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ALARMING POWER PRICES SPARK OUTBACK ANGER

Power price increases of up to 120% may force tourism businesses to close in Coober Pedy and other key South Australian outback tourism destinations.

South Australian Tourism Industry Council Chief Executive, Ward Tilbrook says he is dismayed at the rise in the power prices and has concerns for the sustainability of tourism businesses in these regional communities.

“This outrageous price hike significantly prejudices tourism businesses that work hard to deliver world-class tourism experiences and already face numerous challenges in tough operating environments, this may be the final straw for many of them,” Mr Tilbrook says.

“From my understanding, most small domestic customers will be minimally affected but commercial users will face much higher increases, some by anywhere up to 120%.

“The viability of tourism businesses, such as hotels, caravan parks and attractions will be badly affected, which may result in their closure leaving much-needed tourist services unavailable.

“Tourism is the lifeblood of many outback communities and without the facilities and infrastructure in place to support visitors, the local communities will inevitably suffer.

“It will be a case of: ‘Will the last tourism business to leave Coober Pedy please turn out the lights’.

“These new charges, are a direct threat to the sustainability of tourism in the magnificent South Australian outback, and as the outback is a key destination for South Australian tourism, it is a threat to our State’s tourism industry overall.

“These outback businesses pay tax and contribute to the coffers of this State, as does every other business regardless of where they are located, this power price hike should be reconsidered and there should be equity in power costs for outback areas.”

As South Australia’s peak tourism body, the South Australian Tourism Industry Council represents over 550 members and its’ role is to engage in all of the processes that shape our State’s tourism future.