

## **Flytrek** **Rod Barford, Owner**

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In 1989 Rod Barford turned a life long interest in fishing into a tourism business. Since then his knowledge and dedication to fly fishing has made Rod one of the most sought-after professional guides by anglers from around the world. He is President of the Professional Fishing Instructors and Guides Association of Australia (PFIGA).

From his base in Cowes, Phillip Island, he conducts personalised fishing package tours to the best fly fishing destinations in Australia; from the pristine alpine regions of New South Wales, through Victoria's diverse highland lakes and streams, right down to Tasmania's famous wild brown trout fishery and to New Zealand. He also provides tuition, including Beginners, Streamcraft, Lakecraft and Advanced skills. Flytrek is also the only professional guiding service in Australia to provide tuition in Float Tubing.

After 15 years of operation, Rod decided in 1994 to undertake the Better Business Tourism Accreditation Program. He believed that professional accreditation would provide his business with a marketing edge, but also quickly found that the accreditation process is an excellent way to review and improve all facets of a business operation.

The actual paperwork did not take him long to complete. However, as a result of being made aware of some glaring gaps and faults in his business operation, he devoted about 400 hours into designing new business systems for Flytrek, including flowcharts, spreadsheets and inventory control.

“Each part of the program highlighted an area that needed to be improved. It’s now much easier to track and find business and to identify target markets”.

“It’s helped me to set goals and to review them every six months. Previously I had no real idea of marketing, how to determine specific target markets or how to focus on the most beneficial areas of my business”.

“Accreditation is not something you do once and then put it aside. It’s an ongoing and dynamic process, which enables me to review my SWOT analysis every six months and to keep a much closer eye on the dollars that I spend”.

Rod says that completing the Better Business Tourism Accreditation Program gave him a real sense of pride. He also says that the accreditation tick he can now display on advertising material has a lot of appeal in the marketplace and helps to separate him from other operators “It opens new doors”, he says.

As National President of the PFIGA he is actively promoting Better Business Tourism Accreditation to fellow members and hopes to get the Association to use it to replace their current system of accreditation.

### Key Lessons

- The Better Business Tourism Accreditation Program is designed more to assist you objectively assess your business and marketing operations, rather than simply gaining the accreditation tick to display on advertising material.
- The questions and templates of the accreditation process can form the basis of simple business planning systems.
- In a competitive environment, the accreditation tick can help you to stand out from other tourism products.

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