



6 March 2017

Mr Troy Green  
General Manager  
Tweed Shire Council  
P O Box 816  
Murwillumbah, NSW, 2484

Dear Troy,

**Tweed Council Support for the iconic Cooly Rocks On™ Festival**

On behalf of Connecting Southern Gold Coast, the Event Managers and IP owners of Cooly Rocks On™, please find attached a funding submission document for consideration by Tweed Shire Council.

Cooly Rocks On™ has a rich history in the Tweed region, being staged in various formats from the historic Wintersun through to the incarnation that it is today and is truly an integral part of the social fabric of the area.

Proudly, the event brings millions of dollars into the economy during what is generally a quiet tourism period and economically is lifeblood for many stakeholders. While the namesake of the event is 'Cooly', the effects of the event flow directly into the gateway of Tweed with not only the event program, but with accommodation and business engagement.

Cooly Rocks On™ simply cannot survive without stakeholder support and long term partnerships and investment both on a financial and in-kind basis. The event is a pillar for the businesses in the Coolangatta / Tweed, and as such, we ask that the Tweed Shire Council consider our application for contractual support for the festival.

Thank you in anticipation for your favourable consideration.

Kind regards

Peter Doggett  
Chief Executive Officer

c.c. Kerrie McConnell  
Events Co-ordinator

**Connecting Southern Gold Coast Ltd** ABN 63 133 678 841

5/421 Golden Four Drive Tugun Q 4224

**E** | [info@southerngoldcoast.com.au](mailto:info@southerngoldcoast.com.au)

**P** | 07 5534 3500

**F** | 07 3259 8510

CONNECTING SOUTHERN  
**GOLD COAST.**

## THE HISTORY OF COOLY ROCKS ON™



In June 2010, the sun set on the festival that became an institution within Coolangatta and Tweed being *WINTERSUN*, and ending its 32 year history in the region. Upon hearing the news the festival was headed south, more than 250 local Tweed and Coolangatta, the Chambers of Commerce and Connecting Southern Gold Coast (CSGC) pledged unwavering support for a replacement festival to be developed and delivered, therefore ensuring that the massive influx of tourists and the tens of millions of tourism dollars continued to roll into the local economy annually.

With a vision to become Australia's foremost nostalgia and Rock 'n' Roll festival, the Coolsy Rocks On™ event concept was born by a group of festival organisers (CRO Inc.) and in 2011 delivered the first incredibly successful festival. The mission of Coolsy Rocks On™ was clear, "to drive a significant economic benefit the Southern Gold Coast and Tweed Region during a tourism shoulder and quiet period through attracting tourists and, with a formula of delivering a premiere festival, encouraging increased length of stay and spending."

After six, very well attended events (with attendee numbers ranging from well over 95,000 to 115,000) the financial strains of such an enormous festival proved unsurmountable for CRO Inc. as a group of volunteers and as the Owners of the IP the Board of Connecting Southern Gold Coast decided to bring the Festival "in house" in 2017.

The main reasons behind the financial issues were;

- Significant 'weather events' during the 2016 event impacted crowd numbers.
- The reliance on ticketed events as a financial model did not deliver the desired outcome.
- The festival had become far too large and involved for essentially a voluntary committee to manage.

CSGC's Board determined that Coolsy Rocks On™ from 2017 onwards should be managed "in house" as greater efficiencies were available with a renewed business model, backed by strong governance and financial management.

Coolsy Rocks On™ will stay true to its roots by continuing to feature and promote all things "retro", including rock'n'roll, rockabilly and swing bands, dancing, fashions from the 50s and 60s, retro-stocked market stalls, and custom and classic cars and hot rods.



## 2017 AND BEYOND – THE FUTURE



With CSGC taking the reins of Cooly Rocks On™, there is a new look and feel to the festival with a strong business model and a view to engage and deliver successful stakeholder collaborations to drive sustainability and a return on investment.

