070 Web: [www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au)

### **AUSTRALIAN COMPETITION AND CONSUMER COMMISSION (ACCC)**

An independent statutory authority, the ACCC administers the Trade Practices Act 1974 and the Prices Surveillance Act 1983 and has additional responsibilities under other legislation.

To find out about your business rights under the Trade Practices Act, visit the ACCC's website [www.accc.gov.au](http://www.accc.gov.au) or phone: 1300 302 502

## **AUSINDUSTRY**

AusIndustry provides a range of assistance schemes for business. To find out more about the various AusIndustry financial business assistance schemes – Ph: 13 28 46., visit the website: [www.ausindustry.gov.au/](http://www.ausindustry.gov.au/)

## **BUSINESS ENTRY POINT WEBSITE (WWW.BUSINESS.GOV.AU)**

The Business Entry Point was set up by the Commonwealth and State Governments to provide information and transactions for people operating a business in Australia (and their advisors) and people planning to start a business. The site provides information on more than 850 business support programs. Businesses can also use the site to complete interactive application forms for business tax file numbers or Australian Company numbers, and many other transactions.

## **COMMONWEALTH DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRY, SCIENCE AND RESOURCES (SPORT AND TOURISM DIVISION)**

The Sport and Tourism Division within the Commonwealth Department of Industry, Science and Resources, is responsible for developing and implementing Government tourism policy, delivering funding under the government's Regional Tourism Program and managing Australia's participation in international expositions. It works with the tourism industry, other Federal Government agencies and State, Territory and local Governments to maximise the contribution tourism makes to the well being of all Australians.

The Department has a number of fact sheets that can be downloaded from its web site. Fact sheets are available on topics such as jobs and careers in tourism, the international tourism industry, where to find tourism data, staff development and training and establishing a tourism business.

Ph: 02 6213 6000 Publications: 1800 804 465 <http://www.industry.gov.au>

## **DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS**

The Department of Industrial Relations can provide information on business trading hours, minimum award rates and WorkCover requirements.

Contact through NSW Industrial Relations Commission Phone 131 628 or go to [www.industrialrelations.nsw.gov.au](http://www.industrialrelations.nsw.gov.au)

## **DEPARTMENT OF FAIR TRADING**

The Department of Fair Trading is a comprehensive contact guide of Government and community organisations dealing with consumer matters. The Department can be contacted at [enquiry@fairtrading.nsw.gov.au](mailto:enquiry@fairtrading.nsw.gov.au) or located online at [www.dft.nsw.gov.au](http://www.dft.nsw.gov.au)

Department of Fair Trading - 1 Fitzwilliam Street, Parramatta NSW 2150

Ph: 13 32 20 Fax: 9895 0222

## **NSW DEPARTMENT OF STATE AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT (DSRD)**

The NSW Department of State and Regional Development supports and promotes New South Wales business. The DSRD is the central entry point for businesses to access government services. The DSRD produces several business publications and self-help resources, and conducts seminars and workshops aimed at improving business skills.

For further information on the services of the NSW Department of State and Regional Development, contact [businessweb@business.nsw.gov.au](mailto:businessweb@business.nsw.gov.au)

Level 47-49, MLC Centre, Martin Place / PO Box 5477, Sydney NSW 2001

Ph: 02 9228 3626 Fax: 02 9228 3626

## **NRMA**

NRMA supports vital community services and helps many other organisations. It provides information such as road maps, tourist brochures etc. - see <http://www.mynrma.com.au/travel/help/directory/index.shtml> For further information on the NRMA, visit their website at [www.mynrma.com.au](http://www.mynrma.com.au) or contact them on: Ph: 1300 13 11 22.

## **TOURISM TRAINING AUSTRALIA (TTA)**

Tourism Training Australia supports a national training network, which can provide you with assistance and advice on tourism, hospitality and caravan training issues in each State/Territory. The TTA Network maintains close links with the industry, Federal and State Government, public and private training providers, industry associations, unions and students/trainees.

Tourism Training Australia - Level 4, 64 Clarence St, Sydney NSW 2000

Ph : 02 9286 3944 Email : [reception@tourismtraining.com.au](mailto:reception@tourismtraining.com.au)

## **TOURISM DATA AND INDUSTRY INFORMATION RESOURCES**

### **PUBLISHED TOURISM DATA SOURCES**

#### ***International Visitors Survey (IVS)***

Survey of characteristics, behaviour and expenditure of overseas tourists in Australia. Published quarterly and annually. Source: Bureau of Tourism Research

#### ***National Visitor Survey (NVS)***

Survey of characteristics, behaviour and expenditure of domestic tourists in Australia. Published quarterly and annually. Source: Bureau of Tourism Research

#### ***Forecast Magazine***

Latest international and domestic tourism forecasts. Published half yearly. Source: Tourism Forecasting Council

#### ***Overseas Arrivals and Departures (OAD)***

Profile of level and characteristics of travellers to and from Australia. Published monthly, quarterly and annually. Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics

#### ***Survey of Tourist Accommodation (STA)***

Census of supply and levels of utilisation of select tourist accommodation facilities. Published monthly, quarterly and annually. Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics

#### ***Tourism Indicators Australia***

Contains core data relating to the STA, OAD and other information from relevant Australian Bureau of Statistics Information. Published quarterly. Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics

## **FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE SCHEMES AVAILABLE TO TOURISM ORGANISATIONS**

### **SMALL BUSINESS**

This Scheme assists companies and regional groups to identify opportunities for economic development. Projects funded include feasibility studies, business opportunity development plans and improvements to tourism attractions run by community groups. Individual businesses and industries, regional development organisations, regional and local associations, business, industry and community groups, tertiary education institutions and Local Government Authorities are eligible to apply for funding under this Scheme.

Financial assistance is provided for up to 50% of the total project costs, although special consideration for more than 50% funding by the Scheme may be requested for projects in regional areas and areas experiencing economic hardship.

For further information, contact: <http://www.smallbiz.nsw.gov.au>

## **GRANTS LINK**

GrantsLINK makes it easier to find suitable and relevant grants for community projects from the many Commonwealth grants that are available. GrantsLINK also helps you find the best source of funding and assists you to complete application forms. GrantsLINK is managed by the Commonwealth Department of Transport and Regional Services.

For further information contact: Grantslink Commonwealth Government Information Service  
Ph: 1800 026 222 Web: [www.grantslink.gov.au/index.htm](http://www.grantslink.gov.au/index.htm)

### ***Regional Assistance Program***

The purpose of this Program is to assist regions experiencing adjustment pressures or high levels of unemployment. It is designed to improve community understanding of structural and cyclical changes to the regional economy and labour market, increase the capacity of a local community to respond to structure and cyclical change, improve regional skills base and increase the opportunity for the development and consolidation of cyclical change.

Organisations must be an incorporated body to be eligible to apply for funding under this Program.

For further information, contact: NSW Department of State & Regional Development

Ph: 02 9228 3111 [www.communitybuilders.nsw.gov.au](http://www.communitybuilders.nsw.gov.au)

### ***Rural Living Infrastructure Program***

This Program provides financial assistance to Local Government to enhance the quality of life of people living in rural areas by the provision or improvement of community recreational, sporting or physical infrastructure, the provision of greater incentives for people to continue to live in rural towns and increasing the tourism potential of rural towns through an improvement in the physical environment.

For further information, contact:

Enterprise, Small Business & Regional Development Unit  
Industry & Investment NSW Level 1, 206 Lords Place ORANGE NSW 2800  
Ph: 02 6361 2444 Email: [greg.beileiter@business.nsw.gov.au](mailto:greg.beileiter@business.nsw.gov.au)

### ***Community Heritage Grants***

The purpose of these Grants is to promote community-based documentary preservation activities such as preservation and access projects involving community documentary heritage collections of significance, or certain training or research activities.

Australian community organisations which collect and provide public access to their documentary heritage collections are eligible to apply, for example, libraries, archives, museums, art galleries, historical societies, indigenous/multicultural groups and community/religious associations.

For further information contact: National Library of Australia Public Programs - CANBERRA ACT 2600

Ph: 02 6262 1147 Fax: 02 6273 4493

### ***Capital Infrastructure Program***

The objectives of the Capital Infrastructure Committee of the Arts Advisory Council are to:

- benefit the artistic and cultural life of the community, particularly of people in regional areas and people with special needs
- assist the development of major projects that add to State or regional cultural infrastructure and services
- encourage active cooperation between local community groups, professional arts organisations, and Local Government Authorities, to ensure the most efficient use of available resources
- provide cultural resources for non-English speaking background and Indigenous communities in New South Wales.

