

# Host community perceptions of the impact of events

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## HOST COMMUNITY PERCEPTIONS OF THE IMPACT OF EVENTS A COMPARISON OF DIFFERENT EVENT THEMES IN URBAN AND REGIONAL COMMUNITIES

By Liz Fredline, Marg Deery and Leo Jago

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## Comparison of Different Event Themes in Urban and Regional Communities

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iv A Comparison of Different Event Themes in Urban and Regional Communities ABSTRACT		

Over recent years, there has been increasing interest shown by tourism policy makers and planners in the social impacts of tourism events (see, for example, Gabr 2004; Fredline & Faulkner 2002a). However, to date the vast majority of research effort has

been directed toward evaluating only the economic impacts. Thus, economic impact evaluation has reached a point where there is substantial agreement on the most appropriate techniques to be used. Social impact assessment lags far behind this point. This paper goes some way to addressing this issue by comparing three different events that vary by location and theme. In so doing, this research offers tourism policy makers and planners a means of comparing different types of events through the evaluation of their social impacts on the community. Three case studies were selected specifically for their geographic and theme characteristics; the Australian Grand Prix, the Moomba Festival (both hosted in Melbourne) and a regional community festival, the Horsham Art Is... Festival. For each event, self-complete questionnaires were used to collect data from local residents regarding their perception of the impacts of the event, and a range of independent variables including the distance of the residence from the event zone, the amount of travel to the event zone, the involvement in tourism, the identification with the theme and the socio-political values of the respondents. Following the methods of Fredline (2000), the perception data were measured using a three part scale. The scale included 45 impact statements (42 of which are common to all instruments), and residents were first asked to assess whether they believed the item had changed because of the event and to identify the direction of the change. If residents did perceive a change, they were subsequently asked to assess the effect on their personal quality of life, and also the effect on the community as a whole. These latter two assessments were measured using a seven point Likert type scale ranging from -3 (very negative impact) to +3 (very positive impact). The findings



from the research suggest that, for each of the events, the majority of the respondents indicated that the event had 'no effect' at the personal level, but the proportions indicating a positive impact outweighed those indicating a negative impact, resulting in a positive mean score. It is interesting to note that although the Grand Prix registered the highest proportions indicating a negative impact, it also registered the highest proportion indicating the most positive level of benefit. All three events were rated as having a substantial community level benefit. In comparing the specific impacts of the event, fewer impacts were perceived for the Art Is... Festival, with 16 of the 42 potential impacts being perceived by the majority to have not changed, compared with only three for the Grand Prix, and seven for the Moomba Festival. The paper proceeds to discuss a number of observations made in relation to the three different events and the reaction of the host community to them. The paper concludes by comparing (a) the different themed event across the same community and (b) the similar themed events in different communities. With each of these commentaries, recommendations are provided for planning and management.

v HOST COMMUNITY PERCEPTIONS OF THE IMPACTS OF EVENTS SUMMARY Objectives of Study This report provides the findings from a comparative study of the social impacts of three events located in different regions and differentiated by theme. The key objective of this report was: - To examine host community perceptions of event impacts across a range of events and host communities, specifically;

â' A comparison of different themed events in the same community. The Grand Prix data collected in 2002 was compared with data on resident reactions to the Melbourne Moomba Festival, a community festival. â' A

comparison of similar themed events in different sized communities. The Moomba festival data was compared to data collected at the Art Is... Festival in Horsham, a regional community about 275 km west of Melbourne.

**Methodology** A research instrument was designed utilising statements from previous event and tourism literature with the inclusion of additional items from the social capital literature. Three slightly different versions of the instrument were developed for the three different events, the only differences being variation as necessary to allow for differences in the types of event and locations. Following the methods of Fredline (2000), the main dependant variables, namely, residents' perceptions of the impacts of events, were measured using a three part scale. The scale included 45 impact statements (42 of which are common to all instruments), and residents were first asked to assess whether they believed the item had changed because of the event and to identify the direction of the change. If residents did perceive a change, they were subsequently asked to assess the effect on their personal quality of life, and also the effect on the community as a whole. These latter two assessments were measured using a seven point Likert type scale ranging from  $-3$  (very negative impact) to  $+3$  (very positive impact). The instrument was administered via a postal survey.