### The 2017 Festival Aim

Set on a combination of outdoor stages and venues within the beachside streetscape of iconic Coolangatta and the Tweed, the core strength of Cooly Rocks On™ is the destination; the spectacular Southern Gold Coast and Tweed region, the relaxed and friendly hospitality and family-friendly atmosphere for which the area is renowned.

Cooly Rocks On™ winds through Coolangatta and the Tweed, taking in not only the beachside laid back vibe, but the myriad of stakeholders within the precincts. Being able to relax and take in the atmosphere from the balcony of one of the many accommodation options, or one of the restaurants, cafes or bars that line the streets is a drawcard and adds to the festival's unique feel.

Cooly Rocks On™ is quite simply a tourism product with 95% of visitors coming from outside the Southern Gold Coast area (*source: 2015 Independent Visitor Research Report*). The objectives of the festival from 2017 and beyond are to;

- Deliver a strategically planned and sustainable festival,
- Deliver a festival that provides opportunities for all stakeholders from accommodation providers, local businesses and service providers who share in the economic benefits of the festival,
- Drive interstate visitation,
- Drive increased length of stay and increased unique visitation, and
- Focus on driving an increase in visitation and appeal to the 18-45 demographic. A growth demographic for long term sustainability.
- Introduce a refreshed, new look Cooly Rocks On™ brand (currently under trademark registration).



### The Uniqueness of Cooly Rocks On™.

Cooly Rocks On™ is uniquely different and is one of the only major cross-border events in the country. It is a true destination event with thousands of festival goers flocking from all parts of Australia (and NZ) for the annual sojourn.



There is diversity within the region that is and will continue to be the recipe of its success from the point of view that there are so many accommodation options available within the Tweed region from 5-Star penthouses through to Motels and Caravan Parks. There are also a wide range of businesses within the Tweed from venues through to retail, restaurants and parks that all play a major part in the delivering a successful program and festival.

The tremendous Economic Impact (\$35.6million in 2015 *source: 2015 Independent Visitor Research Report*) is also felt throughout the entire Tweed and Coolangatta region. Tweed receives a level of 13% of this spend (Source Destination Research 2015)

## Collaboration and Connectivity

The key to success for the Cooly Rocks On™ festival is stakeholder collaboration and connectivity. The economic benefits of such an event are far reaching, and the CSGC Event Business Model is designed for each and every business in the region to leverage opportunities to maximise their return.

CGSC has begun and will continue to drive the engagement and participation of all businesses in the area with new opportunities to partner with the event and there is a real sense of ownership that will ultimately drive sustainability and purpose.

The support from Tweed and Coolangatta businesses and the ability to work together has been incredibly successful to date and the aim is to leverage effective cross-promotions with major venues and stakeholders and drive “in-kind” marketing support and promotion.



Effective communication and offering inclusion within the festival has been a major factor in bringing these businesses together, and along with designing elements of the festival that truly incorporate the Tweed not only Coolangatta such as;

- Utilisation of major venues such as Twin Towns, Tweed Heads Bowls Club, Jack Evans Boat Harbour, Tweed City Shopping Centre
- Inclusion of a Car Run taking in the region as far down as Kingscliff
- Engagement with accommodation properties.

Engaged stakeholders also drive a positive experience for the festival goer, which in turn, drives repeat visitation... the ultimate goal.



## **The 2017 Major Festival Changes**

Through extensive research and analysis, we have identified the event was spread over too many days; the entertainment was not as high quality as it could have been; the budget was stretched way too thinly, and that it was a confusing event for attendees with some elements ticketed and some completely free.

From 2017, CGSC have made some major strategic changes that will shape this already iconic event to ensure it is the premier festival in the nation, and one that is sustainable and achieves the ultimate economic and tourism benefit for all stakeholders.

