

Visitor Feedback

July 2001 - March 2005

Prepared For: Tourism Tasmania

Roy Morgan
— Research —

Prepared By: Roy Morgan Research
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Methodology

- Visitor responses were obtained from the following questions in the Tasmanian Visitor Survey:

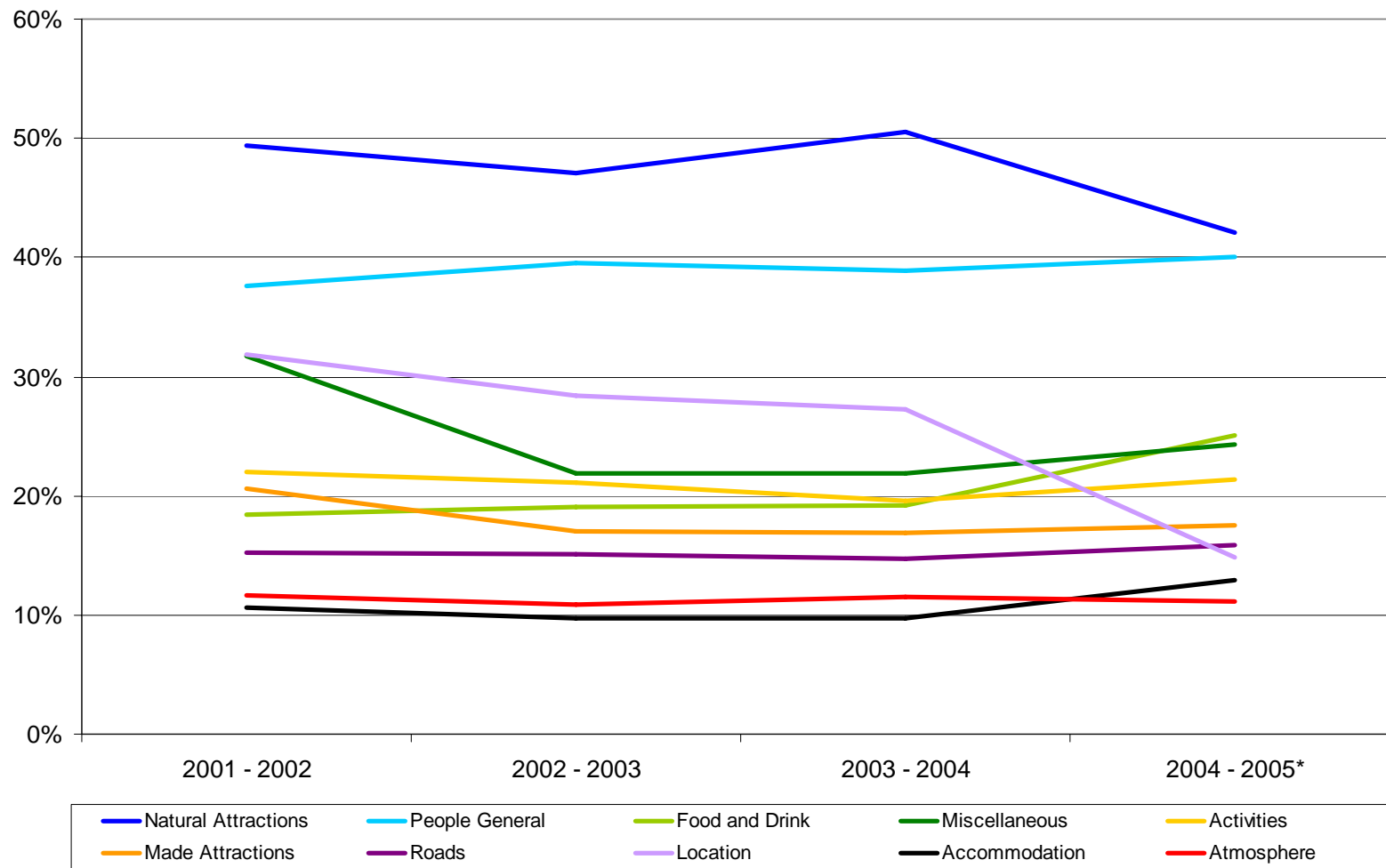
Please use the space below to tell us what you liked or disliked about this trip to Tasmania, and why. You could include in your answer such things as your general impression of the areas you visited, areas you enjoyed the most, areas enjoyed the least.