Although this method is not without its shortcomings, given resource limitations, it is often the most effective method for collecting data adequate for analysis. The most serious problems associated with postal surveys are low response rates, self-completion errors and missing data. Previous studies in this area would suggest that response rates in the order of 30% are possible in this type of research (Fredline 2000) provided that reminder

questionnaires are dispatched. A decision was made to include only residents with a 15 km radius of the centre of the event precinct. This decision was made in recognition of the localised nature of many event impacts such as noise and traffic congestion, and the need to adequately represent people living close to the event precinct. Given the anticipation of low response, large numbers of survey packages were dispatched for each event, with the aim of achieving datasets in the order of 200-300 responses for each event. For each of the two Melbourne based events, 2400 questionnaires were distributed, while in Horsham, 1400 packages were sent out. The usable returns for the Grand Prix, the Moomba Festival, and the Horsham Art Is...Festival were 279, 181 and 96 respectively, representing effective response rates of 13%, 8%, and 8%. A profile of the respondents found that there were almost equal numbers of males and females, the most common age group was between 40-49 years of age, 22% had completed a post graduate degree and the majority (60%) were employed.

**Key Findings**

The key findings from the study are: - In the case of each event, the majority indicated 'no effect' at the personal level, but the proportions indicating a positive impact outweighed those indicating a negative impact, resulting in a positive mean score. - Fewer impacts were perceived for the Art Is... Festival, with 16 of the 42 potential impacts being perceived by the majority to have not changed, compared with only three for the Grand Prix, and seven for the Moomba Festival.

vi A Comparison of Different Event Themes in Urban and Regional Communities - - - - - All events were perceived as having a positive impact on maintenance of public facilities but this was seen to be far more beneficial in the case of the Grand Prix than for the other

events. Similarly, a larger proportion of respondents felt that the Grand Prix had improved facilities available to local residents. Unlike the other events, the Grand Prix is perceived as having a substantially negative impact on the community because of the noise it creates. The events are seen to have differencing levels of impact on employment opportunities, with the Grand Prix being seen as providing substantial employment opportunities, while the Art Is... Festival was seen as having the lowest (but still positive) employment impact. The Moomba festival was perceived as having a more negative impact on rowdy and delinquent behaviour and excessive drinking and drug use than either of the other two events. Similarly Moomba is seen as having a more negative impact on litter than the Grand Prix or Art Is... Festival. Traffic congestion and the decreased availability of parking were seen to be less of a problem with regard to the Art Is... Festival in Horsham, than they were with regard to the two Melbourne based events. It was perceived that the Grand Prix is associated with a decrease in the rights and civil liberties of local residents, but no similar impact was reported for the other two events. Similarly, there was substantial agreement that ordinary residents get no say in the planning and management of the Grand Prix, whereas this was seen to be a less substantial issue for the Moomba Festival and not an issue at all for the Art Is... Festival. The Grand Prix is also seen to be somewhat disruptive, inducing stress in the lives of local residents, while this was not seen to be a problem associated with the other events. All of the events were seen as providing opportunities for people to have fun with their family and friends, although to varying extents. The Art Is... Festival was seen as providing the most benefit in this regard, while the Grand Prix was

perceived as providing the least benefit. The proportion who believed that the events promoted values that are good was significantly lower with respect to the Grand Prix, than for the other two events. Using cluster analysis, respondents in the Grand Prix survey were somewhat more likely to be in the negative cluster than those who participated in the surveys relating to the other two events. Contact with the event is important in predicting cluster membership for the Grand Prix, but it is not important for either Moomba or the Art Is... Festival. A strong relationship was observed between identification with the theme of the event and cluster membership, with members of the positive cluster much more likely to register higher levels of interest in the event than negative and unconcerned groups. People with mostly post-materialist values are more likely to be negatively disposed to events. People who are more negatively disposed to the event are most likely to have not ever attended the event, while positive cluster members are most likely to have a history of attendance. Future Action The findings from this research suggest there are more elements in common between each of the events than would be expected in terms of the social impacts on the community. There appears to be a general consensus that events have fairly substantial economic, entertainment, social and development benefits. There is also agreement with regard to some negative impacts such as increased prices and damage to the environment, but these are not perceived to have substantial impact. Whilst the instrument that has been developed to assess the social impacts of events has proved effective, it is a fairly complex instrument to administer that has implications for resident response rates. Plans are already underway to further refine this instrument

to allow for a more parsimonious set of items that can be more readily administered using telephone interviews. This will enhance the usability of the scale. Substantial testing will be required to determine the reliability of a shorter instrument. In parallel with this work to reduce the size of the social impact survey instrument, research will be undertaken to incorporate social impact analysis into a more holistic event evaluation kit. This research seeks to evaluate events from multiple perspectives at one time rather than treating each evaluation perspective in isolation as has happened in the past.