### **COOLY ROCKS ON™ IS NOW A FREE DAY TIME EVENT.**

The decision to deliver the entire event free to the public was made to;

- Deliver festival inspired spending to the Coolangatta and Tweed stakeholders (rather than an event promoter),
- Give the festival goer an enhanced experience and encouraging an increase length of stay and event options, and
- Drive an increase in unique event-specific attendees.
- All major day time entertainment is free throughout outdoor stages and is complimented by entertainment in major venues at night. (Pubs and Clubs)

### **COOLY ROCKS ON™ IS NOW A FIVE DAY EVENT**

What used to be a 10 day festival, the 2017 event will be running from Wednesday to Sunday (7 to 11 June 2017) with an enhanced and consolidated program. The decision was made to;

- Deliver a premier product with a focus on premier entertainment,
- We have improved the quality of entertainment and merged into five jam packed days, and
- Festival goers were staying on average up to six/seven nights, and this program will deliver a similar yield.

In addition to this, CSGC are delivering a satellite event the Sunday prior to the festival (Sunday 4 June) as a 4 hour "Tribute to Rock n Roll" show which will feature named headline artists and is designed to link the two weekends and drive extended visitation from interstate and intrastate guests. This is adding four more hours and extended days of "free" entertainment for lovers of music from the 50s and 60s!

### **THE ENHANCED FESTIVAL PROGRAM AND FOOTPRINT**

The 2017 Cooly Rocks On™ Festival will focus on an increased level of entertainment, and will deliver an enhanced footprint such as;

- Changes in the locations of the main stages - the main stage that was location in Marine Parade will now be located in Queen Elizabeth Park, and the two other main stages will be located at the north and south end of Griffith Street.

- Inclusion as programmed venues at the Tweed Heads Bowls Club, Twin Towns and the utilisation of Jack Evans Boat Harbour.



### NEW BRAND – NEW LOOK – NEW FEEL

CSGC has already invested significance funding and resources into refreshing the brand and the event delivering;

- **A new logo.** A fresh and on brand logo and style guide that is being distributed to all partners and stakeholders to ensure brand consistency.
- **A new website.** A new and easy to navigate website is designed to not only make the program easy to digest, but highlights Cooly Rocks On™ accommodation and venue partners.
- **A free Festival APP.** The APP is designed to enhance the festival goers experience with interactive maps and the program right at their fingertips.
- **A refreshed printed program/pocket guide.** A 44 page A6 sized “Pocket Program” will be designed and delivered to key information outlets accommodation houses and businesses. This will be a comprehensive guide to the festival, venue locations, and other important information. There will be 25,000 printed and distributed to stakeholders and attendees (up from 20,000 the previous years).
- **A refreshed merchandise offering.** The merchandise will now be outsourced which has a two-fold benefit; it lowers the financial risk, and drives a larger and better range of product than ever before.
- **Cooly Rocks Radio.** This is an innovative and exciting addition to the festival with Cooly Rocks Radio broadcasting from the festival throughout the duration. This initiative brings real benefit to not only the festival goer, with news, information and music, but gives the ability to advertise partners and stakeholders and highlight businesses in the Tweed and Coolangatta area. Jack Evans Boat Harbour will be part of this distribution within the delivery of music and announcements.

### THE ACTIVATIONS AND PROGRAM OF EVENTS

Engaging activations are key to the uniqueness and vibe of the festival as it is not purely a music event and therefore delivering activations within the program is imperative.

Additional activations include;

- Tribute to Rock N Roll Show (Sunday June 4)
- Show’n’Shine car display 1,200+ hot rods, vintage and classic cars (Kirra to Tweed)
- Evening car cruises throughout the streets of the Southern Gold Coast (Coolangatta to Kirra return) Friday/Saturday from 6.30 pm.
- Pedal Car Show’n’Shine (children’s event)





