



REGIONAL
TOURISM
AWARDS



Australian
Tourism Awards

14.SELF CONTAINED ACCOMMODATION

CATEGORY QUESTIONS

2025 AWARDS. VERSION 1.1

SELF CONTAINED ACCOMMODATION

DESCRIPTOR

This category recognises tourism excellence in accommodation providing guests with non-serviced accommodation and the freedom of self-sufficiency. The focus of this award is on both the facilities and services that enhance the tourism experience.

This category is open to accommodation that offers a self-catered accommodation experience and meets a 3-5 Self Catering Accommodation Star Rating Standard.

For companies that are managing multiple self-contained properties they should focus on one of their properties.

WORD COUNT

Word Count: maximum of 5000 words

NOTE: Word count will change to minimum 4,000 words and maximum 7,500 words for NSW Tourism Awards

IMAGE COUNT

Maximum 30 images.

SCORE SUMMARY

Submission Score	60 points
Digital Review Score	20 points
TOTAL	80 points

NOTE: Consumer Review Score (GRI) will be calculated and added for the NSW Tourism Awards entry (20 points) to create Total Score /100

SUBMISSION SCORE BREAKDOWN

SECTION 1. OVERVIEW OF BUSINESS	5 POINTS
• Question 1.1	(5 points)
• Statement of Achievement	(0 points)
SECTION 2. EXCELLENCE IN BUSINESS & PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT	10 POINTS
• Question 2.1	(10 points)
SECTION 3. EXCELLENCE IN MARKETING	15 POINTS
• Question 3.1	(5 points)
• Question 3.2.	(10 points)

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SECTION 4. EXCELLENCE IN CUSTOMER SERVICE

- Question 4.1
- Question 4.2

15 POINTS

(10 points)

(5 points)

SECTION 5. EXCELLENCE IN SUSTAINABLE & RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS

- Responsible Tourism and Sustainability Achievements.
- Question 5.1

15 POINTS

(5 points)

(10 points)

SECTION 6. FINAL REMARKS

- Final Remarks

SUMMARY OF QUESTIONS

SECTION 1. OVERVIEW OF BUSINESS

- Question 1.1 A. Provide an overview of the business.
 B. Provide visual evidence to support your answer.

Statement of Achievement

SECTION 2. EXCELLENCE IN BUSINESS & PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

- Question 2.1 A. What improvements have been made to develop business operations and/or the product offering during the qualifying period?
 B. Provide visual evidence to support your answer.

SECTION 3. EXCELLENCE IN MARKETING

- Question 3.1 A. Provide an overview of the business's target market.
 B. Provide visual evidence to support your answer.
- Question 3.2 A. Provide 1-2 examples of marketing strategies the business implemented during the qualifying period, along with their outcomes.
 B. Provide visual evidence to support your answer.

SECTION 4. EXCELLENCE IN CUSTOMER SERVICE

- Question 4.1 A. What initiatives has the business put in place during the qualifying period to deliver excellent customer service throughout the visitor journey
 B. Provide visual evidence to support your answer.
- Question 4.2 A. How has the business made improvements to be more inclusive throughout the qualifying period?
 B. Provide visual evidence to support your answer.

SECTION 5. EXCELLENCE IN SUSTAINABLE & RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS

- Question 5.1 A. What efforts have been made in the qualifying period towards responsible and sustainable business practices?
B. Provide visual evidence to support your answer.

SECTION 6. FINAL REMARKS

Final Remarks

RESPONSE GUIDE

SECTION 1. OVERVIEW OF BUSINESS

5 POINTS

Question 1.1

5 points

Question 1.1.A Provide an overview of the business.

(text box response)

Response Guidance

Provide a clear and concise description of the business and the product/service/visitor experience it provides.

Include the vision and the values of the business to help set the scene for later questions.

Assume the judge has no prior knowledge of the business so take them on a journey of how and when it began, where the business is located or where the services are provided, who works in the business etc.

Highlight the business's points of difference and what makes it stand out from others. Consider the amenities, products, services, or facilities that enhance visitor satisfaction.

Clearly demonstrate your eligibility by aligning with the category criteria to ensure that there is no misunderstanding as to why you have entered this category. The judges (and auditors) need to understand how the business fits into the category; therefore, be sure to include a clear explanation.

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The judges may not be familiar with the business – your submission may be judged nationally and could have judges that are not from your state/territory. Therefore, explain everything from the ground up.