vii HOST COMMUNITY PERCEPTIONS OF THE IMPACTS OF EVENTS viii A Comparison of Different Event Themes in Urban and Regional Communities

Chapter 1 INTRODUCTION In recent decades, substantial work has been conducted examining residents' perceptions of the impacts of tourism and, to a lesser extent, events. Through this work, considerable light has been shed on many of the potential impacts of tourism and also on some of the variables that tend to be associated with positive and negative reactions to tourism activity. However, not all tourism is equal; tourism is a nebulous concept that manifests its impact differently across communities. Therefore, more information is required about the differential effects of alternative types of tourism on local hosts. Within the multitude of case studies that have been undertaken, the impacts of many different forms of tourism have been investigated. However, these investigations have taken place in different contexts, making it difficult to attribute variations in community reaction solely to the variations in tourism activity. Additionally, the multitude of different methods used impedes comparison. Public planners and decision makers encourage tourism because it brings benefits to

communities. It is, therefore, logical that they would prefer to promote the type of tourism that maximises positive impacts and minimises negative impacts, but they need suitable information about relative costs and benefits of different types of tourism in order to make informed decisions. The substantial body of research investigating economic impacts of events and other forms of tourism is driven by a desire to identify the 'best' type of tourism from an economic perspective, or at least, to make the best of the tourism activity that exists. While a range of economic impact assessment techniques exist, the need for comparison across cases has led to a call for consistency in approach. A similar consistent approach needs to be developed to investigate and compare the social impacts of events and other forms of tourism. The development and refinement of a suitable method will require considerable testing and validation, but the study reported in this paper aims to undertake some of the preliminary work and lay a foundation for future advances. More specifically, the research objectives for this study were:

- To examine host community perceptions of event impacts across a range of events and host communities, specifically;
- A comparison of residents' reactions to the Australian Formula One Grand Prix in Melbourne in 2002, with data previously collected in 1999, in an effort to identify longitudinal changes in community reactions.
- A comparison of different themed events in the same community. The Grand Prix data collected in 2002 was compared with data on resident reactions to the Melbourne Moomba Festival, a community festival.
- A comparison of similar themed events in different sized communities. The Moomba festival data was compared to data collected at the Art Is... Festival in Horsham, a regional

community about 275 km west of Melbourne. - Progression toward development of a compressed generic instrument to evaluate impacts of events and facilitate comparison. - Examination of intrinsic variation within communities with regard to their reactions to events. This report presents the results of the comparisons referred to in objectives 1b and 1c. It also examines the influence of intrinsic variation within the host populations as referred to in objective 3. The longitudinal comparison referred to in objective 1a is reported in a separate technical report. The development of a compressed instrument referred to in objective 2 is also reported independently.

1 HOST COMMUNITY PERCEPTIONS OF THE IMPACTS OF EVENTS Chapter 2 REVIEW OF LITERATURE Social Impacts of Tourism Teo (1994, p. 126) defines social and cultural impacts of tourism as: ' the ways in which tourism is contributing to changes in the value systems, morals and their conduct, individual behaviour, family relationships, collective lifestyles, creative expressions, traditional ceremonies and community organization.'

The issue of the social impacts of tourism has, more recently, attracted the attention of researchers and practitioners. This is evidenced by an expanding literature on sustainable tourism development (see for example the Journal of Sustainable Tourism) and government backing for research into the sustainability of tourism evidenced by widespread support for the Sustainable Tourism CRC. There is also a growing acceptance of the concept of ' social responsibility' (Pearce, Morrison & Rutledge 1998), and increasing incidence of community opposition to tourism developments that harm both the social and natural environment (Gabr 2004). The impacts of tourism on a community provide a good example of ' a double-edged sword'. Marcouiller



