



## Scores on Doors

# Case study: Bega Valley Shire Council

### A regional economy

Bega Valley Shire is a set of coastal and rural communities on the south coast of NSW, part of the Sapphire Coast. With a relatively small but growing residential population of 33,000, its centres include Bega, Eden, Merimbula, Pambula and Tathra as well as many townships, villages and holiday areas.

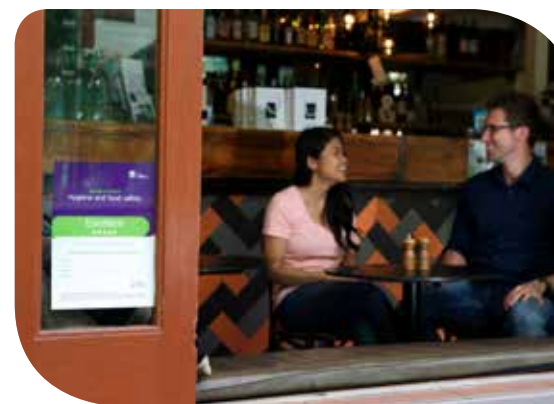
Bega Valley has a strong tourist industry and a reputation as a family beach destination and seaside getaway. Tourism is complemented by fishing, oyster harvesting, wine making, National Parks, dairy farming and timber activities. Its dairy produce is famous across the country. Cultural festivals include Four Winds, Cobargo Folk and Merimbula Jazz Festivals. The local economy accounts for \$1.5 billion pa, with a vibrant mix of small businesses and includes around 300 food businesses which generate significant employment in

the accommodation, restaurant and café sectors.

### Reliable experiences

The bedrock of any tourist economy is delivering a reliable experience and meeting visitors expectations so they want to come back. In that respect, Scores on Doors is a perfect fit for Bega Valley's economy. The program's standardised inspection checklist for food premises (the Food Premises Assessment Report or FPAR) relates back to the specific requirements of the Food Standards Code and generates a rating customers can easily see and understand.

The message of the rating certificates on public display is: here's a food business that has had an official inspection, cares about hygiene and food safety and gives customers information to help decide where to place their trust.



### A natural step

Mayor Bill Taylor saw the fit between Scores on Doors' positive encouragement for food premises and the council's desire to support and develop its local economy.

"Our council seeks to nurture innovation by our local businesses, and assist them wherever we can in meeting compliance obligations. We already work with our businesses on compliance and have a food safety inspection program which uses the

standard assessment report, so this is an easy and natural next step for us," Mr Taylor said.

Acting General Manager Leanne Barnes agrees. "Although it's a voluntary program for food businesses, our environmental health staff had discussions with many local proprietors to gauge potential support for the program. There has been overwhelming endorsement from many food businesses," Ms Barnes said.

"They can see the benefits in reassuring visitors to the area who may not be familiar with local businesses."

"The program is also an incentive to improve hygiene standards generally, which benefits our local residents too."

Bega Valley Shire decided to begin rolling out the program from December 2013. Businesses will be given rating results and offered certificates for display and explanatory information as environmental health staff proceed with their regular annual inspection program.



### **For more information about Scores on Doors**

Contact the NSW Food Authority on: 1300 552 406 or [contact@foodauthority.nsw.gov.au](mailto:contact@foodauthority.nsw.gov.au)

[www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au/scoresondoors](http://www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au/scoresondoors)