Question 1.1.B Provide visual evidence to support your answer.

File Name	Description of Evidence (up to 10 words)	Evidence Attachment
		Attachment
		Attachment
		Attachment

Response Guidance

This is where you can include images to support your answer in Q1.1.A.

Examples of the type of evidence you can include are:

- *Images of staff, services, experiences, buildings, room types etc.*
- *Map of location of business, route etc.*

This is an opportunity to show each of the products or services that are on offer.

Do not include any documents (plans, procedures, policies etc.).

Statement of Achievement

0 points

Automatic Listing of Quality Tourism programs the business has completed/renewed in the qualifying period.

- Quality Tourism Accreditation
- Sustainable Tourism Accredited
- Marine Tourism Accredited
- Camp and Adventure Activity Accredited
- International Ready Accredited
- EcoStar Accredited
- Accessible Tourism Program
- Accessible Tourism Accredited
- Tourism Emissions Reduction Commitment Program (minimum of Level 3)
- Star Ratings
- Online Trade Distribution

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- International Trade Distribution
- Risk Management Tool
- Business Continuity Tool

If any of these programs are completed prior to the end of the qualifying period this will be reflected in your Statement of Achievement.

SECTION 2. EXCELLENCE IN BUSINESS & PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT 10 POINTS

Question 2.1 10 points

Question 2.1.A What improvements have been made to develop business operations and/or the product offering during the qualifying period?

Provide a short overview of the business's approach towards developing its business operations and/or product offering.

EXAMPLE

Improvement 1:

What specific improvements has the business implemented in its operations and/or the product offering during the qualifying period? Keep this response to one sentence, providing a basic introduction only.

Describe the Improvement:

Provide further detail on the improvement.

Rationale:

What were the reasons for implementing this improvement?

Specific Goals:

What specific goals did the business aim to achieve with this improvement?

Outcomes:

What were the measurable results of these changes?

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Response Guidance

Provide 1-2 examples.

The response to this question can include examples relating to:

- *Business operations*
- *Product development*

(?) Business Operations

"Business operations" generally refers to the day-to-day activities involved in running a business. This can include but is not limited to managing resources, processes, and people to achieve organisational goals.

Some examples of improvements include;

- *Operations (inventory management, compliance and safety, risk management, trade distribution etc.)*
- *Finance (systems, investment, pricing strategy etc.)*
- *Human resources (training, reward, recognition, professional development, attracting staff etc.)*
- *Business capability or learning initiatives (e.g. completion of Quality Tourism programs including risk management, online distribution etc.)*

(?) Product Development

"Product offering" generally refers to the products, services and experiences a company offers its customers.

Some examples of improvements include;

- *Technology (developed a mobile app to improve the experience, introduced AI chatbots to assist in visitor enquiries etc.)*
- *Product packaging (value added to the experience with other local products/experiences etc.)*
- *Facilities (upgraded or introduced new facilities e.g. pool, vehicle, tasting room etc.)*
- *Experiences (upgraded or introduced new experiences e.g. tour, gastronomic tasting session, wine tasting, meet the keeper, spa/wellbeing etc.)*

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Note: this is not a complete list but does provide some examples for consideration.

(?) Rationale

Provide the judge with a clear understanding why the improvement was made.

Some examples on the rationale for the improvement could be:

- *Business Operations*
 - *Reduce business expenses*
 - *Streamline processes*
 - *Other strategic objectives*
- *Product Development*
 - *Driven by feedback*
 - *Reaching new markets*
 - *Advancing technologies*
 - *Other strategic objectives*

Note: this is not a complete list but does provide some examples for consideration.

Consider how the improvement aligns with the vision or values of the business as identified in Q1.

(?) Specific Goals

Provide the judge with the specific goals that the business aimed to achieve with the improvement.

Some examples of specific goals could be:

- *Reduce manual effort by 15%*
- *Improve workflow efficiency by 30%.*

(?) Outcomes

What were the measurable results of these changes?

Provide measurable results that demonstrate to the judge the outcomes of the improvement.

Consider what learnings were made during this process, particularly if intended outcomes were not achieved.

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Question 2.1.B Provide visual evidence to support your answer.