(1997), in his study of tourism development in US rural communities, argued that the injection of tourists into a rural community can divide a previously homogenous community because the influx changes the dynamics of the community. Glasson's (1994) study of the UK heritage city, Oxford, found that, although the overall effect of tourism on the city was positive, many of the local respondents stated that tourism increased overcrowding, noise, litter and crime. The costs of tourism have been documented under a number of themes. For example, King and Stewart (1996), among others, discuss the negative effects associated with the commodification of a destination's culture and the negative impact of tourist activities such as sex tourism. Doxey's (1975) Irridex Model has been tested in a number of tourism environments to determine the level of resident irritation generated by tourism. Teo (1994), in using Doxey's instrument, for example, found a reasonably high level of intolerance for tourists in Singapore and those residents associated tourism with higher levels of crime. Other negative social impacts such as the impact of the cultural and behavioural differences between tourists and residents and, the often, high inequality between the wealth of tourists and residents, are well documented (Weaver & Opperman 2000). On the other hand, Marcouiller (1997, p. 351) argues that: ' Other important sociological effects of tourism development on rural communities include developing a local sense of place, community pride or image, and local quality of life.' This sense of community pride, wellbeing and stability is an indicator of the social capital of a community. Onyx and Leonard (2000) argue that there is a growing recognition of the importance of social capital in maintaining a healthy and vibrant civil society. Tourism is often perceived

as increasing the economic wellbeing of communities. Tourism also provides an incentive to preserve culture and heritage, although this does not necessarily add to the social capital of the community. Teo's (1994) study of Singapore found that the conservation projects of the city had preserved the cultural heritage, but, unfortunately, local residents did not identify with the environment created by these projects and moved out. So the 'double-edged sword' of tourism can both preserve cultural aspects but can also alienate the community in the process.

Definition of Events Within the tourism field, the term 'event' is used to describe a wide range of event categories many of which have quite different characteristics. Such events range from the Olympic Games at the mega-event end of the scale to small regional festivals. Even within these sub-groupings, there is substantial debate as to the definitions that should be adopted (see, for example, Getz 1991; Jago & Shaw 1998; Arcodia & Robb 2000). The definition that has been adopted here is that proposed by Jago and Shaw (1998, p. 29), namely, 'a onetime or infrequently occurring event of limited duration that provides the consumer with a leisure and social opportunity beyond everyday experience'. This definition is taken as embracing the other subcategories of events, including community festivals and mega-events.

## 2 A Comparison of Different Event Themes in Urban and Regional Communities

Social Impacts of Festivals and Events Although there has been a strong focus on economic impacts, there are other types of impacts of events and festivals including social impacts. These include reinvigorating existing facilities and creating an image for the tourist destination, as well as promoting tourism sustainability (Getz 1991). While there is a reasonable amount of literature

on the social impacts of tourism, particularly through the sustainable tourism literature, less research has concentrated on the social impacts of events and festivals. Issues such as safety, trust and 'a sense of personal and collective efficacy' (Onyx & Bullen 2000) form part of the social capital concept and would appear to have relevance in an investigation of the social impacts of events and community festivals. Delamere's (1997) social impacts instrument for community festivals investigates a number of key elements pertinent to this study. These include the impact of the festival on the friendliness, safety, tolerance and creativity of the community. Delamere concentrates his questionnaire on the social costs and benefits of community festivals. For the purposes of this paper, social impacts are defined as any impacts which potentially have an impact on quality of life for local residents. Thus, economic outcomes of events (such as employment opportunities) and environmental effects (such as litter) are included because perceptions of such impacts are likely to contribute to residents' overall reactions to an event. This is consistent with most of the previous work in this area. Ritchie (1984), and later Hall (1989, 1992) suggested a classification of potential event impacts comprising six dimensions; economic, tourism/commercial, physical, socio-cultural, psychological, and political. Some examples of positive and negative manifestations of these impacts are shown in Table 1 with references as applicable to further examples in the literature. Table 1: A taxonomy of potential event impacts

POSITIVE	NEGATIVE
Small community festivals may generate	It is unusual for large events to recoup their internal
surpluses enormous capital and operating expenditures - many require	extensive public funding
Visitor expenditure and associated	Increased prices

for locals multiplier effects - increased demand for goods and services

Creation of direct and indirect employment Opportunity Costs Acquisition of a poor reputation if the event ' Showcase effect' (Hiller 1989){ XE is

unsuccessful " Hiller, 1989" } - magnification of the region's profile which may have implications for increasing tourism and other business activities