Grants are available to approved applicants for the construction, alteration, renovation, completion or fitting-out of buildings and other facilities for arts and cultural use. The maximum Grant available for a project is 50% of its total cost. Most Grants are considerably less than \$100,000 and are intended for comparatively modest alterations to structures. For exceptional projects, Grants of up to \$250,000 will be considered. Other Grants available include:

[Community Cultural Development Program](#)

[Dance Program](#)

[Indigenous Arts Fund](#)

[International Program](#)

[Literature and History Program](#)

[Museums Program](#)

[Music \(including Contemporary Music\) Program](#)

[Performing Arts Touring Program](#)

[Theatre Program](#)

[Visual Arts and Crafts Program](#)

[Western Sydney Local Government Arts Incentive Fund](#)

[Western Sydney Capital Infrastructure Program](#)

[Fifth City of the Arts Program](#)

Contact the Ministry for the Arts, Level 9, St James Centre, 111 Elizabeth Street, SYDNEY NSW 2000  
Ph: (02) 9228 5533 Fax: (02) 9228 4722  
Toll Free number (in NSW): 1800 358 594 General email: [ministry@arts.nsw.gov.au](mailto:ministry@arts.nsw.gov.au)

## **M SAMPLE - CODE OF CONDUCT / CODE OF PRACTICE**

A Code of Conduct for delivery of quality customer service should be included in your manual. When preparing this code, consider that the AVIC's customers include not only visitors, but also operators and the community. Those AVICs that are related to Local Government will already be operating according to their Council's Code of Conduct Suggested Content.

Observe the Code of Conduct which reflects the value of the AVIC Network. AVIC staff are required to act in an ethical manner in dealing with customers and operators. AVICs must develop their own Code of Ethics that reflects the principles of the AVIC Network as detailed below:

<b>Quality</b>	<i>offering friendly and professional visitor services and information.</i>
<b>Accessibility</b>	<i>being open for visitors consistent with the AVIC criteria and ensuring there are after hours services available.</i>
<b>Consistency</b>	<i>in management and operational practices and standards throughout New South Wales.</i>
<b>Currency</b>	<i>all the information provided is up to date.</i>
<b>Comprehensiveness</b>	<i>having a thorough knowledge of the area and region's tourism products and being able to provide information on tourism facilities throughout the State.</i>
<b>Credibility</b>	<i>providing reliable and impartial advice and assistance to visitors.</i>
<b>Commitment</b>	<i>visitor information staff are to encourage visitors to stay longer and visit more attractions and undertake more activities in the local area.</i>
<b>Confidentiality</b>	<i>not to disclose confidential information to a third party. For example, financial information of operators, individual occupancy rates, AVIC sales information of individual operators.</i>
<b>Conflict of Interest</b>	<i>disclosing potential conflicts. For example, self, relative or close friend who has a tourism operation in the area, personal beliefs or attitudes that may affect the impartiality of advice.</i>
<b>Relationships with Operators</b>	<i>do not favour one operator over another operator when recommending or selling products. Always put the customer's needs first.</i>

## CODE OF PRACTICE

1. Accredited businesses will eliminate any practices that could be damaging to trade or consumers or to the dignity and integrity of the tourism industry.
2. **Advertising and the provision of information.** All advertising and promotional activities shall accurately reflect the activities of the business.
3. **Disclosure.** Customers will be informed of all terms and conditions of the contract including the terms of payment and any cancellation conditions prior to or at the time of entering the transaction. The business will adhere to these terms and conditions.
4. **Receiving Payments.** The business will ensure that all monies received from the customer, either as a deposit for goods or services to be supplied in the future, or on the completion of the service transaction, will be receipted by the business and an authentic copy supplied to the customer.
5. **Delivery of the Service.** The business acknowledges its responsibilities to meet the reasonable expectations of all customers to the best of its ability. Customers include any individual, group or business desirous of using or receiving the goods or services of the business. The business will, as far as it is reasonably capable, present its goods and services in the best possible way.
6. **Health and Safety.** The business will exercise all reasonable care to address customers' and staff safety and comfort. As far as is practicable, the business will take all reasonable measures to ensure that all facilities, equipment and products are in good working order. The business should also, under duty of care, list potential hazards and risks that exist within the business and assess methods of preventing and minimising them on a regular basis.
7. **Discrimination.** The business shall endeavour to treat all customers equitably.
8. **Customer Confidentiality.** Unless required by law, a business will not provide information concerning an individual customer to another entity without the customer's permission. The collection and analysis of customer information is necessary to improve tourism industry products and services for the benefit of both businesses and consumers. It is not intended that this rule should constrain the provision of such information, but rather that no information will be divulged which breaches a customer's right to privacy.
9. **Complaints and Disputes.** All reasonable customer concerns and queries will be fairly and amicably dealt with as soon as practicable. The decision of any mediator who may be employed will be final and binding. The business should provide a system that facilitates effective communication with customers, in the event of a customer concern or complaint.
10. **Tourist Information.** Accredited businesses shall, where possible, inform their customers of pertinent facts concerning tours, transportation, accommodation or other tourist services available to consumers.
11. **Resolving Disputes.** Accredited businesses should conduct their activities so as to try and avoid disputes with fellow businesses. In the event of a controversy between businesses, both parties must enter into an appropriate dispute resolution process.





# **MODULE 4**

# **TEMPLATES**

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## **Disclaimer**

The information in this Manual is current at the time of compiling. It can be expected that during the life of the Manual a number of contact details and information sources will change. This document is not an exhaustive list of every resource that an AVIC can access. Whilst every care has been taken in compiling this Manual, the VICDP/AVIC Secretariat, its officers, servants and agents expressly disclaim all liability for errors or omissions of any kind (whether negligent or otherwise) or for any loss, damage or other consequence which may arise from any person relying on this publication.

Feb 2003

– amended November 2009

## **Acknowledgements**

Aurora Research acknowledges extracts from CTA's VIN Membership Manual, Victoria's Better Business Tourism Accreditation Program and Country Victoria Tourism Council's Visitor Information Centre sector specific requirements, Tourism Accreditation Board of Victoria (TABV), Tourism Queensland's Queensland Visitor Information Centre (VIC) Signage Policy and Rob Tonge 'How to Establish and Operate a Visitor Information Centre' in the development of this Manual for use by the NSW AVIC Network.



# AVIC VISITOR DATA FORM

Please complete for (month/year) and return by (month, year)

**To:** Aurora Research  
**Fax:** 02 6885 5556  
**Email:** vic@auroraresearch.com.au

**From (Contact Name)** \_\_\_\_\_  
**AVIC Name** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Date (month/year)** \_\_\_\_\_

Date	Australian States or Territories				Overseas Visitors						Total	
	NSW		QLD	AVIC	Other	NZ	Japan	Other Asia	UK	Other Europe		Other o'seas
	a*	b*										
1												
2												
3												
4												
5												
6												
7												
8												
9												
10												
11												
12												
13												
14												
15												
16												
17												
18												
19												
20												
21												
22												
23												
24												
25												
26												
27												
28												
29												
30												
31												
<b>Total</b>												

a\* = visitors from NSW who reside within 400 kilometres of the AVIC  
b\* = visitors from NSW who reside outside 400 kilometres of the AVIC

## INCIDENT REPORT FORM

### INCIDENT REPORT FORM

Your Name:

Date:

#### DETAILS OF WHAT HAPPENED

Time and date, injury if any, activity being undertaken at the time; equipment, substance or place involved:

#### DETAILS OF PERSON/S INVOLVED

Name/s:

Residential Address:

Postcode:

Telephone:

Facsimile:

Mobile Number:

Email Address:

Employee / Contractor / Customer, etc.:

Name and phone contact of Witnesses (if any):

Any other details, eg. Employer contact? Contact details whilst on holiday?

