

## Profile of Company



The Coorong Wilderness Lodge is a new tourism venture which was officially opened on 3rd November, 2000 by Professor Lowitja O'Donoghue AC, CBE. Situated in the beautiful Coorong wilderness area, it offers an Indigenous cultural experience as well as enabling visitors to celebrate nature.

The Lodge is built on sand hills overlooking the Coorong which is an inland sea of shallow shimmering lagoons separated from the Southern Ocean by the Youngusband Peninsula. The Coorong is less than three kilometers wide covering some 47,000 hectares and is home to some 230 species of waterbird and shorebird including 14 protected species and 21 species of seabird.

There are also abundant numbers of emu, kangaroo, reptiles as well as fish, particularly the famous Coorong mullet. The Lodge was recently built, with the assistance of two of the current trainees who have previously completed Certificates in Building and Construction. The lodge consists of a restaurant and cultural interpretive centre with spectacular views of the surrounding waters and native bushland. The lodge also has a modern ablution block to service campers and backpackers.

The Coorong Wilderness Lodge offers a range of activities which enable tourists and the local community to experience Aboriginal culture (Ngarrindjeri) and the local wildlife and fauna, including tours, listening to stories and sampling bush tucker.

Coorong Wilderness Lodge  
PO Box 294  
MENINGIE SA 5264  
Ph: 08 8575 6001  
Email: kuranga@lm.net.au

The Lodge is run with the assistance of a team of 6 full-time trainees.

Employment	Total
Permanent	2
Apprentices/Trainees	4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6</b>

## Goals and Mission of Company

### Goals

The Lodge aims to provide visitors, including local, national and international tourists, with a range of indigenous cultural and nature-based experiences including:

- Bush walking
- Tours to experience plant and animal life, bush tucker, medicine and history
- Bush tucker and meals from local produce
- Stories and cultural experiences
- Canoe tours and kayaking
- Island hopping
- Fishing
- Camping

Currently, the restaurant offers snack foods and light meals, and visitors experience bush walks and story telling. In the future, there are plans to have the restaurant fully operational and to take visitors on other activities such as kayaking and fishing. There are also plans to renovate an historic woolshed, and to build cabins and camping sites to enable visitors to stay long-term.

## Current Training Situation and Plan

### Type of Training

Because of the distance of the Coorong area to the nearest college, the trainees are being trained on-the-job by visiting trainers from Onkaparinga TAFE who visit on a regular basis.

The trainees are all currently undertaking a dual training program consisting of:

- Certificate II in Tour Guiding
- Certificate II in Tour Attractions

Currently, they are undertaking the Core units and will undertake the others as the need arises.

Some of the Units of Competence being covered include:

THHCOR01A

Work With Colleagues and Customers

THHCOR02A

Work in A Socially Diverse Environment

THHCOR03A

Follow Health, Safety and Security Procedures

THTFTG01A

Work as a Guide

THTFTG03A

Develop and Maintain the General Knowledge Required by Guides

Sue Atkins and Jill Mitchell, from Onkaparinga TAFE are the two trainers who deliver the training on-site. Jill explained how the training is tailored to meet the needs of the trainees and the Lodge. For example, following the opening, they needed to develop a promotional brochure. The whole project from the concept, the writing, the artwork and the liaison with printers to overseeing the final product is being undertaken by the trainees. This will result in their achievement of the Unit THTSMA01A Co-ordinate the Production of Brochures and Marketing Materials, an elective in the Certificate.



Training is an essential component of the future goals for the Lodge, without which, the Lodge would not be able to realise their plans of being able to offer a full range of activities. For the trainees, it is not only providing them with the skills and knowledge to work at Coorong

Lodge, but with valuable tourism and hospitality skills which will be transferable to other establishments should they require it, and which will provide them with career path options.

### Priority Areas for Training

The team working at the Lodge all need to be multi-skilled and to be able to do everything from taking visitors on tours, cooking, serving food and beverages, fixing and maintaining the Lodge and surrounding area, as well as administration and bookwork.



Although the women can already cook, they also have plans to do further training in Commercial Cookery and Catering, as they are aware of the need to transport and store food, and to produce food for large numbers of tourists under commercial conditions. Pat, who works in the kitchen, is currently undertaking a Certificate II in Commercial Cookery under the supervision of the chefs at Onkaparinga TAFE. All the trainees will undertake Food and Beverage training at some point, including Responsible Service of Alcohol.