Extension of tourist season - smooth out cyclical demand (Ritchie & Beliveau 1974){ XE " Ritchie & Beliveau, 1974" }

Construction of new facilities and Dislocation of lower socioeconomic groups infrastructure - the extent of this benefit during the creation of new ' desirable middle depends on the long term usefulness of class environments' (Hall 1995){ XE " Hall, these facilities to the community 1995" }

Regeneration and beautification of run Architectural pollution down areas Environmental damage Overcrowding, traffic congestion, noise, litter, and access restrictions Entertainment and

social opportunities for Dissatisfaction especially where the theme local residents of the event does not fit the socio-cultural milieu of the community

Increase in the level of local interest in the Commodification and commercialisation of activity associated with the event (Ritchie traditional

local events 1984{ XE " Ritchie, 1984" }) Opportunity for intercultural

contact Potential for intercultural misunderstanding DIMENSIONS ECONOMIC TOURISM/ COMMERCIAL PHYSICAL SOCIOCULTURAL 3 HOST COMMUNITY

PERCEPTIONS OF THE IMPACTS OF EVENTS Table 1: A taxonomy of potential

event impacts (continued) DIMENSIONS POSITIVE Volunteerism - improved local social support networks SOCIOCULTURAL NEGATIVE May contribute to

general social problems such as crime, prostitution and changing moral

values Crowding can exacerbate rowdy behaviour, drinking, drug use and

violence (Getz 1991{ XE " Getz, 1991" }; Hall 1992{ XE " Hall, 1992" }) 'Hoon effect' (Fischer, Hatch & Paix 1986{ XE " Fisher, Hatch & Paix, 1986" }) Bring a sense of belonging and sharing to the community (Getz 1991{ XE " Getz, 1991" }) PSYCHOLOGICAL Excitement, spectacle, pride and self esteem brought about by being the focus of international attention (Burns & Mules 1986{ XE " Burns, Hatch & Mules, 1986" }) Enhance certain images and ideologies (Hall 1992{ XE " Hall, 1992" }) - may be either positive or negative depending on the extent to which residents concur with these Rapid development may bring disruptions which may lead to feelings of alienation, and the loss of a sense of belonging or attachment to the community (McCool & Martin 1994{ XE " McCool & Martin, 1994" }) Where conflicting interests exist it is likely that the interests of the politically powerful will win out over the interests of the politically weak Loss of local autonomy (Krippendorf 1987{ XE " Krippendorf, 1987" }) Formation of protest groups - 'rebellion of the hosts' (Krippendorf 1987{ XE " Krippendorf, 1987" }) POLITICAL Career enhancement of specific political figures (Hall 1992{ XE " Hall, 1992" }) Source: Adapted from Ritchie 1984 and Hall 1989 & 1992

Extrinsic vs Intrinsic Studies As mentioned in the introduction, there has been a growing awareness of the need for assessing all of the potential impacts of tourism activity, and this has led to a recent proliferation of research into social impacts of tourism on host communities. Generally speaking, two types of social impact study have been conducted. The first type, sometimes referred to as stage-based models (Pearce, Moscardo & Ross 1996), or 'extrinsic' studies (Faulkner & Tideswell 1997), investigate the impact of tourism on the community as a whole and, therefore, assume a

level of homogeneity among the residents of a region. These models consider the effects of variables such as the stage of tourism development in a community, the tourist / resident ratio, the cultural distance between hosts and guests, and the seasonality of the tourist activity. A good example is Doxey's Irridex Model (1975) that suggests that residents' responses to tourism will pass through a series of stages (euphoria, apathy, irritation, and antagonism) as continued exposure to negative impacts is reflected by increasing annoyance. These models tend to be overly simplistic, ignoring the diversity of communities and the undeniable potential for tourism to impact various subgroups in different ways. However, their value lies in the contribution they have made in highlighting the fact that negative social impacts will lead to resident dissatisfaction unless appropriately managed.

The second type of research, described as 'intrinsic' (Faulkner & Tideswell 1997), does consider the heterogeneity of communities by measuring social impacts through the perception of members of the host community and then investigating differences in perception held by different sub-sectors of the community. These studies acknowledge that subgroups may be affected by tourism differentially, and also that differing value systems may be responsible for variations in perceptions. Previous research on the Gold Coast Indy and the Australian Formula One Grand Prix (Fredline 2000) 4 A Comparison of Different Event Themes in Urban and Regional Communities identified the influence of a range of intrinsic variables. Key findings are referred to below, and these relationships are summarised in Table 2.

