

What is an Indicator?

The Kangaroo Island TOMM (Tourism Optimisation Management Model) is a community initiated destination management model, developed in 1997. This unique process measures tourism impact through a range of indicators on the local community, environment, economy as well as the visitor market, including visitor satisfaction.

What are Indicators?

Indicators are a measure - they are generally sets of information used on a regular basis to measure change. They can utilize quantitative (raw data, comparable numbers) and qualitative (opinions, values, yes/no) information. The most useful indicators are those that measure key risk areas and provide information which can clarify cause relating to key issues.

For indicators to be of true value they must be feasible, both to collect and interpret, and they must be practical to implement. Due to these factors, indicators should undergo continuous review to respond to the ever changing circumstances and information received.

Indicators will not provide all of the answers and solutions in management, but can be a useful tool in assessing changes and monitoring trends, contributing to better informed decision making. At the core of TOMM is a practical set of indicators that monitor the status of tourism on Kangaroo Island. The TOMM indicators were developed through a series of workshops with Government, industry and community. Initially a large set of suggested indicators were developed, however these were rationalised using a variety of criteria shown in the following table:

Criterion	Explanation	Example
Degree of relationship with actual tourism activity	The indicator needs to have a clear relationship with tourism activity to be relevant.	The number of sea lions at Seal Bay is more relevant than the number of possums at Stokes Bay.
Accuracy	The indicator needs to represent the desired condition accurately.	The number of traffic accidents is more accurate than the perception of parking difficulties.
Utility	The indicator is more worthwhile if it generates additional insights.	The number of visits (number of visitors) has greater utility than perception of crowding.
Availability of data	The indicator is more worthwhile if data already exists or is accessible, rather than needing to be collected from scratch.	Data on the number of seals is more available than data for White Bellied sea-eagles.
Cost to collect and analyse	The indicator requires minimal additional human resources to collect and analyse.	The level of direct tourism employment is cheaper to monitor than the number of tourism products developed by local suppliers in response to tourist demand.

After: Manidis Roberts Consultants (1997)

Over time the indicators have been refined as more knowledge and market data is gathered and monitoring opportunities arise. The indicator program will continue to be refined as the TOMM knowledge base increases and new monitoring programs and data collection techniques become available.

Each indicator has an identified acceptable range, which Manidis Roberts Consultants (1997) initially explained as:

"An ideal, yet realistic range of measurement for each indicator which is consistent with optimal conditions."

Each indicator is reported on against its acceptable range as data becomes available. Trends generated through the indicators are reported to the TOMM Management Committee and then any action taken by management agencies is reported as the outcome.

Indicators have been identified for four focus areas, Economic, Market, Environmental and Socio-cultural. More detailed information for each focus area of indicators is reported in separate Fact Sheets, available at www.tomm.info

Other Resources

Manidis Roberts Consultants (1997) *Developing a Tourism Optimisation Management Model (TOMM), a model to monitor and manage tourism on Kangaroo Island, Final Report*, South Australian Tourism Commission, Adelaide.

Miller G. and Twining-Ward L. (2005) *Monitoring for a Sustainable Tourism Transition: the Challenge of Developing and Using Indicators*. Oxon: CAB International.

World Tourism Organisation (2004) *Indicators of Sustainable Development for Tourism Destinations: A Guidebook*, World Tourism Organisation, Madrid, Spain.

Further Information

For more information regarding TOMM and the indicator program, please visit www.tomm.info or contact the TOMM Project Manager:

Phone: 08 8553 4518

Email: info@tomm.info

Post: PO Box 121, Kingscote SA 5223