- Family Fireworks – Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> June to complement the Car Cruise.
- Cooly Rocks On™ Street Parade with floats, cars, dancers, walkers, bands, guest artists (Saturday June 10)
- Outdoor entertainment & music stages, throughout the Cooly Rocks On™ precincts plus “Buskers” in the street.
- Hokey Pokey Beach Party
- Vintage Van Display on the Tweed
- Drive-in movies - Jack Evans Boat Harbour on the Tweed over three nights.
- 50s & 60s Film Festival - ‘The Bests of the Classics’ proposed for Birch Carroll & Coyle Coolangatta (under negotiation)
- Pop up dance competitions, throughout the Cooly Rocks On™ precincts
- Retro markets, exhibitors and food stalls
- 2017 Poodle Parade (family event)
- Carnival Showrides
- Miss Cooly Rocks On™ Pageant; Miss Rockabilly Pageant
- Skydiving display on June 10 and 11
- Northern NSW Car Run to Kingscliff
- Kooly Kats Dance Championships at Tweed Civic Centre (June 10 and 11)
- Interactive Dance Workshops at Tweed Civic Centre throughout the festival (June 7 to 11)
- Frankie J Holden / Cooly Rocks On™ Show at Queen Elizabeth Park Stage (June 10 and 11)

## MARKETABILITY OF COOLY ROCKS ON™

Over the past six years, Cooly Rocks On™ has begun diversifying the product by adding elements to attract a younger demographic. Industry patterns and research from dance and car clubs indicate that the younger market start out with a preference for rockabilly, before moving to rock’n’roll as they age. The addition of more rockabilly music and retro fashion events have proved successful in attracting a younger demographic.

It is also now acknowledged that attendance at the festival spans generations. For many, cars, a love of dancing and rock’n’roll music or a love of vintage fashion, has been passed down through generations. Couples, their children, and grandchildren, travel to Cooly Rocks On™ as an annual family excursion or holiday.

What has been evident over the past festivals is the marketability and viability of Cooly Rocks On™. The genre consistently evolves and the eclectic vibe delivers an incredible experience to all who attend.

The fundamental purpose of Cooly Rocks On™ however is to deliver the precinct with additional economic stimulus during the quieter winter months and strategically this creates continual economic wealth within a low season.





There are a number of key marketable features to Cooly Rocks On™;

- The iconic beachside location is a draw card for those from interstate seeking an annual holiday away from the cold winter months.
- The location is set within the Coolangatta and Tweed CBDs with a wide range of restaurants, cafes, bars, shopping and services.
- There is a huge variety of accommodation options available from motel rooms, caravan parks to ocean view apartments. Savvy festival goers can book accommodation with their balcony overlooking the festival footprint or a short walk from some of the major venues.
- The entire festival is incredibly easy to get around.
- The Gold Coast Airport is right on the doorstep. The festival is located five minutes from the major transport hub of Coolangatta Airport which links to all major ports nationally, plus New Zealand and Asia.
- The Gold Coast is Australia’s favourite holiday playground with so many other activities and attractions such as whale watching, theme parks, hinterland walks, scenic flights and shopping.
- Plus from 2017, the most notable feature is that the festival is now entirely “free” by day!

## Visitor Profile

| Target Market   | Profile   | Seeking   |
|---|---|---|
| Baby boomers (BB)<br>55+<br>39% of total visitation   | Exposed from young age to rock’n’roll music; have personal attachment/ experience with music, cars, dancing of the 50s and 60s; enjoying wealth and comfort of retirement; holiday lovers; disposable income from investments; car enthusiasts; ageing surfers; many still rely on traditional print media e.g. television for news, current affairs; moderate but increasing focus on social media; many repeat and interstate visitors. | Nostalgic atmosphere, rock’n’roll music, coastal lifestyle, cars, reminiscing, lifestyle.               |
| DINKS (DNKS)<br>40-54<br>31% of total visitation      | Dual income, no kids; disposable income to spend on cars and holidays; car enthusiasts and collectors; participate in car clubs, dance clubs, social groups; travel from interstate or Southeast Queensland; enjoy travel with family/ friends/social or sporting clubs; Facebook users; many repeat visitors.  | 50s and 60s rock’n’roll culture, dancing, group holidays, attending in social groups, groups of friends |
| New recruits (NR)<br>18-39<br>19% of total visitation | Enjoy rockabilly music; rockabilly culture; vintage fashion, hair, make-up; more likely to attend many nostalgia festivals annually and make comparisons; social media users (Facebook, Instagram, twitter); Southeast Queensland or locals.  | Rockabilly culture, retro fashions, cars, motorcycles, tattoos, family activities                       |

**Visitor Stay:** (Conducted by Destination Research in 2015)

Research indicated the average length of stay for this event is 5.5 nights.