**Residential Proximity and Contact with Event Zone** It was found that those who held negative attitudes toward the events were more likely to live very

close (within 1. 5km on average) while those who lived more than 5km away appeared to be fairly unconcerned. Residents with positive attitudes tended to live somewhere in between. Similarly, people who visited the area frequently were more negative, while those who seldom did were indifferent.

**Involvement in Tourism** People who worked in tourism, or perceived that their industry was positively affected by the event, tended to have more positive attitudes, while those who did not were less positive.

**Identification with the Theme** Residents who identified themselves as having an interest in motorsport as a spectator sport or an interest in other aspects of the event were more positive than those who claimed no interest.

**Socio-Political Values** People who identified more with materialist goals for society such as security and economic growth (which tend to be aligned more with conservative political opinions) are more positive about the event than those who identify more with post-materialist values such as equality and civil rights.

**Table 2: Summary of previous research into intrinsic variation of residents' reactions to events**

INTRINSIC VARIABLE	NEGATIVE	UNCONCERNED	POSITIVE
Distance of residence from event zone	Travel to event zone	Involvement in tourism	Identification with theme
Socio-Political values	Live close to event zone	Visit frequently	Tend not to work in tourism
Live far away from event zone	Visit very infrequently	Tend not to work in tourism	Uninterested in motorsport
Live mid distance from event zone	Visit moderately often	Tend to work in tourism	Interested in motorsport

Tend toward postmaterialist values

Tend toward mixed values

Tend toward materialist values

In an effort to generalise these findings to a broader range of events, three case studies were included, the Australian Formula One

Grand Prix, the Melbourne Moomba Festival, and the Horsham Art is...

Festival. These events were selected to facilitate comparison of different themed events in the same community (Grand Prix compared to Moomba Festival), and comparison of similar themed events in different sized communities (Moomba festival compared to Art Is... Festival). A brief background on each of these events is provided next. Case Studies

Australian Formula One Grand Prix The Australian Formula One Grand Prix has been staged annually in Melbourne since 1996. It is a four-day event featuring qualifying, practice and support races on the first three days and the main Formula One Race on the final day (a Sunday). In the early years there was some opposition to the staging of the event in Albert Park and a number of local residents formed a vocal protest group known as ' Save Albert Park'. This group still exists, however, in recent years there has been far less publicity relating to their activities. There is evidence to suggest that resident reactions to the event have become less intense which may be due to acclimatisation or selective migration . Melbourne Moomba Festival The Melbourne Moomba Festival is an outdoor festival held over the Labour Day weekend in March in the city 5 HOST COMMUNITY PERCEPTIONS OF THE IMPACTS OF EVENTS

centre. The origins of the word ' Moomba' come from an Aboriginal word meaning 'Lets get together and have fun' and the festival features a street parade, street parties, a fireworks display, water-skiing competitions on the Yarra River, and fair-ground attractions. Moomba is managed by the City of Melbourne, and was originally held to encourage the community and visitors into the city centre. The traditional Moomba festival, however, has been re-invented and launched as Melbourne Moomba



Waterfest in 2003 merging the old and the new themes for the festival.

Moomba is 'free' to enter and is open to the public although some activities may incur a cost. In 2004, over 950,000 people attended Moomba

Waterfest. The 2004 program combined Moomba events such as the Parade, water skiing, fire show and carnival, with new programs, including a

dedicated children's entertainment area, a multicultural and community performance and workshop, starlight cinema, a series of night time 'River

Rhythms' concerts and the 'Birdman Rally.' (<http://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/info>)

