

Alice Springs and MacDonnell Ranges Region Destination Management Plan ANNUAL REPORT CARD 2021

Overview

The Alice Springs and MacDonnell Ranges Region Destination Management Plan (DMP) is a plan for the region that focuses on development priorities for the sustainable growth of tourism over 10 years.

The DMP was released in 2020 and will be reviewed every two years to ensure action plans and the prioritisation of product development opportunities align within the context of the current environment, including demand.

The annual scorecard measures the progress of outcomes and includes key performance metrics for the region such as visitor numbers, expenditure, satisfaction rating, online feedback/ reviews and digital data.

Read more about Destination Management Plans here:

tourismnt.com.au/research-strategies/destination-management-plans



Ellery Creek Big Hole, Tjoritja-West MacDonnell National Park



Outback Ballooning



Earth Sanctuary Observatory, Alice Springs

Alice Springs and MacDonnell Ranges Region

The Alice Springs and MacDonnell Ranges region makes up a significant portion of Central Australia and is characterised by unique desert environments.

Visitor experiences in the region focus on nature, Aboriginal culture, adventure, history and events.

The region includes the Territory's second most populated centre of Alice Springs, which forms an important service point for communities and visitors across Central Australia.





Alice Springs, East MacDonnell Ranges

Website visitation statistics

<https://northernterritory.com/alice-springs-and-surrounds>

Alice Springs and surrounds

741,292

↑162%

Unique visitors

280,125

↑115%

It is expected that in the short to medium term, increased digital traffic will have a delayed impact on actual visitation numbers, due to COVID-19 and movement restrictions that prevailed in the Northern Territory over the reporting period.

Achievements January - December 2021

- Department of Chief Minister and Cabinet established a working group for a potential adventure hub development.
- New owners of Glen Helen Resort and Crowne Plaza Alice Springs Lasseters commenced enhancements of their properties.
- Works commenced to revitalise the Alice Springs central business district.
- Developed minimum tourism amenity standards for towns in the Northern Territory to set best-practice standards to cater for tourism visitors.
- Supported industry in reviewing and understanding ReviewPro and other online visitor satisfaction reports.
- Delivered the Northern Territory Drive Tourism Strategy 2021-2030 to support investment in road infrastructure and linkage of tourism priorities.
- Aligned Tourism NT grant program outcomes with DMP priorities and accessibility criteria.
- Delivered Book Now grant programs to facilitate packaging of tourism experiences in the region.
- Undertook an accessibility project to assist tourism operators on the steps required to become more inclusive and cater for a greater range of visitors.
- Advocated for increased investment in communications infrastructure in the region through the round 5A bid of the Australian Government's Mobile Black Spot program.
- Developed a tourism roads priorities document articulating priority infrastructure works in the region that would greatly increase tourism.
- Heritage Branch reconstructed Ryan Well with interpretations of the elaborate well 'whip' system operated by camels.

Visitation and expenditure in the Alice Springs and MacDonnell Ranges Region

265,000

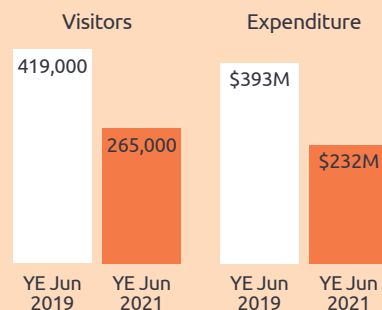
Visitors ↓37%

Holiday
Visiting friends and family
Business
Other (ie work/ study)

\$232M

Expenditure ↓41%

↓59%
↓15%
↓17%
↑33%



Visitation to the region has been greatly impacted by the pandemic, including the restriction to travel and low levels of consumer confidence.

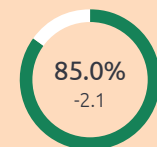
Comparisons are year on year, unless otherwise stated.

Visitor satisfaction rating

Based on establishments – attractions, hotels, caravan parks and wayside inns (not food and hospitality providers) – ReviewPro data;

Summary

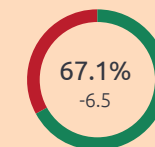
Global Review Index™



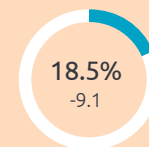
Reviews



Semantic Analysis



Management Response



Increase in positive reviews on:

- Security ↑7.1
- Camping ↑5.7
- Sustainability ↑6.7

Decrease in positive reviews on:

- Service ↓11.2
- Staff ↓5.6
- Room ↓4.4
- Experience ↓4.7

GRI decrease for Alice Springs MacDonnell Ranges Region is as a result of receiving less positive reviews and the flow-on effect of staff shortages. The semantic analysis confirms this with a spike in negative reviews in key categories including cleanliness, facilities, experience, staff, service and value.