Please use the space below to tell us what you liked or disliked about this trip to Tasmania, and why.

What Visitors Liked and Disliked

What Respondents Liked About Tasmania (% of Survey Responses)

Discover your



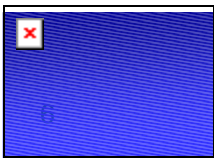
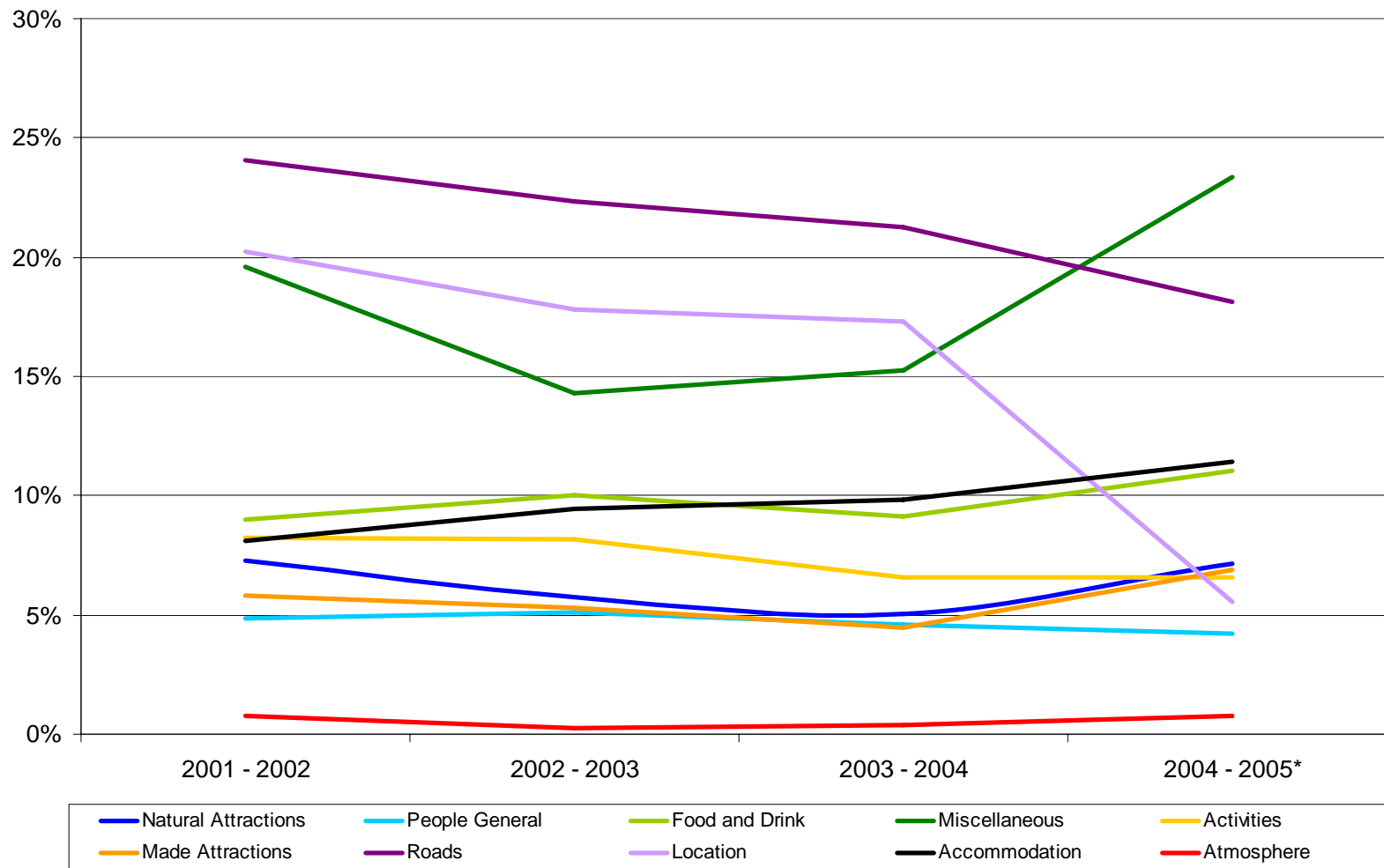
Source: Tasmanian Visitor Survey

