

## MEDIA RELEASE

Friday, 18 January 2019

### WHO'S SLEEPING WHERE? LONG-TERM v SHORT-TERM v HOMELESS

At the last ['street count'](#) undertaken by the Council of the City of Sydney, 278 individuals were sleeping rough and a further 495 residents were occupying beds in temporary shelters and homelessness hostels. People in boarding houses or with friends or those living in other forms of non-secure housing weren't counted. The next count is overnight on 18/19 February. Yet for those whose desire is to *'live like a local'*, Airbnb currently has 9,241 homes available in the Sydney Local Government area – for every homeless resident, Airbnb has 12 homes occupied by tourists or sitting empty.

[In New York a US\\$21 million lawsuit has this week been filed by the city](#) against real estate brokers who are accused of using Airbnb to illegally rent out homes. The real estate brokerage firm has converted 130 apartments into de facto hotel rooms. Critics of short-term rentals argue that commercial operators are aggravating the city's housing shortage.

Sydney-based "investment management company" ['MadeComfy' last year raised \\$6 million](#), with the majority coming from Investec Australia. [MadeComfy claims](#) "total transparency" and licensing "under the Property, Stock and Business Agents Act 2002...licence number is 10043571".

MadeComfy [currently list 304 homes](#) on the Airbnb platform and have their "eyes set on international expansion". At the 2018 [NSW Business Chamber Awards](#), sponsored by the City of Sydney and the NSW State Government, [MadeComfy won the 'Excellence in Business' gong](#). They went on to [win the 2018 Westpac 'Business of Tomorrow' trophy](#). Did someone mention a \$21 million lawsuit?

The [Real Estate Industry of NSW's CEO Tim McKibbin](#) trumpets "Industry wins in short-term holiday letting reforms" and writes that the REINSW "seized this opportunity to provide feedback on behalf of its members" and "REINSW has been invited to participate in an advisory committee to develop a code of conduct for this (the short-term rental) industry". Despite (unenforced) legislation covering most if not all areas of residential housing, the REINSW claims our housing 'industry' has "remained largely unregulated". Someone please hand Mr McKibbin a copy of the [NSW Residential Tenancies Act](#) and copies of NSW Land and Environment Court judgments. ["Agreements to which Act does not apply include an agreement made for the purposes of giving a person the right to occupy residential premises for a period of not more than 3 months for the purposes of a holiday."](#)

DestinationNSW's Acting CEO Ross Pearson wrote this week: "The Legislative Assembly Committee's Inquiry into the Adequacy of the Regulation of Short-term Holiday Letting in NSW essentially focused on the approach to regulating short-term holiday letting in NSW and the economic significance of the industry. As such, the Inquiry's Terms of Reference did not require the disclosure of (Online Travel Agency) arrangements" including DestinationNSW's ongoing partnership with Expedia/ HomeAway and others.

How does DestinationNSW ensure that the tourist/visitor rentals of residential dwellings its web platforms facilitate meet all structural and legislative criteria and Coroners' recommendations, are not covered by Land and Environment Court Orders banning short-term holiday agreements, do not impinge on the proprietary rights of Residents in neighbouring homes, and do not undermine the viability of accredited Accommodation Providers? It doesn't.

A reply too please from NSW Premier Gladys Berejiklian to a request for voluntary Land and Environment Court Orders which would stop DestinationNSW's use of our residential housing and its facilitation of Expedia/HomeAway and Airbnb's penetration into our homes.

Currently, Home Owners, Tenants and accredited Accommodation Providers are the big losers, while "Industry wins".

Homes not Hotels      Communities not Transit Zones      People before Profits      Neighbours not Strangers

The REINSW announces it "seized the opportunity" and "Industry wins" on short-term holiday letting.

Destination NSW's A/CEO: "The Legislative Assembly Committee's...Inquiry into the adequacy of the regulation of Short-term Holiday Letting in NSW essentially focused on the approach to regulating Short-term Holiday Letting... As such, the Inquiry's Terms of Reference did not require the disclosure of OTA partnership arrangements, including that with Expedia..."

Home Owners, Tenants and small accredited Accommodation Providers are the big losers.



Convener: Trish Burt

[www.neighboursnotstrangers.com](http://www.neighboursnotstrangers.com)

SUPPORT NETWORK: Amsterdam, Austin, Baltimore, Barcelona, Berlin, Byron Bay, Edinburgh, Hong Kong, Lisbon, London, Los Angeles, Melbourne, Montreal, Nashville, New Orleans, New York, Paradise Valley, Palm Springs, Paris, Reykjavik, San Francisco, San Diego, Scottsdale, Sedona, Sydney, Tucson, Vancouver, Valencia, Victoria (BC) Washington DC, Winnipeg, Yamba, Zurich.