#### ACTION TAKEN – attach photos, statements, etc. to this sheet

IMMEDIATE ACTION TAKEN to prevent recurrence of incident, to contact anyone involved or authorities

LATER, FOLLOW UP ACTION (include dates):



**BUSINESS PLAN**

**Executive Summary**

--

**Vision Statement**

--

**Mission Statement**

--

**Background**

--

**Recent Achievements of the Centre**

--

**Current Performance of the Centre**

--

**Products / Services**

--

**STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES & THREATS (SWOT) ANALYSIS**

<b>Business Area</b>	<b>Situation</b>	<b>Implications</b>
Visitor Numbers		
Key Markets		
Length of Stay		
Attractions & Activities		
Purpose of Visit		
Information Needs		
Technological Change factors		
Planning factors		
Timing factors		
Funding		
Council priorities		
Community priorities		

**SUMMARISE YOUR STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, MARKET OPPORTUNITIES & THREATS**

<b>Strengths</b>	
<b>Weaknesses</b>	
<b>Opportunities</b>	
<b>Threats</b>	





<b>Alternative Objective Format</b>	
-------------------------------------	--

<b>OBJECTIVE 1</b>	
--------------------	--

<i>STRATEGIES</i>	
-------------------	--

<b>OBJECTIVE 2</b>	
--------------------	--

<i>STRATEGIES</i>	
-------------------	--

<b>Human Resources</b>	
------------------------	--

Add your Organisation Chart; Position Descriptions; Recruitment Policy & Roster Information here (if applicable)

<b>PROGRAM OF ACTIONS</b>	<b>COST</b>
Visitor Information Centre Marketing and Public Relations	\$
Visitor Information Centre Maintenance and Development	\$
Staff Training and Development	\$
Networking with other AVICs and Industry	\$
<b>TOTAL BUDGET</b>	\$

### **Operational Budget**

Operational Budget for \_\_\_\_\_ Accredited Visitor Information Centre  
for \_\_\_\_\_ Financial Year

<b>Income</b>		<b>Expenditure</b>	
Local Government Authority	\$	Program of Actions (as above)	\$
Regional Tourism Organisation	\$	Rent	\$
Income from Brochure Display	\$	Electricity	\$
Chamber of Commerce contribution	\$	Security	\$
Event organisation	\$	Rates	\$
Other Income Sources (list)	\$	Operating Costs:	\$
▪	\$	Staff wages and salaries	\$
▪	\$	Volunteer expenses	\$
▪	\$	Telephone, fax, post, etc.	\$
▪	\$	Office equipment, rental and maintenance	\$
▪	\$	Other Operational Expenses	\$
▪	\$	Program Costs	\$
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	\$	<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	\$

AVIC Budget			
Income		Expenditure	
Grants: <i>Council</i> <i>Other</i>		Fixed Costs Of Operation: <i>Rent</i> <i>Electricity, etc.</i>	
Membership		Operating Costs:	
User Pay Income		<i>Staff</i>	
Booking Income		<i>Publications, Materials</i>	
Material Sales and Publications		<i>Telephone, fax, etc.</i>	
VIC Hire - Commercial activities		Program Costs:	
Sponsorship		<i>High Priority Programs</i>	
Festival of the Leaves		<i>Medium Priority Programs</i>	
		<i>Low Priority Programs</i>	
Income from Level 3 AVIC at Gully Springs (See separate schedule)		Expenditure (Summary) applying to Level 2 AVIC at Gully Springs (See separate schedule)	
<b>Total Income</b>		<b>Total Expenditure</b>	
Evaluation			
		<b>Expenditure too high for income</b>	<b>Income higher than expenditure</b>
Options			
Environmental Considerations			
Action Plan			
Plan	Do	Review	Improve
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determine and document current processes</li> <li>• Determine current performance of the process</li> <li>• Determine customer expectations of the process</li> <li>• Determine the gaps between expectations and process capability</li> <li>• Find the cause</li> <li>• Propose possible solutions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trial solution (on small scale)</li> <li>• Collect data to determine if changes have occurred in the process</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analyse data</li> <li>• Determine if changing the process has resulted in an improvement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement and standardise the change if there was improvement</li> <li>• Repeat the process again if there was no improvement</li> </ul>
<p><b>Regulatory Compliance Issues</b> Any business must comply with a range of regulatory standards as required by Local, State and Federal Governments as well as controlling industry bodies. Accredited Visitor Information Centres should have an understanding of the regulatory compliance issues which are relevant to their business and be able to demonstrate compliance with these regulations.</p> <p>Accompanying the Business Plan should be a table including the following regulatory compliance details (where applicable to the AVIC):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Workplace Registration</li> <li>▪ Business Name Registration</li> <li>▪ Certificate of Incorporation</li> <li>▪ Australian Company Number</li> <li>▪ Australian Business Number</li> <li>▪ Insurance - Public Liability (minimum of \$5m including volunteers), Professional Indemnity, Workers Compensation</li> <li>▪ Compliance with all relevant licences and permits</li> <li>▪ Compliance with relevant codes of conduct/ethics</li> <li>▪ Compliance with all staffing and employment regulations</li> <li>▪ Compliance with all taxation requirements</li> </ul>			

# MARKETING PLAN GUIDELINES

<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	
<b>TARGET MARKET ANALYSIS</b>	
<b>SITUATION ANALYSIS</b>	
<b>OBJECTIVE 1</b>	
<i><b>STRATEGIES</b></i>	
<b>OBJECTIVE 2</b>	
<i><b>STRATEGIES</b></i>	
<b>MARKETING OBJECTIVES / STRATEGIES/ ACTIVITY/ BUDGET/ TIMEFRAME</b>	
<p>List here what you plan to do over the next year or so in marketing. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promotions</li> <li>• Regional marketing campaigns</li> <li>• Local tourism association activity</li> <li>• Trade events</li> <li>• Distribution of brochures, eg. to AVICs, other outlets</li> <li>• Signs</li> <li>• Visiting Journalists Program</li> <li>• Customer database</li> <li>• Website development</li> <li>• Advertising</li> </ul> <p>List how much money you will allocate to each activity and indicate the dates by which this activity will be completed.</p>	



## AVIC NETWORK ANNUAL REPORT FORMAT - DUE 31 MARCH

AVIC Accreditation is granted for three years. Accredited VICs are required to submit a brief report due in **by 31 March annually**.

**Name of AVIC:**

**AVIC Manager:**

*Please confirm the following details to ensure we have the most current information:*

**Postal Address of AVIC:**

**Street Address of AVIC:**

**Phone Number(s) Public Use:**

**Toll Free Number:**

**Fax:**

**Website:**

**Email Address: Public Use:**

**Contact details for person in charge of Accreditation matters**

*(As this person may be situated in alternate premises to the AVIC, please supply their contact details)*

**Organisation Name** (if different from above)

**Postal Address:**

**Street Address:**

**Phone Number:**

**Fax:**

**Email Address:**

---

**1 Please briefly describe major initiatives and continuous improvement activities undertaken by your Centre in the past year:**

**2 Please confirm that your Centre is now operating in accordance with the relevant Accreditation Criteria**

**Yes we are operating in accordance with the Accreditation Criteria (2003 Manual)**

**No, we still need to address issues as follows:**

**3 Please confirm signage status**  
**Yes all signage is in place and meets National Standards**

**No, we still need to finalise signage as follows:**

**4 Please briefly describe your progress with Professional Development in the past year.**

**5 Please provide details of activities undertaken by AVIC Supervisors/Managers in the past year to meet the 30 hour ongoing professional development requirement.**

<b>Date of Activity</b>	<b>Description of Activity</b>	<b>Number of Hours</b>

**6 Please provide any comments/suggestions/ideas about enhancing the AVIC Network:**

---

**Declaration**

**I declare that the information provided in this Annual Report is true and correct. I agree to continue to operate the AVIC in accordance with the relevant criteria and advise Aurora Research of any change of ownership. I am authorised by my organisation to sign this document.**

**Name:**

**Position:**

**Organisation:**

**Signature:**

**Date:**





## CHANGE OF OWNERSHIP TEMPLATE

11/20/2015

The Secretariat  
NSW AVIC Network  
PO Box 1000  
DUBBO NSW 2830

### RE: CHANGE OF BUSINESS OWNERSHIP

This letter is to advise that I, (*name of new owner*) have purchased the Business (*name of business*) from (*name of previous owner*) on (*date of sale*).

Our Business is located (*complete address of business, include name of AVIC*).

---

---

---

---

Our postal address is (*postal address or same as above*).

---

---

Our contact details are:

Phone: 

---

Fax: 

---

Email: 

---

Website: 

---

Enclosed are copies of our Visitor Information Centre's:

- Insurance Certificates (PI & PL)
- Certificate of Incorporation (if applicable)
- Proof of Ownership Documents
- Relevant Operating Licences (eg. Travel Agent Licence if required)
- Business & Marketing Plan
- Action Plan (if applicant does not meet all criteria - include supporting documentation where appropriate)
- Photo of signage (where changed from previous owner)

Please find set out below a signed declaration stating that I shall adhere to the requirements of the Accreditation Criteria of the Accredited Visitor Information Centre Network.