What Respondents Liked About Tasmania

- **Natural Attractions** has consistently provided the most positive comments over the past 4 years.
- General comments about **'People'** are the 2nd most numerous, with the number of references rising slightly over time. Descriptions of local people as friendly has particularly been increasing.
- 'Like' **Food & Drink** comments have increased slightly since 2001. General comments on good **standard/quality** have contributed to this rise.
- References to **location** have declined sharply since 2003/2004, most likely due to the question wording change previously mentioned.

What Respondents Disliked About Tasmania (% of Survey Responses)

Discover your



Source: Tasmanian Visitor Survey

What Respondents Disliked About Tasmania

- **Roads** has previously been the main 'dislike' referred to by visitors. Marked downward trend in comments driven by fewer mentions about the poor quality of roads and road signs.
- **Miscellaneous** 'dislikes' has increased sharply since 2003/2004, with a sharp increase in **expensive** comments.
- Negative comments about **Accommodation** have increased steadily since 2001, with references to **availability** more prominent in the past 2 years.
- **Food & Drink** 'dislikes' have increased slightly, but at a slower rate than positive references. Recent increases in mentions of **availability** were noted. The standard of service received has also contributed to this rise.

Accommodation - Liked

- Accommodation in General has become a more important issue to visitors since 2001. Progressively higher % of visitors commenting on likes & dislikes, with likes dominant.
- Positive comments ranged across a number of areas:
 - Facilities (general)
 - Service received
 - Price of accommodation
 - Availability
- **'Service'** received almost twice as many like comments compared to dislikes:
 - *"The places we stayed were all full of atmosphere and one can't help but be impressed with the level of friendliness, helpfulness and hospitality from each and every place". (2001-2002, Female, aged 60-64 years, from Victoria).*

Accommodation - Disliked

- Level of dislike comments for specific accommodation types generally increasing over time, but variation amongst different accommodation types.
- **Hotels / Motels** worst performer, with marked increase in dislike comments since 2003/2004. Main issues:
 - High prices and
 - Low quality on-site facilities
 - Poor customer service
- **Caravan Parks** was also an area attracting more dislike comments in recent years. Similar issues as Hotels / Motels – high rates accompanied by mixed quality.
 - *“The Caravan Parks - overcrowded, facilities, toilets in some parks well below standard and dirty. Caravan Park pricing e.g. Cradle Mountain power site \$30, power site Lake St Clair \$15 - this is per night. I found the cost was generally higher for power sites than paid in other States.”* (2003-2004, Male, aged 60-64 years, from South Aust).

Natural Attractions - Liked

- **‘Scenery’** was by far the most mentioned like with Natural Attractions, which was consistently the highest mention (by a large margin) across the 4 years.
- Most of the like ‘scenery’ comments were fairly general in nature, however some provided more detail:
 - *“The scenery was beautiful.”* (2004/05, Female, 30-34 years, from Victoria, MPP)
 - *“Magnificent scenery on the East Coast beaches etc and in general. Very interesting heritage museums etc. Cabins were value for money accommodation. The local people were friendly and helpful. In general a very good holiday.”* (2003/04, Male, 30-34 years, from NSW, MPP)
- ‘Like’ comments relating to **‘Mountains’** and **‘National Parks’** were the next most common, which has also been consistent since 2001.