File Name	Description of Evidence (up to 10 words)	Evidence Attachment
		<i>Attachment</i>
		<i>Attachment</i>
		<i>Attachment</i>

Response Guide

Provide evidence to support your response. For example:

- *An image of the improvement*
- *A testimonial demonstrating the outcome (NOTE: the main content of the testimonial must appear in the written response)*
- *Before and after images of works*
- *An infographic e.g. graph, demonstrating the outcomes.*

SECTION 3. EXCELLENCE IN MARKETING

15 POINTS

Question 3.1

5 points

3.1.A Provide an overview of the business's target markets.

Provide a brief introduction to the business's target markets and how the top market was identified.

EXAMPLE

Name of Target Market: -----	
What stage is the target market in for the business? <i>Identify if this is Primary Market, Secondary Market, Growth Market or Emerging Market.</i>	(tick box)
Target market characteristics <i>Describe the target market i.e. who are they, where are they from, age, behaviours and motivations.</i>	
How does the business meet the expectations of this target market? <i>Demonstrate how you have tailored the business to the target market.</i>	
What research have you undertaken to confirm this target market is right for the business? <i>Describe the research or analysis undertaken to determine that this target market and their characteristics are suitable to the business.</i>	

Response Guidance

Provide details of your top target market.

*A **target market** is a specific group of potential customers that a business directs its marketing efforts and products towards.*

Identify the various characteristics such as demographics, psychographics, geographic location, and buying behaviour of the selected target market.

Demonstrate how the business tailors its products/service/visitor experience to effectively reach and engage the target market.

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(?) **Target Market Characteristics**

For the target market characteristics, consider the following:

- **Geographic – Where they are:** Where the people live or visit
- **Demographic – Who they are:** Their age, family size, income, or lifestyle, such as families, retirees, or holidaymakers.
- **Psychographic – What they care about:** What they enjoy, believe in, or value, like being active, spending time outdoors, or supporting local businesses.
- **Behavioural – What they do, how they act:** e.g. like hiring bikes, exploring the area, or looking for fun activities.
- **Motivations – What drives them, why they do things:** e.g. like wanting to have family adventures, stay healthy, or trying something new.

(?) **Meeting the expectations of a target market**

Demonstrate the business's understanding of the target market's needs, preferences, and behaviours, and how the business has tailored its products, services or experiences to meet these needs.

(?) **Research**

Outline how the business has determined that this target market is suitable for the business. What research was undertaken, and what was concluded from this research.

3.1.B Provide visual evidence to support your answer.

File Name	Description of Evidence (up to 10 words)	Evidence Attachment
		Attachment
		Attachment
		Attachment

Response Guide

Provide evidence to support your response. For example:

- An image of the target market
- An infographic e.g. graph demonstrating the market characteristics

Question 3.2. **10 points**

Question 3.2.A Provide 1-2 examples of marketing strategies the business implemented during the qualifying period, along with their outcomes.

Provide a short overview of the business approach towards developing its marketing strategies.

EXAMPLE

Marketing Strategy 1:
What was the marketing strategy? E.g. was it a campaign, an exhibition, an event, a partnership, or other marketing initiative?

Objective:	<i>Provide quantifiable objectives for the strategy.</i>
Target Market:	<i>As per market identified in Q3.1</i>
Concept:	<i>Provide greater detail of the strategy.</i>
Rationale and Research:	<i>Describe the research and analysis undertaken to determine that this strategy will achieve the objectives and reach the intended target market.</i>
Activity/Tactics:	<i>Describe the activities or tactics used in the strategy.</i>
How does this strategy align with local, regional or state destination/marketing plans?	<i>Detail how the local, regional or state destination/marketing plans were considered in the development of the strategy.</i>
What were the outcomes	<i>E.g. an increase to website traffic by 21% which generated an increase in online bookings by 30%</i>

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Response Guidance

Provide 1-2 examples.

It is recommended that you include examples that differ to any of the improvements you have included in Q2.1.

(?) Objectives

Provide details on the business's marketing objective.

Objectives or goals can include, but are not limited to:

- Improve brand awareness*
- Increase sales*
- Higher number of leads*
- Attract new customers*
- Improve customer retention*
- Increase online engagement*
- Expand into new markets*
- Optimise ROI*
- Highlight new features/experiences*

Be sure to provide some quantifiable objectives e.g. increase leads from website by 10%.

(?) Target Market

Be sure to align this to the top market identified in Q3.1.

(?) Concept

This is where you can provide an overview of the strategy outlining its key highlights.