Owner

Endorsing Council or Level 1 or 2 AVIC

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

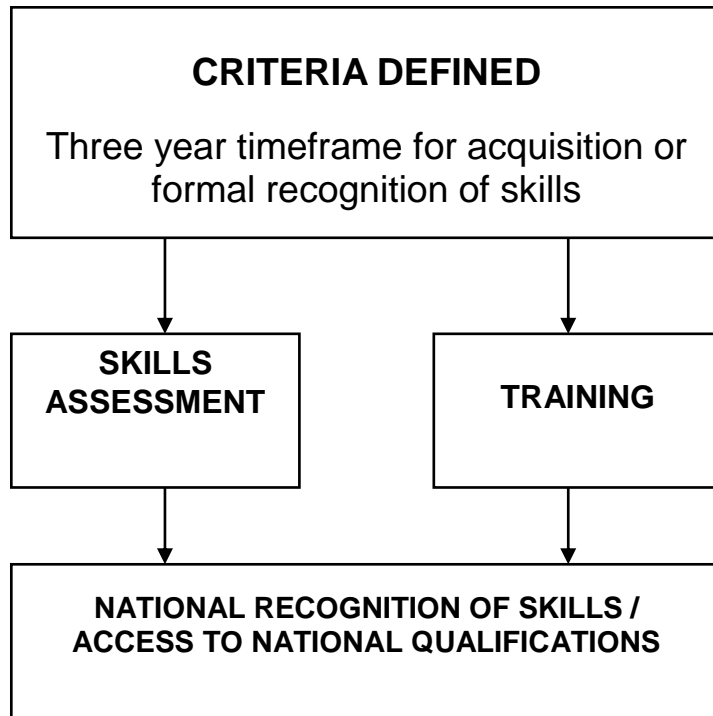




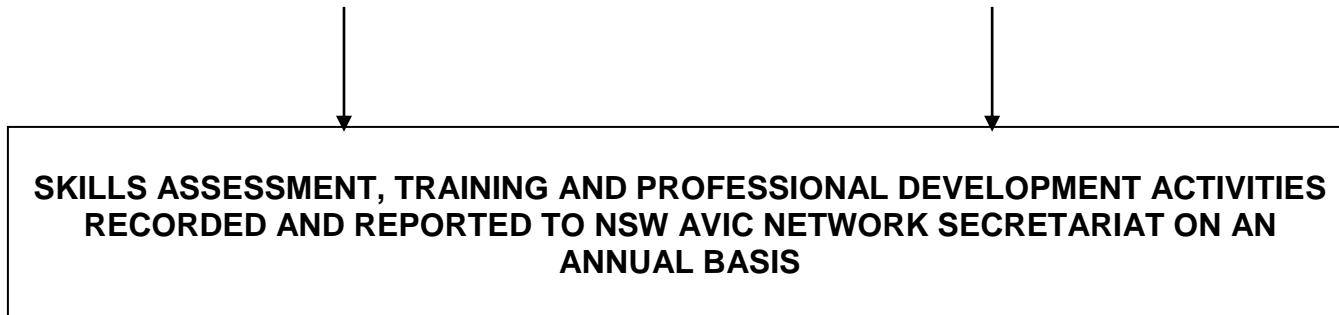
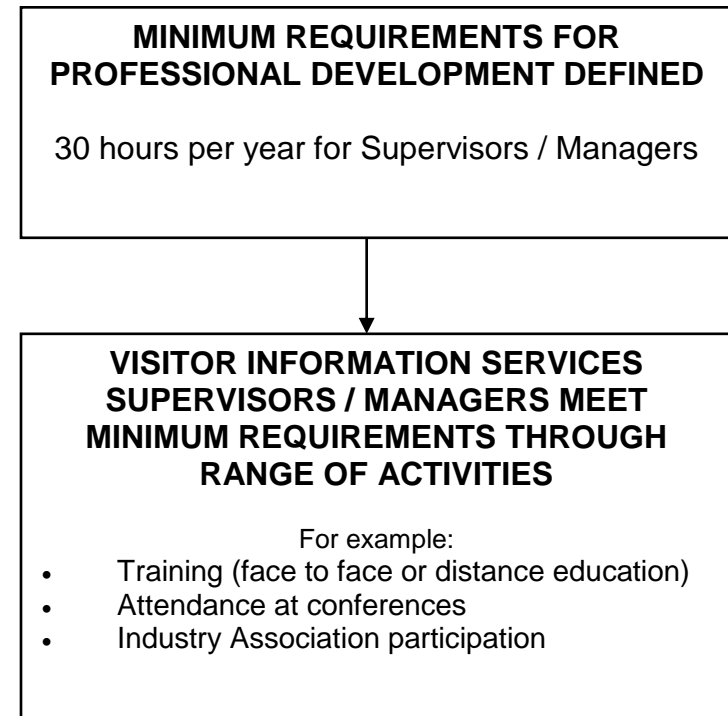


**NSW ACCREDITED VISITOR INFORMATION CENTRE NETWORK - PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM**

**SKILL & QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS**



**ONGOING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**



## SAMPLE CODE OF PRACTICE

### CODE OF PRACTICE

1. Accredited businesses will eliminate any practices that could be damaging to trade or consumers or to the dignity and integrity of the tourism industry.
2. **Advertising and the provision of information.** All advertising and promotional activities shall accurately reflect the activities of the business.
3. **Disclosure.** Customers will be informed of all terms and conditions of the contract including terms of payment and any cancellation conditions prior to or at the time of entering the transaction. The business will adhere to these terms and conditions.
4. **Receiving Payments.** The business will ensure that all monies received from the customer, either as a deposit for goods or services to be supplied in the future, or on the completion of the service transaction, will be receipted by the business and an authentic copy supplied to the customer.
5. **Delivery of the Service.** The business acknowledges its responsibilities to meet the reasonable expectations of all customers to the best of its ability. Customers include any individual, group or business desirous of using or receiving the goods or services of the business. The business will, so far as it is reasonably capable, present its goods and services in the best possible way.
6. **Health and Safety.** The business will exercise all reasonable care to address the safety and comfort of customers and staff. As far as is practicable, the business will take all reasonable measures to ensure that all facilities, equipment and products are in good working order. The business should also, under duty of care, list potential hazards and risks that exist within the business and assess methods of preventing and minimising them on a regular basis.
7. **Discrimination.** The business shall endeavour to treat all customers equitably.
8. **Customer Confidentiality.** Unless required by law, the business will not provide information concerning an individual customer to another entity without the customer's permission. The collection and analysis of customer information is necessary to improve tourism industry products and services for the benefit of both businesses and consumers. It is not intended that this rule should constrain the provision of such information, but rather that no information will be divulged which breaches a customer's right to privacy.
9. **Complaints and Disputes.** All reasonable customer concerns and queries will be fairly and amicably dealt with as soon as practicable. The decision of any mediator who may be employed will be final and binding. The business should provide a system that facilitates effective communication with customers, in the event of a customer concern or complaint.
10. **Tourist Information.** Accredited businesses shall, where possible, inform their customers of pertinent facts concerning tours, transportation, accommodation or other tourist services available to consumers.
11. **Resolving Disputes.** Accredited businesses should conduct their activities so as to try and avoid disputes with fellow businesses. In the event of a controversy between businesses, both parties must enter into an appropriate dispute resolution process.



# MODULE 5

# APPLICATION FORM



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## Disclaimer

The information in this Manual is current at the time of compiling. It can be expected that during the life of the Manual a number of contact details and information sources will change. This document is not an exhaustive list of every resource that an AVIC can access. Whilst every care has been taken in compiling this Manual, the VICDP/AVIC Secretariat, its officers, servants and agents expressly disclaim all liability for errors or omissions of any kind (whether negligent or otherwise) or for any loss, damage or other consequence which may arise from any person relying on this publication.

Feb 2003, Amended Jan 2010; Nov 2014

## Acknowledgements

Aurora Research acknowledges extracts from CTA's VIN Membership Manual, Victoria's Better Business Tourism Accreditation Program and Country Victoria Tourism Council's Visitor Information Centre sector specific requirements, Tourism Accreditation Board of Victoria (TABV), Tourism Queensland's Queensland Visitor Information Centre (VIC) Signage Policy and Rob Tonge 'How to Establish and Operate a Visitor Information Centre' in the development of this Manual for use by the NSW AVIC Network.