Progress on priority product development opportunities

Mount Sonder Lookout, Tjoritja-West MacDonnell National Park

Product opportunity	Progress achieved
Alice Springs	
Establish the National Aboriginal Art Gallery (NAAG).	Department of the Chief Minister and Cabinet (DCM&C) continued discussions with Traditional Owner groups and the community on the development.
Establish the National Indigenous Cultural Centre.	DCM&C continued discussions with Traditional Owner groups and the community on the development.
Expand mountain biking experiences and services.	Traditional Owners of Yeperenye Dreaming built a 7km walking and cycling trail connecting Anthwerke (Emily Gap) and Atherrke (Jessie Gap).
Consolidate and expand the business and leisure event infrastructure and experience offer.	The first Dark Skies Festival was held in May 2021 by Earth Sanctuary. NT Major Events Company continue to grow large leisure events.
Develop new and support the upgrade of cultural and heritage tourism experiences.	Provided support and advice to various cultural attractions.
Develop new products that further enhance tourism experiences between and including the Telegraph Station, NAAG and CBD.	DCM&C consulted with Traditional Owner groups through the Lhere Artepe Indigenous Land Use Agreements working group.
Establish a new contemporary visitor information centre with possible collaboration opportunities.	Tourism Central Australia commenced investigating alternative locations and enhancement opportunities.
Establish and improve quality Alice Springs accommodation offerings.	New owners of Crowne Plaza Alice Springs Lasseters commenced enhancements of the property.
Plenty Highway	
Complete the sealing of the Outback Way and upgrade the wayside facilities and experiences	Developed the NT Drive Tourism Strategy 2021-2030. Roadhouse to Recovery round 1 funding supported Tobermorey Station and Roadhouse to install two new family cabins. Further sections of Plenty Highway continue to be sealed.

Product opportunity	Progress achieved
Tjoritja/ West MacDonnell Ranges	
Establish an iconic, sustainable and in-landscape accommodation facility in the West MacDonnell Ranges.	Provided support to private operator establishing accommodation facility in the Ormiston Gorge area. New owners of Glen Helen Resort investing in upgrades.
Develop a hub for world class adventure experiences set within the MacDonnell Ranges.	DCM&C established a working group for a potential adventure hub development.
Finalise the Red Centre Adventure Ride.	Consultation continued with Traditional Owner groups on the development of the Red Centre Adventure Ride trail.
Finke Gorge National Park	
Establish a walking trail linking Ntaria/ Hermannsburg to the Finke Gorge National Park.	No progress but new walks inside the National Park were considered.
Ntaria/ Hermannsburg	
Expand Aboriginal cultural experiences.	Aboriginal Tourism grant funding supported Hermannsburg Potters for signage upgrades. Community representatives attended the Camping with Custodians WA study tour in June 2021.
Develop the Namatjira Art Gallery in Ntaria/ Hermannsburg.	Consultation with Traditional Owner groups and local community commenced.
Finalise the redevelopment of the Hermannsburg Historic Precinct.	Completed the stage 1 restoration and interpretation works in April 2021. Commenced stage 2 restoration of remaining buildings.
Alice Springs & MacDonnell region	
Develop night time tourism experiences.	Grant/ funding program developed for release by EOI in early 2022.
Develop experiences that service the knowledge and education sectors expectations.	Desert Knowledge Australia and various private operators commenced establishing education specific campgrounds and tours.
Seal the Mereenie Loop Road to better connect Watarrka and West MacDonnell National Parks.	Work continues to secure funding for this project. NT Drive Tourism Strategy 2021-2030 outlines this a priority one drive.
Develop the Stuart Highway WWII and pastoral history journey experience.	NT Drive Tourism Strategy 2021-2030 provides high level initiative regarding the highway stories and interpretation.



Finke 2 Mile campground, Tjoritja-West MacDonnell National Park

Future focus

- Support the priority investment opportunities including sealing the Mereenie Loop Road, Outback Way, National Aboriginal Art Gallery and National Indigenous Cultural Centre.
- Upgrade the Red Centre Way interpretation signage.
- Commence a community tourism skills development trial for the Hermannsburg Historic Precinct.
- Deliver, in partnership with Charles Darwin University, a Tour Guide Ready program.
- Complete stage 2 restoration and enhancement works of the Hermannsburg Historic Precinct.
- Support Tourism Central Australia to identify locations for a contemporary visitor information centre.
- Provide funding to industry to enhance the visitor experience while holidaying in the Northern Territory.
- Enhance Aboriginal tourism sector report in ReviewPro to compare progress nationally.
- Improve online bookability of Aboriginal tourism businesses through their own and third party channels.
- Support regional councils and local government to enhance public facilities, amenities and roadside stop infrastructure in the region.
- Deliver a grant funding opportunity to tourism operators to develop night time experiences.
- Build tourism operators' awareness of visitor experiences and satisfaction through dissemination of ReviewPro data.
- Continue to develop a sustainable Aboriginal tourism sector as identified in the Northern Territory's Aboriginal Tourism Strategy 2020 – 2030.
- Continue to support ongoing upgrades of wayside inns and services to cater to the drive market demand.
- Support the coordination of waste, signage and infrastructure as identified in the Drive Tourism Strategy action plan.
- Source funding for establishment of a purpose built artists workshop within the Hermannsburg Historic Precinct.

For further information please contact Tourism NT's Industry Development team on tourism.development@nt.gov.au or 08 8951 8518