For example:

- A digital campaign to highlight the unique selling proposition of the business*
- A PR campaign to highlight how the business fulfils specific visitor needs*
- Improved website content to create an emotional connection with visitors*
- Targeted email campaign conveying key business ethics/commitments e.g. sustainability or accessibility*
- Social campaign demonstrating how the business aligns with target markets values, preferences etc.*

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(?) Rationale

Why did the business execute this strategy?

And what research was used to support the development of this strategy, e.g. visitor feedback, ticket sales, digital analytics etc.

(?) Activity/Tactics

Describe the activities or tactics used in the strategy

Different channels can include, but are not limited to:

- *Digital Advertising*
- *Emails*
- *Events*
- *Influencer marketing*
- *Search Engine Optimisation*
- *Social Media*
- *Traditional Marketing*
- *Trade activities*

(?) Align with local, regional or state destination/marketing plans

Demonstrate how the activity aligns with local, regional or state destination/marketing plans.

(?) Outcomes

Provide measurable results that demonstrate to the judge the outcome of the strategies.

Consider what learnings were made during this process, particularly if intended outcomes were not achieved.

Be sure these results relate back to your specific objectives.

3.2.B Provide visual evidence to support your answer.

File Name	Description of Evidence (up to 10 words)	Evidence Attachment
		<i>Attachment</i>
		<i>Attachment</i>
		<i>Attachment</i>

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Response Guide

Provide visual evidence demonstrating the marketing activity.

Videos can be included, however do not produce a video for the specific purpose to respond to this question, it must have been produced as part of the activity.

Examples of images/video evidence can include:

- *Instagram Reel*
- *TikTok*
- *Video segment on TV*
- *TV Commercial*

SECTION 4. EXCELLENCE IN CUSTOMER SERVICE	15 POINTS
Question 4.1.	10 points
Question 4.1.A What initiatives has the business put in place during the qualifying period to deliver excellent customer service throughout the visitor journey?	

Provide a brief overview of the business's customer service philosophy.

EXAMPLE

Customer Service Initiative 1.	
Describe the initiative that enhances the business customer service:	
At what stage of the visitor journey does this impact? <i>(Pre, During, Post, All)</i>	(checkbox with multiple choice option)
What influenced the development of this initiative?	
What investment has been made in this aspect of the visitor experience?	
What outcomes have come from this initiative?	

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Response Guidance

Provide 1-2 examples.

Focus on the initiatives that have specifically related to customer service and provide examples that have not been included in question 2.1.

Ensure that you include activity that is new in the qualifying period.

This could include, but is not limited to:

- *Staff training and development*
- *Customer feedback and post-stay surveys*
- *Improved booking processes*
- *Improved service delivery Front of House*
- *Additional services e.g. bed turn down services*

(?) Describe the initiative

Consider the various touchpoints of visitor engagement and how these have been enhanced, specifically for the customer experience.

(?) Stage of the visitor journey

Specify at what point the initiative takes place within the visitor journey – pre, during, post or at all points.

(?) Influence of Initiative

Consider why the business focused on improving this specific customer experience.

This could be, but is not limited to examples such as:

- *Customer feedback*
- *Staff input*
- *Competitive landscape*
- *Data/survey insights*
- *Shift in customer demands or expectations*

(?) Investment

Consider all resources put towards the initiative. This could be financial, time investment in staff, technologies, supply chain etc.

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(?) Outcomes

Provide examples of what outcomes were achieved as a result of the initiative. For example, increased online ratings by XX%, return visitation etc.

You could include testimonials here to demonstrate an improved visitor experience.

4.1.B Provide visual evidence to support your answer.

File Name	Description of Evidence (up to 10 words)	Evidence Attachment
		Attachment
		Attachment
		Attachment

Response Guidance

This is where you can include images to support your answer in Q4.1.A

Examples of the type of evidence you could include are:

- Staff initiatives
- Customer initiatives in place
- A testimonial demonstrating the outcome (NOTE: the main content of the testimonial must appear in the written response)

Question 4.2.

5 points

Question 4.2.A How has the business made improvements to be more inclusive throughout the qualifying period?

(text box response)

- Has undertaken or updated an Accessibility Assessment e.g. through the Accessible Tourism Program on the QTF in the qualifying period.
- Has included an Accessible Guide on the business website.
 - o Please insert website page the guide is available on.