The men are about to commence training in kayaking. Again, although they already know how to do it, they want to be fully qualified, especially in the safety aspects. This will mean undertaking training based on Units of

Competence from the Sport and Recreation Training Package. It is being delivered on-the-job by Recreation South Australia. They also have plans to undertake a course in handling a motorboat, in order to provide back-up support to kayaking activities.

Another priority for the team is First Aid. The risks are quite high whilst taking tourists on tours in remote areas, including snakebite, drowning, sprains and breaks. There are also the usual risks of burns, cuts and back injuries to employees who work in a kitchen. Since they are situated at a distance from the nearest hospital or medical centre, all need to be able to treat an accident victim. Whilst they have all done a Basic First Aid course, they are all keen to do a refresher course.

### Training Resources

Training resources are utilised by the RTO, for training and assessment including:

- Tourism Training Package
- Hospitality Training Package
- Workbooks to support individual Units of Competence.

### Trainers and Assessors

Training is conducted by invited trainers, who are also qualified assessors and undertake the assessment.

### Registered Training Organisation

#### TAFE SA, Noarlunga Campus

Ramsay Place  
PO Box 405  
Noarlunga Centre SA 5168  
Ph: 08 8207 3164  
Fax: 08 8207 3166

### Scope

Certificate I in Tourism (Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Cultural Guiding)  
Certificate II in Tourism (Guiding)  
Certificate II Tourism (Tourist Attractions and Theme Parks)  
Certificate III in Tourism (Guiding)  
Certificate III Tourism (Tourist Attractions and Theme Parks)

### Advice, Support & Partnerships

The Coorong Wilderness Lodge has a strong working relationship with Tourism Training

South Australia through John Cassebohm, Project Manager of TTSA's Structured Training and Employment Program (STEP). The STEP initiative has been funded by the Commonwealth Government through a grant provided by the Department of Employment, Workplace Relations and Small Business with the aim of the program being to substantially increase the number of Indigenous people employed within the tourism and hospitality industry. John has assisted the team in organising the traineeships and in providing strong support for the trainees.

The Lodge is also supported by the South Australian Tourism Commission, the Department of State Aboriginal Affairs and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission.

### New Apprenticeships

Area	F/T	P/T	Total
Tourism	5		5
Hospitality	1		1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6</b>		<b>6</b>

### Existing Workforce

Training needs are identified through consultation and discussion between the trainees, John Cassebohm and the trainees themselves. Training Record books are kept by the trainees and records are kept by the RTO.

Discussions with John Cassebohm and with the RTO were held to determine the training needs of the trainees, which are related to the operation of the Coorong Wilderness Lodge. Liaison with the RTO took place to provide on-the-job training at times to suit the RTO, the business and the trainees. Partnership arrangements were made with the University and Recreation South Australia to provide the kayaking training.



## **Barriers to Training Package Implementation**

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There are no real barriers to the implementation of the Training Package for this particular group of trainees, other than the location of the Lodge, which is in a fairly remote area and at some distance from Meninge, the nearest town, and from a TAFE college. Most of the trainees live at Meninge, and access to training in a TAFE college would be extremely difficult.

In terms of selection of appropriate training to suit the nature of where they work, the flexibility of the Tourism Training Package has enabled the team to select the training to ensure that their needs can be met. Future training will be met by selecting units also from the Hospitality Training Package and from the Sport and Recreation Package.

To solve the issue of access to training, it has been addressed through the arrangement with the visiting trainers who deliver training on-site.

## **Successes & Information on Process & Outcomes**

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The Coorong Wilderness Lodge has only been operating for a short time, however they have already received many accolades from local visitors as well as from international visitors who have written in the Visitors Book. The Official Launch was a successful event with many dignitaries attending and over 100 guests, who were served food cooked in the restaurant.

The on-going success of the Lodge will go hand-in-hand with the training being undertaken by the team. The Tourism Training Package provides an excellent model for providing the exact training required. This particular program was developed by Onkaparinga as a pilot to meet the training needs of indigenous tourism operators and has proved to be extremely successful. As a typical tourism operation, Coorong Lodge is a small business with the need for a highly multi-skilled staff. The Training Package is able to offer the flexibility to meet these needs as well as those of the trainees, now and in the future. The trainees can undertake training in not only the core tourism

skills, but through electives, the other diverse skills needed.

The success of this program will mean that it will provide a model for other indigenous tourism operators. The trainees themselves are very happy with the training and all have plans to continue on to a Certificate III in Tourism, once their current programs are complete. If enthusiasm and hard work are any gauge, Coorong Lodge will go on to be very successful operation and a credit to the team and the local area.