## Our Marketing Strategies and Event Driving Strategies

Driving visitation from the drive and interstate market is a core focus. These festival goers tend to stay for a longer duration and have a higher yield. Through this focus, we will primarily drive our digital media channels and work with our partner channels to drive visitation.

We have sought to cement media and marketing partnerships and have focused on driving the event through collaborations that maximise our investment.

Collaborations with major Tweed and Gold Coast stakeholders (along with Destination Tweed, Gold Coast Tourism and Tourism and Events QLD) and partnerships will be a key focus for us for the event, especially where this leads into activating interstate channels.



Of paramount importance is the increased use of digital platforms. We will be increasing this engagement and strategy and investing further as the ROI is very high and the most targeted form of advertising worldwide.

Leveraging all media spend with PR, editorial and promotional opportunities will also be a key focus along with the opportunities to expand our reach. The messaging will predominantly feature;

- The artists performing at the 2017 festival and the program.
- The fact that the festival is completely 'free' to attend by day.
- The more condensed dates of the festival.
- The location and the festival footprint with access to accommodation, dining and shopping.
- The number of indoor venues hosting quality acts over the entire five (5) day festival.

NBN Television are a major media partner and are investing in the event with a commercial campaign spanning from Newcastle in the south through to Tamworth in the West and north to the entire NSW North Coast and Gold Coast region.

We have also engaged the Gold Coast's number one radio station, 102.9 Hot Tomato who will make the event a pillar and major focus of the station.

We will have a significant street and visual presence in the area and will have 50 street banners placed throughout the Gold and Tweed Coast, of which 15 will be positioned south of the border in Tweed Heads for maximum exposure as the north bound gateway.

Within this, we are also focusing on digital marketing channels and collaborations along with a heavy PR and publicity focus.



## Our Growth and Sustainability Strategies

To meet our vision and to take Cooly Rocks On™ to the next level, we have a number of goals for 2017 and beyond being;

- Increase funding and strategic support for a new, enhanced and sustainable program of Cooly Rocks On™ festival events;
- Revitalise and strengthen the image and appeal of Cooly Rocks On™ and highlight the benefits of visiting the region for the festival through a measured and effective multi-channel campaign;
- New product development based on future sustainability;
- Determine gaps and identify opportunities for product growth;
- Create opportunities to promote the festival to a broader market, nationally and internationally, with a focus on emerging international markets via Gold Coast Airport;
- Establish a collaborative partnership approach to marketing Cooly Rocks On™ between the City of Gold Coast and Tweed Council
- Enhance sense of ownership and civic pride in Cooly Rocks On™ within the local community;
- Given the limited funding and human resources vs the size and scope of the festival, establish clear delineation of key marketing roles and operational framework, responsibilities and priorities, in order to successfully manage the five-day program.



## CONNECTING COOLANGATTA AND THE TWEED



CSGC has a broad and realistic view of what Cooly Rocks On™ is... and that is a true tourism product designed to bring a massive ROI and Economic Benefit to the Coolangatta /Tweed regions.

The event simply must remain and for this to happen and it needs to be supported from both sides of the border and by all stakeholders who the event is designed to benefit.

CSGC has put considerable time and resources into engagement and collaborations and these have been on both the event side and business engagement.