## INTRODUCTION

Thank you for your interest in becoming part of the New South Wales Accredited Visitor Information Centre (AVIC) Network.

Accreditation is a process designed to establish and continually improve industry standards for conducting a tourism business. It aims to assist every AVIC to improve the way it operates to meet the increasing demands of domestic and international consumers and stakeholders.

Accreditation also provides consumers and the industry with an assurance that an Accredited Centre is committed to quality business practice and professionalism. The primary focus is to ensure that standards of service delivery meet and, where possible, exceed the visitors expectations.

The AVIC Network bands together Accredited Centres that show a commitment to continuous improvement and customer satisfaction, providing all consumers and travellers with an assurance of delivering quality products and services.

All New South Wales Visitor Information Centres wishing to utilise and display the accredited ‘i’ sign (and use the accredited ‘i’ symbol) must complete the following Application Form. The questions in this Application Form link with the National Standards and the *AVIC Network Manual*. All Centres should read the New South Wales Accredited Visitor Information Centre Network Manual prior to completing this Application Form. All content is in accordance with Accreditation Criteria and procedures set down by Destination New South Wales (DNSW) and reviewed by the Industry Reference Group (IRG) for the New South Wales Accredited Visitor Information Centre Network.

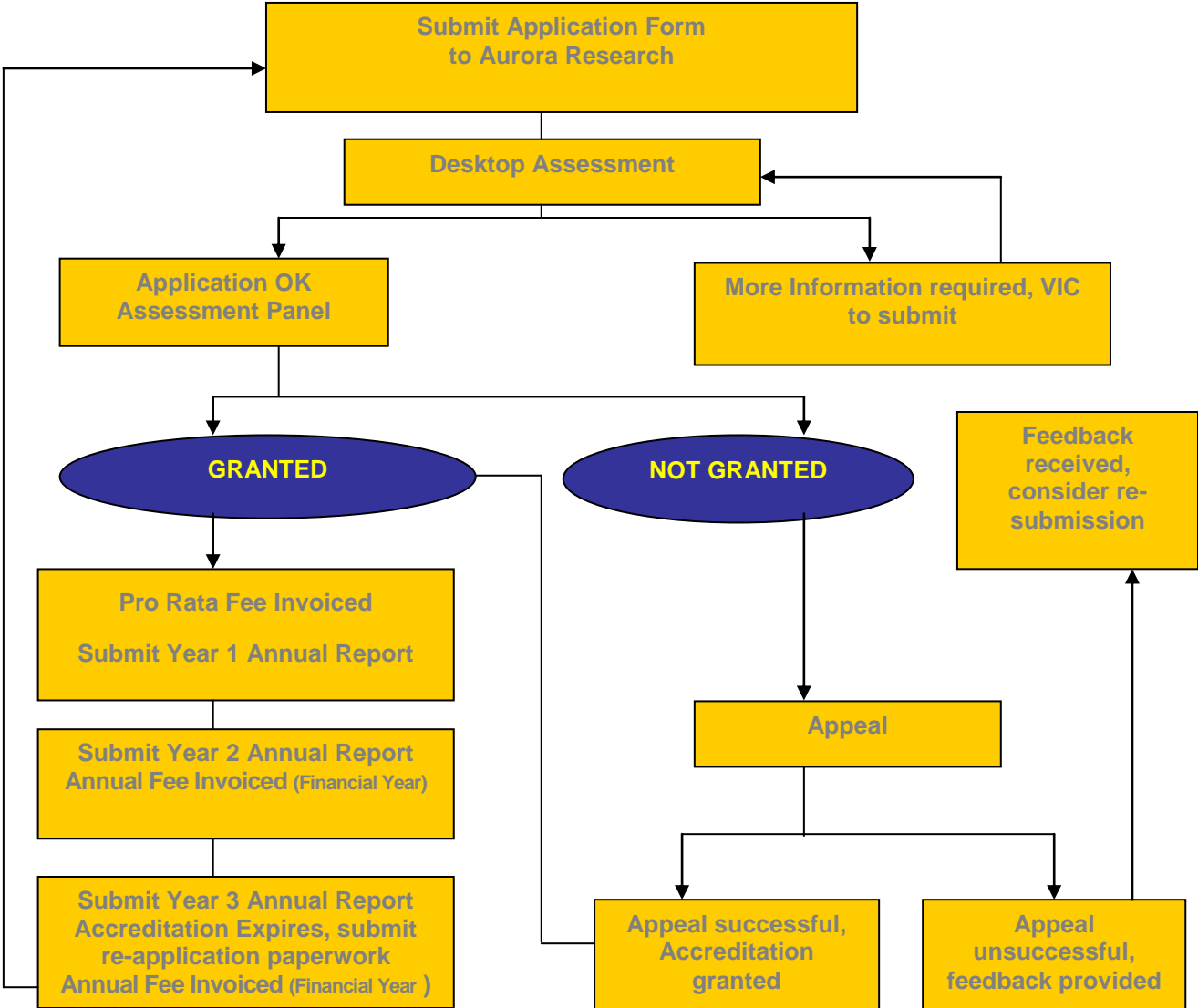
Please note that **a separate Application Form must be submitted for each Centre** wanting to display the accredited ‘i’ sign (ie. if a Centre operates in conjunction with several other ‘satellite’ Centres, each Centre must apply individually for use of the ‘i’ sign). The Accreditation Application forms are accessible via email to Aurora – [vic@auroraresearch.com.au](mailto:vic@auroraresearch.com.au)

# HOW TO BECOME AN ACCREDITED VISITOR INFORMATION CENTRE

To become part of the New South Wales Accredited Visitor Information Centre (AVIC) Network, applicants must first complete a self-assessment to ensure they meet the Accreditation Criteria.

Prospective applicants must complete the enclosed Application Form and submit to the AVIC Network Secretariat (Aurora) with supporting documentation.

## THE NSW ACCREDITATION PROCESS



Each successful applicant will be welcomed as an AVIC and will receive all benefits of the NSW Accredited Visitor Information Centre Network.

## ACCREDITATION LEVELS

### OVERVIEW OF ACCREDITATION LEVELS AND CRITERIA

<b>FUNCTIONS</b>	<b>Level 1</b>	<b>Level 2</b>	<b>Level 3</b>
<b>Opening Hours</b>	Open 363 days per year for a minimum of 56 hours per week	Open 363 days per year for a minimum of 43 hours per week	Open a minimum of 5 days per week (including weekends) for 7 hours per day
<b>Primary Function</b>	An AVIC whose primary function is disseminating visitor information, marketing the area of it's responsibility and undertaking relation tasks eg accommodation and tour bookings etc		A business or information centre where the provision of information may or may not be the primary function. Can be a mixed or private business (eg. museum, craft shop).
<b>Scope of Information Provision</b>	Local, regional and Statewide information provision		Local information provision only.
<b>Staffing</b>	A minimum of one full time permanent staff member with appropriate experience/ qualifications.  Ongoing training and professional development for staff.		May be staffed by volunteers.  Training program to include staff induction, customer service ongoing staff training and product familiarisation program.  Maintenance of personnel records
<b>Management and Planning</b>	Operates in accordance with a Business Plan and Operations Manual		Operates in accordance with both Business Plan and Operations Manual and with guidelines set up by the endorsing Level 1 or 2 AVIC or Local Council
<b>Application Requirements</b>	Application direct from the AVIC or potential AVIC to the AVIC Network Secretariat (Aurora)  Requires the submission of a Business/Marketing Plan relevant to AVIC component of the business		Application must be endorsed by a local Level 1 or 2 AVIC or Local Council  Requires the submission of a Business/Marketing Plan relevant to Visitor Information Centre component of the business
<b>Annual Accreditation Fees</b>	\$880.00 inc GST	\$880.00 inc GST	\$385.00 inc GST

## Level 1

An AVIC whose primary function is disseminating visitor information and marketing the area of its responsibility.

Open for at least 363 days per year for a minimum of 56 hours per week.

Employs a minimum of one permanent staff member with at least one year's experience as a Tourism Officer / AVIC Manager, a minimum of one year's relevant management experience, or a relevant tourism management/general management qualification or general management or tourism related degree.

## Level 2

An AVIC whose primary function is disseminating visitor information.

Open for at least 363 days per year for a minimum of 43 hours per week.

Employs a minimum of one permanent staff member with at least one year's experience as a Tourism Officer / AVIC Manager, a minimum of one year's relevant management experience, or a relevant tourism management/general management qualification or general management or tourism related degree.