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Response Guidance

Demonstrate how the business has actively considered, and where able, met the needs of a diverse community. This could include:

- *Staff training*
- *Management and leadership*
- *Business policy making*
- *Improved/modified systems/operations/facilities*

Demonstrate how the business has analysed its target markets and identified any specific requirements that may need to be considered for these guests.

4.2.B Provide visual evidence to support your answer.

File Name	Description of Evidence (up to 10 words)	Evidence Attachment
		<i>Attachment</i>
		<i>Attachment</i>
		<i>Attachment</i>

Response Guidance

This is where you can include images to support your answer in Q4.2.A

Examples of the type of evidence you can include are:

- *Inclusive initiatives in place*
- *A testimonial demonstrating the outcome (NOTE: the main content of the testimonial must appear in the written response)*

SECTION 5. EXCELLENCE IN SUSTAINABLE & RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS PRACTICES 15 POINTS

Responsible Tourism and Sustainability Achievements. 5 points

- Sustainable Tourism Accreditation.
- Has undertaken an assessment of its emissions and identified measures to reduce and offset e.g. through the Tourism Emissions Reduction Program.
- Has undertaken an Accessibility Assessment e.g. through the Accessible Tourism Program on the QTF.
- Has included an Accessible Guide on the business website.
 - o Please insert website page the guide is available on

Question 5.1. 10 points

Question 5.1.A What efforts have been made in the qualifying period towards responsible and sustainable business practices?

Provide an overview of the business philosophy on responsible and sustainable tourism.

EXAMPLE

	Select the type of activity	(drop down list)
Cultural		
	Provide an example of how the business supports the engagement and representation of culture. <i>(E.g. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, heritage, religion.)</i>	What were the outcomes? <i>(E.g. increased employment opportunities for local indigenous community, greater visitor satisfaction in authentic storytelling.)</i>
Example 1.		

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Environmental		
	<p>Provide an example of how the business minimises its impact on the environment. <i>(E.g. water conservation, waste management/reduction/recycling, fuel and energy reduction, carbon reduction/offset, refuse initiatives, noise cancellation, wildlife destruction/interruption measures in place, participation in programs such as the Tourism Emissions Reduction Program.)</i></p>	<p>What were the outcomes? <i>(E.g. the amounts saved/reduced in comparison to the previous year (or multiple years if you have good records.)</i></p>
Example 1.		
Social/Community		
	<p>Provide an example of how the business contributes to or benefits the local community. <i>(E.g., supporting local businesses, product packaging, charitable donations, sponsorship, engagement with community groups, supporting local talent, school education and involvement, work experience, support of community fundraising.)</i></p>	<p>What were the outcomes? <i>(E.g. the number of local people employed, the number of groups supported etc.)</i></p>
Example 1.		
Economic		
	<p>Provide an example of how the business supports the local economy. <i>(E.g., local purchasing, creating job opportunities, promotion of local businesses, support of community funding initiatives, understanding of spend by the business customers to the region/community.)</i></p>	<p>What were the outcomes? <i>(E.g. 75% of all our expenses were spent in a particular region.)</i></p>

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Example 1.		
Ethical		
	Provide an example of how the business acts ethically throughout its development. (E.g., through animal welfare, restoration, procurement, inclusivity, human slavery etc.)	What were the outcomes? (E.g. The number of online reviews that have improved.)
Example 1.		

Response Guidance

Please provide 2 - 3 examples.

This is an opportunity to offer deeper insight into how the business is achieving excellence in both business operations and tourism.

Try to include examples that have not already been identified in previous answers.

Businesses are encouraged to provide a response across all areas. However, it is essential to focus on the business's strengths to effectively showcase their unique capabilities and achievements.

5.1.B Provide visual evidence to support your answer.

File Name	Description of Evidence (up to 10 words)	Evidence Attachment
		<i>Attachment</i>
		<i>Attachment</i>
		<i>Attachment</i>

Response Guidance

This is where you can include images to support your answer in Q5.1.A

Examples of the type of evidence you can include are:

- *Images of guest participation in cultural programs*
- *Visuals of signage, flyers etc. demonstrating cultural contribution*
- *Images of participation in volunteering activities, community events or other local economic initiatives*
- *Images of water stations, upcycled materials, zero-waste kitchens and other environmentally friendly initiatives*

SECTION 6. FINAL REMARKS

0 POINTS

In 100 words or less, provide any final remarks as to why the business should be considered as a winner in its chosen category.

(text box)

Response Guidance

Make this a personal response to close out the submission.