### Tweed Event Engagement

This exciting and incredibly unique cross border event will encompass the Tweed like never before. There are a number of features including;

- A Cooly Rocks On™ Car Run to Kingscliff.
- Kooly Kats Dance Championships at the Tweed Civic Hall in Tweed Heads which will attract more than 400 people and 7 interstate Judges.
- Free entertainment by day, and evening entertainment will be in venues which are all mostly in NSW.
- The use of Jack Evans Boat Harbour as a major venue for;
  - Car Boot Sale
  - Cars and Vintage Van displays and Stalls
  - A 20m x 10m Roller-skating Rink from June 7 to 11 from 11 am till 5pm)
  - An Iconic Swap Meet – June 10, 7am till 11am
  - Dyna Racing - one of the biggest highlights on the program. This static platform measures a cars horsepower and puts on a display of incredible ‘grunt’ for spectators .
  - “Free” Drive- in movies over three nights (for 120 cars each night)

In the future, there will be even more engagement, particularly for the 2018 event. Queen Elizabeth Park in Coolangatta is the venue for Beach Volleyball for the 2018 Commonwealth Games (April). There is a grey area as to whether the park will be delivered back ready for use in time for Cooly Rocks On™, and therefore the main stage that is usually in this park, could likely be moved into a suitable venue within the Tweed.



## Tweed Business Engagement

The support for Cooly Rocks On™ for 2017 by local businesses is as strong as it has ever been. CSGC have spent considerable time engaging the stakeholders of the Tweed – and giving them all the tools possible to maximise their benefit from the event and the increase in tourism.

The engagement has swelled from a sense of ownership of the event we have communicated the changes and offered tangible options for them to leverage from the festival. We have spent resources seeking the support in becoming “Venue” Sponsors and hosts which has been directed at accommodation houses, motel and caravan parks and giving entertainment venues and local businesses the opportunity to partner with Cooly Rocks On™.

Proudly to date, we have 12 Tweed properties committed and featured as accommodation partners on our website and we proactively promote them through all of our relevant marketing channels.

We have also secured the support of a number of businesses in the Tweed who are promoted as partners along with Tweed Council and Destination Tweed being promoted as a ‘Presentation Partners’.

Major Tweed stakeholders such as Tweed Mall Shopping Centre, Tweed Heads Bowls Club and Twin Towns are also on board as venues and are leveraging the event to gain maximum economic benefit. We are also currently in discussion with several other Tweed venues for potential ‘buy in’.

## Furture plans

It is within our forward planning to hold one or two ‘satellite’ events in 2017/2018 in the region, to boost the brand and the appeal of Cooly Rocks On™. We firmly believe the Cooly Rocks On™ footprint will expand through such an initiative.

Plans and negotiations are currently underway to bring a National prime time television show to the Tweed in 2018, in conjunction with the festival.



## TWEED COUNCIL INVESTMENT



We have a clear business model to drive sustainability and growth for Cools Rocks On™. Quite simply, Cools Rocks On™ must remain. The millions of dollars it injects into the region is lifeblood for all businesses within the Coolangatta and Tweed area.

This is a destination tourism product and to remain viable, needs sound support from both sides of the border. The Economic Impact is undeniable, \$35.6million spread throughout the region in what is a traditionally a low season for tourism.

We are seeking multi-faceted support from Tweed Shire Council for Cools Rocks On™ to engage with and sustain the future of the event for Tweed stakeholders. The economic stimulus and return on investment for the Tweed is significant.

We are looking to secure a full partnership with Tweed Shire Council through;

- **An Investment of \$15,000 per annum for a minimum two year period.** This will be injected directly in the Interstate Marketing of Cools Rocks On™, and the engagement of “Strategic Facts” – an Independent Tourism Research company, to deliver a report on the tourism and economic Impact to the Tweed region of the event.
- **A new contract** between Tweed Council and CSGC as the previous contract with the previous event organisers is now void.
- **The ability to leverage the marketing and publicity of Cools Rocks On™ through Tweed Shire Council and Destination Tweed** channels as a major pillar and major event in the region

In return for the above investment, CSGC will work with the Tweed region and Council, to provide a sustainable event that is not only backed by sound financials and governance, but will deliver an economic impact through an incredible annual tourism product to the region.



6/3/17