## Level 3

An AVIC, which offers information services that are secondary to the primary business activity of the organisation within which it is located.

Open minimum 5 days per week, including weekends, for a minimum of 7 hours per day. They must liaise with a Level 1 or 2 AVIC in their area or their local Council if there is no Level 1 or 2.

Criteria apply to each level of Accreditation. Those applicants seeking Level 3 Accreditation must consult with the endorsee and obtain endorsement on their Application Form from the Level 1 or 2 AVIC in their area. If there is no Level 1 or Level 2 AVIC, then the applicant's Local Council is to provide the endorsement.(see Level 3 Policy on page 14)

## ACCREDITATION PERIOD

Applicants will be accredited for a three-year period from the date of approval of the application.

Conditional Accreditation may be granted to an AVIC, which does not yet fully comply with the criteria but undertakes to do so within a six month period. An Action Plan will be required and evidence of compliance will be requested by the AVIC Network Secretariat (Aurora) of the Accreditation Program. When renewing Accreditation, each AVIC will need to certify that it still complies with the appropriate Accreditation Criteria.

## ANNUAL REPORTING

Applicants will be required to submit a brief Report to Aurora on an annual basis. The Report will need to include information on general continuous improvement issues and progress with professional development activities. Aurora will automatically send a reminder to each AVIC with a pro-forma to facilitate easy completion of the Report (this will also be available via e-mail and on disk).

## ACCREDITATION FEES

The fees are as follows:

Level 1 and Level 2	\$880.00 inclusive of GST
Level 3	\$385.00 inclusive of GST

Fees are levied annually and charged at a pro rata rate for newly Accredited Centres. Aurora will send an invoice to all newly Accredited Visitor Information Centres once Accreditation has been granted. (No application fee is involved).

## **COMPLETING AN APPLICATION**

Aurora recommends the following step-by-step approach:

1. Familiarise yourself with all documents in the AVIC Manual.
2. Complete an initial review of the Accreditation Criteria and decide which level you wish to apply for.
3. Develop / review your Business Plan and Marketing Plan.
4. Develop / review your Operations Manual.
5. Develop your approach to the professional development of staff.
6. Complete the self-assessment Accreditation Criteria checklist.
7. Complete the Application Form.
8. Gather supporting information including current Public Liability Insurance cover note.
9. Complete and submit the application checklist with your application.
10. Return the completed application to,

**Aurora Research & Development  
AVIC Network Secretariat  
PO Box 1000  
DUBBO NSW 2830**

**It is strongly recommended that prospective applicants consult with the Aurora for assistance in the preparation of their application.**

## **SPECIAL NOTES ON COMPLETING AN APPLICATION**

### **WHY DOES EVERYTHING HAVE TO BE IN WRITING?**

Documenting Business Plans and operational procedures is essential for businesses of all sizes, from sole person businesses to large companies. The benefits include:

- If a key staff member (eg. the Centre Manager) is suddenly absent from the AVIC, the documented policies support continuance of the AVIC.
- Documented actions are more likely to be completed.
- Helps shape thoughts and leads to new ideas.
- Allows AVIC staff to share knowledge with current and new staff.
- Provides a record of the AVIC's business direction and goals (which particularly assists when applying for funding).
- Represents minimum formal planning required for future success.
- Provides a foundation for review and allows improvement plans and ideas to become reality.
- Allows AVIC management to easily identify gaps in the AVIC's planning and overcome them.

## **LINKAGE BETWEEN OPERATIONS MANUAL AND ACCREDITATION CRITERIA**

The Model Operations Manual provides a framework for applicants to operate in accordance with the Accreditation Program.

Notes and examples in the Model Operations Manual support and further explain many of the Accreditation criteria. Development or review of your own Operations Manual using the Model should

enable you to meet all those criteria and have this clearly documented. For this reason, it is recommended that you complete your Operations Manual prior to completing your self-assessment.

## CONDITIONAL ACCREDITATION

In some instances applicants may not be able to fully meet the Accreditation Criteria. The Action Plan should be completed in this case. Conditional Accreditation may be granted to an AVIC that does not yet fully comply with the Accreditation Criteria but undertakes to do so within a six-month period. For example, an AVIC may not have completed its Business Plan and evidence of compliance will be requested by the AVIC Network Secretariat (Aurora).

## ENDORSEMENT REQUIREMENTS FOR LEVEL 3 APPLICANTS

These applicants are required to meet a limited set of criteria (those shaded gold in the criteria table). Level 3 applicants are required to gain the endorsement of a Level 1 AVIC, Level 2 AVIC or the local Council where no Level 1 or 2 AVIC exists.

The self-assessment process for Level 3 applicants must be conducted in consultation with a Level 1 or Level 2 AVIC in the area or by the local Council where no Level 1 or 2 AVIC exists. Level 3 applicants must have their application co-signed by the Level 1 or 2 AVIC or Local Council representative consulted.

## ASSESSMENT OF APPLICATIONS

Once your self-assessed application is submitted, Aurora, in consultation with the Accreditation Sub Committee will:

- Complete a desktop review of all documentation submitted.
- Grant Accreditation in situations where all criteria have been met.
- Liaise with the applicant to obtain any extra documentation required to fully consider the application.
- Consider conditional Accreditation for those applicants who do not meet all criteria but have submitted an Action Plan.
- Elect not to grant Accreditation and provide advice on matters to be addressed.

The Accreditation Sub Committee is appointed by the Industry Reference Group (IRG).

## REFUSAL OR CANCELLATION OF ACCREDITATION

The Accreditation Sub Committee has the right to refuse an application for Accreditation or cancel the Accreditation of an AVIC if it is not operating in accordance with the Accreditation Criteria. **Refusal** action could result from an applicant's inability to meet a number of Accreditation Criteria.

**Cancellation** action could result from:

1. An AVIC's inability to maintain Accreditation standards.
2. The receipt of a complaint about the AVIC, which has been investigated by the Accreditation Sub Committee and found to demonstrate a breach of the Accreditation Criteria.
3. Un-notified change of business ownership of the AVIC. The Accreditation Sub Committee must be notified in writing should the management or ownership of the AVIC change at any time.
4. Non-payment of Accreditation Fees. *Where an AVIC does not pay their Accreditation Fee within 30 days, a Reminder Notice and copy Invoice will be issued for payment within 7 days. Where no payment is received within the timeframe the AVIC will be given notice to remove the accredited 'i' signage within 30 days of the written notice, cancelling the Centre's Accreditation. The respective AVIC will no longer be part of the AVIC Network*

If an AVIC's Accreditation is cancelled it will no longer be able to:

- display the accredited "i" sign at the Centre.
- include the accredited "i" sign on Centre stationery, brochures, etc.
- be included in networking functions.
- be included on the marketing and promotional activities and opportunities.
- participate in other Accreditation benefit schemes.

## **RIGHT OF APPEAL**

An Appeals Board has been established to act as an independent arbitrator on appeal matters. The Appeals Board is responsible for considering appeals from those applicants whose Accreditation has been refused or cancelled.

Request for a review of any decision should be made in writing to Aurora within one month of receipt of notification of refusal or cancellation.

An applicant making a request to the Appeals Board to reconsider a notice of cancellation or refusal should provide as much material as possible to support their case.

## **RANDOM AUDIT**

To ensure the integrity of the Accreditation Program, spot audits will be conducted each year. Approximately 10% of applicants will be subject to audit each year. The audit process will examine compliance with the Accreditation criteria, including examination of the AVIC's Operations Manual, Business Plan and progress with the Professional Development Program.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

All information supplied by your AVIC will be treated as strictly confidential and will only be reviewed as part of the New South Wales Accredited Visitor Information Network Assessment verification process.