Horsham Art Is... Festival. This annual event in Horsham is a ten day community celebration offering a diverse range of activities. The event

has continued to grow since 1996, and showcases performing and visual

artists from the Wimmera region, and from around the state of Victoria. The

festival involves artists from all genres and involve exhibitions, dance and

music performances. It is a community-based festival aimed at broadening

community participation and audience experience. There is a great range of

activities scheduled in both the day and night over 10 days. The event is

held in the last 10 days of March each year and relies on links with other

organisations both local and regional to launch the event. There are some

free events open to the public. Ticket costs vary between events and include

concession and family rates. 6 A Comparison of Different Event Themes in

Urban and Regional Communities Chapter 3 METHOD Definition of Population

and Selection of Sampling Frame The population of interest in each of the

case studies was defined as the permanent local population of the urban

areas in which the events take place. However, finding a sampling frame

that accurately represents this population is difficult. The two most obvious

choices are the telephone directory and electoral rolls, but each of these has their disadvantages. A third option, and the one chosen for this study, is the use of a proprietary list such as the National Consumer File maintained by Prime Prospects List Marketing. This list is based on the electoral roll but is supplemented with information from the census in an effort to overcome the representation issues associated with the rolls. This list is also updated on a more frequent basis. An arbitrary decision was made to include only residents with a 15 km radius of the centre of the event precinct. This decision was made in recognition of the localised nature of many event impacts such as noise and traffic congestion, and the need to adequately represent people living close to the event precinct. Sampling Methods Given the decision to use the National Consumer File to provide the sampling frame, a variety of stratification options were possible. Previous work in this area has employed disproportionate stratified sampling based on geographical strata, with the aim of over-representing those living closest to the events in an effort to illuminate the importance of proximity (Fredline & Faulkner 2002a, 2002b). As there is already substantial evidence of the relationship between proximity and impacts, this over-representation was not required in the current study. In the case of the two Melbourne based events, simple random sampling within the defined population was employed. In the Horsham case study, a slightly different approach was adopted because of the small population size. An entire population listing for the area was obtained (6, 000 residents) and residents were systematically selected using a sampling fraction of one in five. Administration Method The instrument was administered via a postal survey. Although this method is

not without its shortcomings, given resource limitations, it is often the most effective method for collecting data adequate for analysis. The most serious problems associated with postal surveys are low response rates, self-completion errors and missing data. Previous studies in this area would suggest that response rates in the order of 30% are possible in this type of research (Fredline 2000) provided that reminder questionnaires are dispatched. However, any non-response is an issue of concern. Although it is difficult to investigate, it seems logical to suggest that non-response to a survey investigating perceptions of the impacts of events on quality of life would be, at least to some extent, associated with a lack of concern. Although non-response bias has the potential to distort the representation of different sectors in the community, it should not impact the overall range of responses observed. The second major problem associated with a postal survey is erroneous or missing data. The most effective tactics for minimising this problem include employing good instrument design principles and pilot testing, and these strategies were utilised in this study.

**Instrument Design** The instrument was designed utilising statements from previous event and tourism literature with the inclusion of additional items from the social capital literature. Three slightly different versions of the instrument were developed for the three different events, the only differences being variation as necessary to allow for differences in the types of event and locations. A copy of the instrument used for the Grand Prix is presented in Appendix A. Following the methods of Fredline (2000), the main dependant variables, namely, residents' perceptions of the impacts of events, were measured using a three part scale. The scale included 45

impact statements (42 of which are common to all instruments), and residents were first asked to assess whether they believed the item had changed because of the event and to identify the direction of the change. If residents did perceive a change, 7 HOST COMMUNITY PERCEPTIONS OF THE IMPACTS OF EVENTS they were subsequently asked to assess the effect on their personal quality of life, and also the effect on the community as a whole. These latter two assessments were measured using a seven point Likert type scale ranging from -3 (very negative impact) to +3 (very positive impact). Other sections included the questions measuring the independent variables and demographic information. These variables were included to examine variations in perceptions within communities. Given that the instrument used in this study drew very heavily upon an instrument that was used successfully in previous research (Fredline 2000; Fredline & Faulkner 2002a), it was considered that there was no need to employ an extensive pre/pilot testing phase. However, prior to the data collection phase, the instrument was tested with an appropriate group for comprehension and ease of completion. The final instrument included approximately 80 questions and spread over 12 pages, and would be considered long by any standards. Pilot testing indicated that it would take between 15 and 30 minutes to fully complete. In an effort to boost response, an incentive was offered in the form of a \$500 lottery for full completion by the specified date. However, given the length and complexity of the instrument, a low response rate was anticipated. As previously mentioned, non-response creates concerns about representativeness and bias. Nevertheless, such a large instrument was considered necessary to fully consider all of the potential