Natural Attractions - Liked

- The bulk of **Mountain** comments related to mountains specifically focussed on Cradle Mountain. Most comments were very general in nature, but some referred to specific aspects such as:
 - Quality of **facilities** in area e.g. boardwalks and shuttle buses
 - Enjoyed seeing the **snow**

- Beyond the very general references to **National Parks**, the following subjects were typical:
 - Specific National Parks, primarily Freycinet and Cradle Mountain
 - National Park management, including:
 - High standard of facilities, good walking tracks & helpful information centres

 - *“Most enjoyed area - Overland Track, then all the National Parks we visited. Very good tracks, well signed and good explanations in the Great Short Walks brochure.” (2003/04, Female, 35-39 years, from Switzerland, MPP)*

Natural Attractions - Disliked

- The number of 'dislike' comments was much lower overall, with only a fraction of the number of 'like' comments.
- Aspects of **management** of the **National Parks** were the most prominent 'dislikes':
 - Entry Fees
 - Inadequate walking trail signage
- 'Dislike' comments about National Park management increased over the past year, with this largely being driven by comments about entry fees:
 - *"The fee into the National Parks - we do feel this is far too high, especially when you may go into the Park for only 1 hour. We only visited 2 because of this."* (2004/05, Male, 50-59 years, from ACT)
- Comments relating to **'Forest'** were figured more prominently in the 'dislikes' and included mention of the dislike of plantations replacing native forest in the landscape.

Made Attractions - Liked

- **'City scapes'** were by far the most mentioned made attraction in the 'like' comments.
- This suggests that Tasmania's towns are an attraction in their own right.
- The main attraction is that much of the older architecture has been retained within Tasmanian towns and older buildings contribute more to the feel of the place than in other Australian States.
 - *"Beautiful landscape. Very tidy and pretty small towns. Launceston a pleasure to shop and walk around town. Beautiful old buildings well restored and cared for."* (2004-2005, Female, aged 60-64 years, from VIC).

Made Attractions - Disliked

- **'City scapes'** were also a significant 'dislike', but much closer in terms of the number of comments to other made attractions. These type of comments were generally consistent across the past 4 years:
 - Mingling of inappropriate modern developments amongst older buildings
 - Ugly housing developments
- Some of these comments also were of a 'don't spoil the current look' nature:
 - *"Big, ugly, modern buildings (some are Governments ones) around the Harbour and old part of Town. Don't make the mistakes of other Cities - Think of the UGLY Darling Harbour in Sydney." (2002-2003, Male, aged 55-59, from France)*
- **Wildlife Parks** were also increasingly mentioned negatively by a number of visitors, especially in relation to the perceived value for money offered.

Food & Drink - Liked

- The most common 'like' responses in this category, across all 4 years, were comments on general **traits of food & drink**. The main areas covered were:
 - Quality / standard
 - Availability
 - Variety / choice
- General comments on **food quality** dominated:
 - *"We enjoyed your fine wineries & the high quality local produce available which enhanced our trip."* (2003/2004, Female, aged 35-39 years, from South Aust, MPP)
- **Seafood** was the next most referred to 'like'. Aside from general references, fish & chips, oysters & scallops were mentioned most.

Food & Drink - Disliked

- Within the most prominent dislike **Traits of Food and Drink**, 'Availability' was the main issues emerging as a 'dislike'. This was driven by:
 - Lack of food outlets
 - Availability of local produce
 - Early evening closing times
- **Local produce** was not found to be readily available by a number of respondents, particularly fresh fish:
 - *"We found it difficult to buy fresh fish which is difficult to understand when so much is caught locally. (We eat your fish in Sydney Restaurants)." (2002/2003, Female, aged 60-64 years, from NSW, MPP)*
- **Lack of food outlets** in remote areas or suitable outlets in larger towns was also a problem highlighted.