## New South Wales Visitor Centre ACCREDITATION APPLICATION FORM



*... will take you there!*

## APPLICATION CHECKLIST

# COVER SHEET

*Please tick whichever applies*

- Accreditation Re-Application  
 New Accreditation Application

For:

**Visitor Centre**

***Please ensure that the following documentation is included with your application.***

- |  |                          |
|--|--------------------------|
| Applicant Details and Declaration  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Self-Assessment Checklist / Accreditation Criteria   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Certificate of Incorporation   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Public Liability Insurance Certification   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Professional Indemnity Insurance Certification   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Proof of Ownership Documents (where applicable)  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Relevant Operating Licences (eg. Travel Agent Licence if required)   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Action Plan (only required where applicant does not meet all criteria<br>- include supporting documentation where appropriate) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Digital Images of Centre / proposed Centre including parking facilities, etc.  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Signage and Location Diagram (map)   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Copy of this Checklist on the front of your Application  | <input type="checkbox"/> |

**POST TO**  
**Aurora Research**  
**P O Box 1000**  
**DUBBO NSW 2830**

**Or EMAIL [lyn@auroraresearch.com.au](mailto:lyn@auroraresearch.com.au)**

## APPLICANT DETAILS AND DECLARATION

Please complete one Application per Centre

Name of proposed Visitor Information Centre:

Registered Business Name:

Business Commencement Date:

Australian Company Number (ACN):

Australian Business Number (ABN):

Local Government Area:

Contact Name at Visitor Information Centre:

Street Address of Visitor Information Centre:

Postal Address of Visitor Information Centre:

Post Code:

Phone Number of Visitor Information Centre:

Toll Free Phone Number:

Fax Number of Visitor Information Centre:

E-mail Address:

Website address:

Contact person for Accreditation related issues:

Position:

Organisation:

Address (if different from Visitor Information Centre):

Phone Number (if different from Visitor Information Centre):

E-mail Address (if different from Visitor Information Centre):

Please provide your Travel Agents Licence No (if applicable):.

**You must provide the following documents / certification with your application:**

- Public Liability Insurance (Minimum of \$5 million which includes volunteers)
- Professional Indemnity Insurance (which includes volunteers) (where applicable)
- Certificate of Incorporation (where applicable)
- Proof of Ownership Documentation (where applicable)
- Relevant Operating Licences (eg. Travel Agent Licence if required)

The ..... (name of Visitor Information Centre) has completed the Accreditation self-assessment process and applies for Level: (Please tick).

- Level 1                       Level 2                       Level 3

**DECLARATION FOR LEVEL 1 AND 2 APPLICANT**

I declare that the information we have provided in this Accreditation Application is true and correct. I agree to operate the Accredited Visitor Information Centre in accordance with the relevant Accreditation Criteria, adhere to the Code of Ethics and Truth in Advertising requirement, and will advise the AVIC Network Secretariat (Aurora) of any change of ownership. I agree to supply any additional information that may be required by Aurora to support this Application. I am authorised by my organisation to sign this document. (note – all applicants require Council sign off below)

Signature: .....

Name: .....

Position: .....

Date: ..... Contact Phone No:.....:

**DECLARATION FOR LEVEL 3 APPLICANT**

I declare that the information we have provided in this Accreditation Application is true and correct. I agree to operate the Accredited Visitor Information Centre in accordance with the relevant Accreditation Criteria, adhere to the Code of Ethics and Truth in Advertising requirement, and advise the AVIC Network Secretariat (Aurora) of any change of ownership. I have liaised with the appropriate Tourism Manager/Local Council in my area and I agree to operate the AVIC in a professional manner that does not adversely impact on the Accreditation of the Level 1, Level 2 AVIC or local Council endorsing my Application. I agree to supply any additional information that may be required by Aurora to support this Application. I am authorised by my organisation to sign this document. (note – all applicants require Council sign off below)

Signature: .....

Name: .....

Position: .....

Date: ..... Contact Phone No:.....:

**LOCAL COUNCIL ENDORSING APPLICATION:**

I have been consulted during the applicant’s self-assessment process and I support the application. (I also believe the applicant meets all appropriate Accreditation Criteria).

Name of Endorsing Entity: .....

Signature: .....

Name: .....

Position: .....Contact Phone No:.....:

## LEVEL 3 POLICY

This Policy was endorsed by the Industry Reference Group on 23 September 2003

1. Any Accreditation of Level 3s must be endorsed by a Level 1/2/or Local Government Representative.
2. Accreditation (standards/auditing) for Level 3 AVICs must be **actively managed** by the sponsoring Level 1/2/LGA.
3. Accreditation is not to be given to Level 3 AVICs, which duplicates services of existing Level 1/2.
4. Level 3s must provide complementary services to existing Level 1/2.
5. Level 1/2 must take account of Level 3 location on the local road network, particularly with regard to travel patterns of visitors and whether the Level 3 will divert visitation from the sponsoring Level 1/2.
6. Level 1/2/Local Government representative must sight the business plan and operations manual of the Level 3 applicant prior to endorsement.
7. Level 1/2/LGAs must maintain constant (minimum of 2 visits per month) contact with the Accredited Level 3 to ensure that the brand is not diluted and the management of the Level 3 AVIC is in line with the mission of the AVIC Network and the sponsoring Level 1/2/LGA. Level 1/2 will supply brochures to Level 3s as required.
8. Level 3 Accreditation is not transferable to any new business owner and if Accreditation for such Level 3 is not renewed, all signage must be taken down.
9. Level 1/2 Accredited Visitor Information Centres will be required to audit their sponsored Level 3
10. The IRG (Industry Reference Group) reserves the right to reject any Level 3 applications should there be any concerns regarding the level of customer information services.

## SELF- ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST / ACCREDITATION CRITERIA

This checklist provides details of the Accreditation Criteria that applicants need to satisfy to become an Accredited Visitor Information Centre.

**Level 1 and Level 2 applicants must meet all criteria (select either criteria 6.1 or 6.2 relating to opening hours depending on whether the Application is for Level 1 or Level 2).**

**Shaded criteria applies to all levels, where shaded criteria relates only to a Level 3 AVIC, then Level 1 and Level 2 AVICs have a monitoring role.**

**Level 3 applicants need only meet the criteria that are shaded in the checklist.**

Please indicate (by a tick) in the right hand column whether or not the applicant meets the criteria. In order to determine, if you satisfy the criteria, you should ask yourself the following questions for each criteria:

- Does my Centre currently ..... ?
- Does my Centre agree to ..... ?

If an applicant does not yet meet any particular criteria, please provide details of proposed actions using the attached Action Plan on page 21.

## SELF-ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST / ACCREDITATION CRITERIA

PLEASE COMPLETE ALL CRITERIA. CLEARLY MARK WITH A TICK WHERE APPROPRIATE		Meet Criteria	
		Yes	No
<b>1 Operational Protocol</b>			
<b>1.1</b>	Operate in accordance with a Strategic Business Plan that includes the following or similar elements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Executive Summary</li> <li>• Vision / Mission Statement</li> <li>• Background</li> <li>• Brief Description of Products / Services</li> <li>• Situation Analysis</li> <li>• Objectives</li> <li>• Marketing Plan</li> <li>• Human Resources Plan</li> <li>• Operational Plan</li> <li>• Budget / Financial Plan</li> <li>• Evaluation Mechanisms</li> </ul>		
<b>1.2</b>	Operate in accordance with an Operations Manual that includes the minimums set down in the Model Operations Manual.		
<b>1.3</b>	Operate within the protocols set up by sponsoring Level 1 or Level 2 AVIC or the local Council in the case where no Level 1 or Level 2 AVIC exists.		
<b>2 Networking and Cooperation</b>			
<b>2.1</b>	Liaise with appropriate organisations to manage the integration of visitor information sources within the local area.		
<b>2.2</b>	Liaise with Level 3 applicant in the local area to assist them in meeting the Level 3 Accreditation Criteria.		
<b>2.3</b>	Operate within the guidelines set by the sponsoring Level 1 or 2 AVIC or the local Council in the case where no Level 1 or Level 2 AVIC exists.		
<b>3 Image</b>			
<b>3.1</b>	Include the words 'Visitor' and 'Centre' in the name of the Centre. Additional words may be added where appropriate. The word 'Information' in the name of the Centre is desirable but optional, but it must be used telephone directory listings.		