impacts of the events and to assess the differences and similarities across events. At this stage of scale development, therefore, it was decided that, in the trade-off between parsimony and thoroughness, priority should be given to thoroughness. In subsequent stages, once a suitable level of understanding has been reached about the underlying dimensions of event impacts as perceived by the host community, this lengthy scale will be replaced a compressed scale which is easier to administer and promotes higher rates of response. Response Given the anticipation of low response, large numbers of survey packages were dispatched for each event, with the aim of achieving datasets in the order of 200-300 responses for each event. For each of the two Melbourne based events, 2, 400 questionnaires were distributed, while in Horsham, 1, 400 packages were sent out. The usable returns for the Grand Prix, the Moomba Festival, and the Horsham Art Is... Festival were 279, 181 and 96 respectively, representing effective response rates of 13%, 8%, and 8%. The demographic characteristics of the sample were compared to known population parameters from the 2001 Census Data. As can be seen in Table 3, young people are substantially underrepresented in the sample, as are non-Australian born residents. Given that such demographic groups are less likely to be captured on electoral rolls, this result is not unexpected. Other demographic groups appear to be adequately represented.

8 A Comparison of Different Event Themes in Urban and Regional Communities

Table 3: Response for all events

FREQUENCY	PERCENT POPULATION	PROPORTION	Gender	Age (Mean = 50.9 years)																	
Female	Male	18-29 years	30-39 years	40-49 years	50-59 years	60-69 years	70-79 years	80 years and over	263	276	31	99	135	114	73	55	13	34	60	88	55

66 91 122 303 21 109 11 16 42 259 116 61 107 48. 8 51. 2 6. 0 19. 0 26. 0  
21. 9 14. 0 10. 6 2. 5 6. 4 11. 2 16. 4 10. 3 12. 3 17. 0 22. 8 60. 4 4. 2 21. 7  
2. 2 3. 2 8. 4 47. 7 21. 4 11. 2 19. 7 51. 05 48. 95 23. 48 21. 23 19. 17 15. 04  
9. 58 7. 46 4. 03 22. 8 (12. 592) 0. 2 (3. 841) Highest education level  
completed No formal qualifications Completed year 10 at school Completed  
year 12 Trade Qualification Technical College/TAFE Diploma Undergraduate  
Degree Post Graduate Degree No equivalent data available Employment  
status Employed Unemployed Retired Student Student/part-time work Home  
duties 56. 8 4. 1 Not in Labour Force 39. 1 0. 6 (5. 991) Total born in  
Australia 65. 75 34. 25 9. 4 (3. 841) Where were you born? Melbourne  
Elsewhere in Victoria Elsewhere in Australia In another country 2 \*The  
calculated value of  $\chi^2$  appears first, with the appropriate critical value  
enclosed in parentheses. However, demographic representativeness does  
not necessarily imply adequate representation in terms of variation in  
perceptions of event impacts. Based on previous research, it would be  
expected that at least three different subgroups would exist within the  
community, namely, those who have largely negative perceptions of the  
impacts of the event(s) on their personal quality of life, those who are  
predominantly positively disposed, and those who are largely unconcerned,  
perceiving little or no impacts of the event(s). Given the high non-response,  
it would seem likely that the latter group would be underrepresented, as  
their motivation to participate in the survey would probably be lower than  
those whose feelings were more intense. Previous research has also tended  
to indicate that the unconcerned sector of the community is the largest  
(Fredline 2000). This likely lack of proportional representation at this stage of

scale development is not of major concern. The main aim is to ensure that the range of perceptions is covered, and indeed, adequate proportional representation would be likely to yield very low sample sizes at the extreme ends of the spectrum, hindering statistical comparison. The preliminary results presented below should not, therefore, be considered as absolute indicators of the impacts of events on the quality of life of Melbourne and Horsham residents. However, given that the same methods have been used in each case study, it can be assumed that any biases are fairly consistent across the data sets. Thus, the results can be used as an indicator of issues of relative importance and as a mechanism for comparison across events, communities, and community sub-groups.

## 9 HOST COMMUNITY PERCEPTIONS OF THE IMPACTS OF EVENTS

### Chapter 4 RESULTS

The following results section initially presents an overall comparison of the three events and then investigates the intrinsic variation in resident perceptions of the events.

#### Overall Perceptions of Impacts

As referred to in method section, the main dependant variables, perception of