Activities - Liked

- The most frequently mentioned activity, across all 4 years analysed, was **walking/bushwalking**.
- Aside from general comments about the scenery/landscape, 'like' comments were driven by:
 - Provision of **good walking tracks** / board walks
 - Good **track signage** / information available
 - *“Very impressed with the ruggedness, particularly the West Coast and North East, also thought the bays, small islands and inlets were very beautiful. Loved the well maintained tracks for bush walks and clean, well maintained toilets. Tasmania is a unique and beautiful place and the people open and friendly.” (2003/2004, Male, aged 70+ years, from NSW, MPP)*
- Visiting **local markets** was also popular, although with a decreasing number of mentions since 2001. Salamanca/Hobart markets were the focus – with crafts and the local area the main attractions.

Activities - Disliked

- Most 'dislike' comments on activities were general in nature, but a small number of issues were identified:
- **Lack of nightlife** / entertainment in the evening was a frequent complaint.
- The **high cost** of activities, especially **tours** was also an issue.
- Complaints were also made about **activities being closed**, sometimes despite information claiming them to be open.
 - *"The fact that in Launceston and Hobart I could not find a single live show I could take the children to at night. No live theatre, no musicals, no dance - you get the picture. The fact that I was rarely able to find fresh fish in restaurants."* (2004/2005, Female, aged 40-45 years, from VIC, MPP)
- **Shopping** also received a number of negative feedback, fairly consistently across the 4 years. Opening hours and the poor standard of some craft/antique shops were the main points raised.

People in General - Liked

- The proportion of visitors providing positive comments about Tasmanians has remained steady across the 4 years.
- The main positive traits referred to were:
 - **Friendliness** (largest by a margin)
 - **Helpfulness**
 - Nice, Hospitable, Attitude
- **'Attitude'** has remained at a consistent level since 2001, with no downward trend apparent. This provides an indication to suggest that the attitudes of locals towards tourists have not deteriorated substantially over the past 4 years. A typical positive comment of attitude was:
 - *"We have been visitors to Tassie many times over the past 5 years on both business and pleasure and have always been very satisfied with attitudes of all service providers, restaurants, hospitality people etc."* (2003-2004, Male, aged 55-59 years, from VIC, MPP).

People in General - Disliked

- Over the 4 years, **Customer Service** received the most negative comments about people in general. However, positive customer service references were still in the ascendancy.
- The main customer service 'dislikes' raised related to service received at:
 - Accommodation
 - Food Outlets
 - Shops
- **Unprofessional** / **uncourteous** staff and the speed of service were the main complaints.
- The number of negative references to Traits of People was very small compared to the number of 'like' comments, but a slight upward trend since 2002/2003 was apparent. Specific comments on 'attitude' remained fairly consistent since 2001.

Improvements Suggested by Visitors

Suggested Improvements (1)

- Topline analysis of actual improvements suggested by respondents conducted. Findings showed recurring themes across all 4 years:

Signage

- Improving road signs was the most frequent, particularly:
 - **Turnoff signs** to be placed further from junction.
 - More signs showing **routes to tourist attractions**.
 - **Street name** signs need to be more visible.

Tourist Information

- There were a number of suggestions in relation to information that could be provided for visitors. These were very varied, but included:
 - More information in brochures on attraction **opening times/days**.
 - Provide **brochure / map** of attractions **upon arrival** at airport / port.

Suggested Improvements (2)

Transport

- This area also attracted a number of suggested improvements:
 - Increase number of **bus routes**, particularly around the island.
 - Improve **Spirit of Tasmania** seating and embarking / disembarking arrangements
 - *“No suitable public transport. Why not have a ‘backpackers public bus’ that circles the main interest points in Tasmania to make it an economical Tourist attraction for young backpackers with limited time and money.” (2003-2004, Female, aged 35-39 years, from NSW).*

Food & Drink

- Comments were also made about improving the **service** received at restaurants through better staff training and increasing the availability of **local produce** (especially seafood) in food outlets.