3.2	<p>Comply with the signage requirements for Accreditation including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identification of AVIC with the accredited 'i' sign both on the building and in the grounds in an unobstructed position on the exterior of the building or on a fixture dedicated for the purpose close by.</li> <li>• Erection of advance direction accredited 'i' signs on both approaches to the AVIC on the nearest state or regional road or roads. Reassurance 'i' signs on local approach roads to be installed to guide motorist directly to the centre. (<b>Level 3 AVICs</b> located on a state or regional road to display 'i' signs signposting <b>only in the Centre's grounds and not in the road reserve</b>. Where the centre is located on a local road, to display advance direction accredited 'i' signs in the road reserve on the approach roads. In each case approval must be obtained from the sponsoring Centre/Council.)</li> <li>• Use of stationery featuring the AVIC 'i' sign. (Level 3 AVICs to use stationery clearly stating that it is a satellite Centre of its sponsoring AVIC or Council).</li> </ul> <p><b>Note:</b> Include the words 'Visitor' and 'Centre' in the name. The word 'Information' is optional.</p>		
3.3	Display notices at transport interchanges showing location of AVIC, hours of operation and services provided.		
3.4	Develop and implement procedures to monitor visitor information where it is provided outside of the AVIC to ensure accuracy and currency.		
<b>4 State Tourism Data Warehouse (STDW) – Get Connected</b>			
4.1	Operate STDW, maintain current and accurate information on system.		
<b>5 Research</b>			
5.1	Participate in AVIC endorsed research programs including collection of AVIC Visitor Data and Customer Satisfaction as required by the Accreditation Program.		
<b>6 Hours of Operation</b>			
6.1	<p>Open for at least 363 days per year for a minimum of 56 hours per week.</p> <p>This criteria applies to Level 1 AVICs only.</p>		
6.2	<p>Open for at least 363 days per year for a minimum of 43 hours per week.</p> <p>This criteria applies to Level 2 AVICs only.</p>		
6.3	<p>Open for at least 5 days per week including weekends for a minimum of 7 hours per day.</p> <p>This criteria applies to Level 3 AVICs only.</p>		
6.4	24hr access to information/display details of after-hours services, including accommodation, attractions, emergency help services, together with a local map in an appropriate location when the AVIC is closed.		

<b>7 Services Offered</b>			
7.1	Display a map of the area within two hours driving radius.		
7.2	Maintain information on coming events. Level 3 applicants to display information on coming events as supplied by sponsoring Level 1 or Level 2 AVIC or with the local Council in the case where no Level or Level 2 AVIC exists.		
7.3	<p>Maintain and provide information on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accommodation</li> <li>• Attractions</li> <li>• Dining</li> <li>• Other visitor amenities, including facilities capable of handling people with disabilities.</li> </ul> <p>Level 3 applicant to display information as agreed with the sponsoring Level 1 or 2 AVIC or with the local Council in the case where no Level 1 or 2 AVIC exists.</p>		
<b>8 Visitor and Operator Enquiries</b>			
8.1	Provide impartial and objective information as required by the Code of Ethics.		
8.2	Maintain a compliments and complaints management system.		
8.3	Develop and adhere to policies relating to customer response times to be noted in Operations Manual.		
8.4	Provide local, regional and Statewide information in response to visitor enquiries.		
<b>9 Accommodation and Other Service Referrals</b>			
9.1	Maintain an accommodation and other services register.		
<b>10 Booking Conditions (if applicable)</b>			
10.1	Hold appropriate licences to operate reservations system (if applicable).		
10.2	Document booking procedures (if applicable).		
10.3	Maintain a peak period accommodation vacancy register system. Level 3 applicant only need to display after hours contact for the accommodation vacancy register.		
<b>11 Merchandise</b>			
11.1	Document and implement merchandising policies and procedures. (Level 3 AVIC-related merchandise only).		
<b>12 AVIC Services to Operators</b>			
12.1	Document services provided by the AVIC to local operators and other organisations.		
<b>13 Brochure Management</b>			
13.1	Display and / or carry brochures from all local operators who meet local quality standards. (Where Membership applies it is understood only members' brochures will be displayed). Level 3 AVICs to display brochures in accordance with guidelines set down by the sponsoring Level 1 or 2 AVIC or the local Council where no Level 1 or Level 2 AVIC exists.		



13.2	Document and implement a brochure management system that includes policies and procedures for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acceptance of brochures</li> <li>• Display</li> <li>• Distribution</li> <li>• Supply (at AVIC and other outlets)</li> <li>• Removal of out-of-date brochures</li> </ul>		
13.3	Display and / or carry regional / Statewide information brochures according to customer demand and space availability. Where space or other limitations apply, alert customers to availability of regional / Statewide information within the AVIC through use of appropriate signage.		
<b>14 Support Material</b>			
14.1	Maintain or have access to material such as videos and photographic libraries to support the operations of the AVIC.		
<b>15 Staffing</b>			
15.1	Employ a minimum of one permanent staff member with at least one year's experience as a Tourism Officer / AVIC Manager, a minimum of one year's relevant management experience or a relevant tourism management, general management qualification or general management or tourism related degree.		
15.2	Develop and implement an Induction Program for all new staff including Customer Service and ongoing training.		
15.3	Comply with the requirements of the Professional Development Program.		
15.4	Maintain a formalised system of ongoing local product familiarisation. Level 3 applicant to consult with their sponsoring Level 1 or Level 2 AVIC or the local Council where no Level 1 or Level 2 AVIC exists.		
15.5	Maintain dress standards, in keeping with local requirements.		
15.6	Ensure all customer service staff wear name badges.		
15.7	Document and implement policies and procedures for human resource management including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff recruitment</li> <li>• Job descriptions, roles and responsibilities</li> <li>• Staff rostering</li> <li>• Maintenance of personal records</li> <li>• Performance management</li> </ul>		
<b>16 Code of Ethics</b>			
16.1	Observe a Code of Ethics that reflects the values of the Accreditation Program		
<b>17 Premises</b>			

17.1	Locate AVIC on the main approach to a town or city, or in a prime position.		
17.2	Occupy shared premises with a compatible business or organisation.		
17.3	Obtain relevant Local Government approvals.		
17.4	Maintain AVIC grounds and premises.		
17.5	Provide adequate disabled access and facilities, as set out in Australian Standard 1428.1. <i>Existing buildings may be exempted, but new buildings to comply.</i>		
17.6	Provide adequate parking facilities, either at the AVIC or in the near vicinity.		
17.7	Provide adequate coach parking and car and caravan facilities that comply with Local Government requirements, either at the AVIC or in the near vicinity.		
17.8	Provide staff facilities that comply with Local Government /industrial relations requirements.		
17.9	Provide adequate brochure and storage facilities to ensure presentation and OH&S standards.(Level 3 highly desirable)		
17.10	Provide an information / enquiry counter. (Level 3 highly desirable)		
17.11	Provide accessible public / staff toilets or access to same in close proximity. (Level 3 highly desirable)		
17.12	Hold relevant Local Government and RTA approval for signage.		
<b>18 Telecommunications</b>			
18.1	Operate telephone systems capable of handling the demands on the AVIC. (Level 3 including fax or email)		
18.2	Operate other telecommunications systems capable of handling the demands on the AVIC including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• After hours telephone answering system</li> <li>• Facsimile</li> <li>• Email</li> <li>• Internet</li> </ul>		
<b>19 Occupational Health and Safety</b>			
19.1	Document, communicate and implement Policies and Procedures for Occupational Health, Safety and Security in accordance with relevant legislation and to include as a minimum: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Risk Management Plan</li> <li>• Roles and Responsibilities of Employer / Employees</li> <li>• Information on Safe Working Practices / Procedures</li> <li>• Emergency / Evacuation Procedures</li> <li>• Incident / Accident Procedures including Log Book</li> <li>• First Aid Kit</li> </ul>		
<b>20 Insurance</b>			

<b>20.1</b>	Hold Public Liability Insurance (must include volunteers) for a minimum of \$5 million.		
<b>20.2</b>	Hold Professional Indemnity Insurance that includes volunteers.		
<b>21 Financial Management</b>			
<b>21.1</b>	Accept credit cards, except where precluded by Council policy, when average merchandise sales exceed \$10.00.		
<b>21.2</b>	Document and implement financial management systems for AVIC operations including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cash handling procedures</li> <li>• Credit card procedures</li> <li>• Details of bank accounts and credit card facilities</li> <li>• Merchandise sales</li> <li>• General bookkeeping processes and systems</li> <li>• Accounts payable</li> <li>• Invoicing</li> <li>• Banking</li> </ul>		
<b>21.3</b>	Provide EFTPOS facilities if applicable.		
<b>22 Asset Management/Equipment Maintenance</b>			
<b>22.1</b>	Maintain an equipment maintenance schedule and a register of all AVIC assets.		
<b>23 Environmental Protection</b>			
<b>23.1</b>	Document policies and practices for sustainable environmental protection.		

**ACTION PLAN**

Should your Application not meet all the Accreditation Criteria outlined in the self-assessment checklist please provide details of the steps you are taking to meet the criteria and provide any other supporting documentation you may have.

**Note: A maximum of six months is allowed for finalisation of action proposed.**

Criteria Number	How is Criteria Not Met?	Why is Criteria Not Met ?	Proposed Action	Deadline