



18th July 2005

Mark & Jeanette Jones
TRAC Consulting
Facilitators – SBECF Mentoring Program

Dear Mark & Jeanette,

We are very happy that our local Tourism and Commerce Association had the opportunity to organise the Business Mentoring Program that you ran for us operators here in Cooktown. It has opened our minds to numerous new possibilities for our business and for ourselves.

Leaving NSW just over four years ago and coming to Cooktown we had no idea that the word "remote" meant more than geographical. Basic services and choices that people take for granted in populated areas, e.g. any bank you want, shops, and even blood banks, government bodies. Just completing everyday activities is a chore that has to be done by phone or Internet because it does not exist in remote areas or they come only once a month.

Starting a new business from scratch in a new field, offered many challenges but when we needed advise on technical or financial considerations for our business we felt like we would become just one of the stats that say "*a high percentage of new businesses will fold within the first five years*". As such it was timely for us to be involved in your business-mentoring program, though it would have been useful bit earlier too!

We feel we have done the hard yards and laid the foundation for our business, now it is time for us to start to make our business work for us- instead us working for our business!

You have energised us and given us plenty of information and connections to move up to that next stage of our businesses life cycle. You have also given us the tools to work out each stage from marketing to retirement. We can't thank you enough!

The other interesting benefit to your training has been the networking opportunities and connecting us to other business people here in Cooktown as well as the Lord Mayor Bob Sullivan who I now feel I can go to with new business development ideas and concerns. Another solid block for us to build on!

So, thank you both Jeanette & Mark for the giving of your time and all your vast knowledge and experience and also for giving us a clearer vision of how to maximise our business opportunities here in Cooktown.

With the completion of the bitumen road between Cape Tribulation and Cooktown to be completed before the end of 2005 we believe Cooktown is on the threshold of huge tourism growth and we now more confident in our ability to prepare our business for this opportunity.

We will definitely keep in touch.

Cheers
Stephen & Kim Budd
Ribbon Reef Pty Ltd

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