

Responsible Tourism Policy Version 1.2 – July 2024

Purpose

This policy outlines ARMC / WCWR commitment to responsible tourism and sustainable management practises.

Scope

This policy applies to all ARMC / WCWR business and business units.

Definitions

Employees

Refers to the permanent, fixed-term or casual employee appointed by ARMC / WCWR.

Workplace

Means WCWR workplaces include, but are not limited to, premises occupied (or partially occupied) by WCWR, employee accommodation, remote stations and home offices.

Policy Statement

- ARMC/WCWR is committed to sustainable tourism and the protection, preservation and environmental recovery of the West Coast habitat within which it operates.
- ARMC / WCWR is an anchor attraction and actively promotes visitation to, and economic opportunity for the West Coast region.
- ARMC/WCWR abides by and supports local conservation projects and policies for the continued evolution and protection of the surrounding environment and its inhabitants.
- ARMC/WCWR chooses to partner with companies and accommodation who share the same values.

Economic Responsibility

- ARMC / WCWR provides **local employment** opportunities and where possible employs locally / Tasmanians. ARMC / WCWR believes that using local people who are passionate about the area they live in and the activities available ensures a high quality of service and a real insight into the West Coast region, which is a valuable experience for ARMC / WCWR's passengers.
- ARMC / WCWR actively **promotes the region fully** and addresses known barriers to West Coast travel in its marketing to enhance economic return and drive visitation to the region.
- ARMC / WCWR prioritises **supports and encourages local business** through cross promotion onboard, at stations and through pre-arrival and other digital means.
- ARMC / WCWR maintains rail infrastructure and rolling stock and reports to the Office of the National Rail Safety Regulator (ONRSR) to ensure **accreditation**, ongoing viability and operation.
- Enhances the **travel trade's product knowledge of the West Coast region** through training, development and participation at qualified trade events.
- ARMC / WCWR **provides leadership to the local tourism association** and supports the overarching strategies of these organisations.
- ARMC / WCWR **pays all suppliers the appropriate market rate** to ensure they are fairly paid.
- ARMC / WCWR is committed to helping the West Coast be a better place to live, work and play.

Environmental Responsibility

- ARMC / WCWR business activities are assessed for their **environmental impact** and all possible steps are taken to reduce environmental harm.

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- ARMC / WCWR actively **manages the biodiversity and ecology of the railway corridor**. This includes managing declared weeds in an environmentally respectful manner, the use and interpretation of endemic plant species for passengers and protection of existing trees.
- ARMC / WCWR **sources local produce** from local, Tasmanian suppliers wherever possible.
- **Remote Stations are managed effectively** and to environmental best practise where practicable. This includes above ground buildings with the ability to collect rain water, on site water treatment of wastewater, the use of environmentally approved drop toilets and power generation through a combination of remote solar and hydro generation.
- ARMC / WCWR is committed to all forms of **waste reduction** and recycling, which includes separating traditional recycling (PETs etc), providing opportunities for staff and passengers to recycle on stations and in their workspaces, re-using heritage elements of railway for signage and interpretation and generating more sustainable food habits, including worm farms and composting.
- ARMC / WCWR **recognises the stories** of the region's local timbers and how this can be used to illustrate the power of human consumption. The timber used in ARMC / WCWR carriages is locally and sustainably sourced.
- ARMC / WCWR **provides appropriate training** for all on-train guides to ensure that they are able to speak to the environmental history of the region and discuss how the area is regenerating, highlighting the community, visitor and ARMC / WCWR's role within this.
- ARMC / WCWR readily **adopts innovative options** to reduce environmental impact.
- ARMC / WCWR has an ongoing relationship with the University of Tasmania's School of Natural Sciences (Earth Sciences) and facilitates **student access** to the mouth of the King River for learning and monitoring.

Social Responsibility

- ARMC / WCWR actively **engages students** and provides learning opportunities in preparation for rail, tourism and trade careers.
- ARMC / WCWR is a founding party of the **West Coast Pathways Program**, an annual program delivered in partnership with Mountain Heights School that aims to improve employability and school retention for year 10 students attending the local high school.
- ARMC / WCWR works closely with the local tourism and business associations, providing **leadership on social initiatives**.
- ARMC / WCWR supports and provide a source of **local events** for the local community that promotes the west coast way of life.
- ARMC / WCWR **maintains the heritage significance** of the railway, as this is important to the local community and their traditions and history.
- ARMC / WCWR supports **local accommodation operators** through provision of seasonal rates and exclusive offers.
- ARMC / WCWR is committed to generating a deeper understanding of the region's **indigenous history** and how to respectfully communicate this to its passengers.
- ARMC / WCWR provides a safe, memorable experience to a **diverse audience** culturally and across the accessibility spectrum.

Proactive Action

- In 2024 ARMC / WCWR will;
 - Develop an accessibility framework and deliver internal training (completed April 2024).

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- Re-introduce the use of recycled automotive oil onboard the Abt steam locomotives (completed May 2024).
- Complete restoration of Abt Locomotive No. 2 and return it to traffic, thereby increasing capacity and reliability, whilst strengthening the community's heritage connection to the region (completed May 2024).
- Review its use of single use plastics and engage action to reduce their use across the business (completed June 2024).
- Engage a new student cohort in the West Coast Partnership Program and participate in the regional workforce development expo. (approx. 300 paid hours)
- Continue rail infrastructure upgrades, with a focus to re-opening elements of the Abt rack and pinion railway to enhance visitor appeal and overall visitation.
- Actively engage the local tourism association via the marketing subcommittee and through Public Officer support (approx. 150 paid hours).
- Provide leaderships and governance on the regional tourism association's board (approx. 100 paid hours)
- Develop cultural experiences that celebrate 125 years since the establishment of railway between Teepookana and Regatta Point.
- Provide a free community focussed rail experience to celebrate the railway's cultural heritage with local residents.
- Donate up to \$5,000.00 in travel vouchers to local, state and national charities.
- In 2023 ARMC / WCWR;
 - Enabled and empowered staff to participate in First Nation's training.
 - Reviewed the onboard acknowledgement of country to ensure it was respectful and acknowledged the ongoing journey of the Tasmanian Aboriginal Community.
 - Participated in the 2022/23 TICT Carbon Accounting Pilot with Local Carbon (now Sumday).
 - Completed significant infrastructure upgrades to approx. 10 kilometres of rail corridor, ensuring longevity of the operation as an anchor attraction.
 - Engaged Mountain Heights School in Queenstown and developed the West Coast Partnerships Program, delivering workplace training and development to 11 students.
 - Participated in the regional workforce development expo run by local Study Hub.
 - Provided written support to literacy programs led by Queenstown Library.
 - Maintained a leadership position on the local tourism association.
 - Supported the Queenstown Top Tourism Town submission with volunteered time and expertise to assist production of the submission.
 - Donated vouchers to local, state and national charities (\$5,340.00 value)

Supporting Documentation

NA