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Northern Territory's Drive Tourism Strategy 2021-2030

ANNUAL REPORT CARD
Year Ending December 2022

This is the first annual report card for the Northern Territory's Drive Tourism Strategy 2021–2030 (Drive Strategy). The report card details outcomes to the year ending December 2022 and shows the collective progress towards developing the Northern Territory (NT) offering as a drive destination for the holiday market.

Our vision

To deliver self-drive outback adventure experiences that showcase the Territory's iconic natural environments and unique cultural identity.

The Drive Strategy has four key focus areas:



Attract new growth markets: increasing visitor numbers.



Improve the current visitor experience: increasing length of stay.



Increase regional dispersal: improving outcomes for regional areas.



Enhance brand reputation: attracting key visitor markets.

Our goals

The Drive Strategy contributes to the overall achievement of the NT's Tourism Industry Strategy 2030 by helping to grow visitor numbers, improve regional dispersal and increase length of stay.

Short (2021–2022)

Achieve 2022 growth goals by targeting traditional long drive markets as well as high yield domestic markets.

Medium (2023–2025)

Achieve 2025 growth goals by targeting the international market and further expand domestic focus to include the adventure market.

Long (2026–2030)

Achieve 2030 growth targets through introducing a new range of drive experiences targeting new markets.

Destination Management Plans

The Drive Strategy focuses on enabling drive tourism and regional dispersal, whereas the development of experiences, icons and destinations are addressed through Destination Management Plans (DMP) for each region. For consistency in reporting and monitoring, actions for product development in the regions have not been included in the Drive Strategy or this report card, except where it has been identified as necessary to enable the journey throughout the NT.

Read DMPs here: tourismnt.com.au/research-strategies/destination-management-plans

Drive Strategy Action Plan

Significant work is required to achieve the market, infrastructure and product priorities detailed in the Drive Strategy. To guide the outcomes, an Action Plan has been developed under four strategic pillars:

- Enabling Infrastructure
- Digitally Enabled
- Better Together
- Marketing

Achievements under the strategic pillars



Enabling Infrastructure: infrastructure that meets and exceeds the needs of the drive market.

- The Australian Government allocated funding to complete sealing of the Central Arnhem Road and Outback Way.
- Upgrades continued on the Central Arnhem Road, Roper Highway, Carpentaria Highway, Buntine Highway and Tanami Highway.
- Tenders awarded and field surveys completed for upgrades to access roads in Kakadu.
- Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics (DIPL) released the Northern Territory Rest Facilities Strategy.
- Tourism NT developed 'Minimum Tourism Amenities Standards' to help guide local governments' tourism infrastructure development.
- Two priority Electric Vehicle tourism drive routes have been identified: Central Australia loop drive and Top End loop drive.
- Updated "Welcome to the NT" signage was installed on the Tanami Road and Docker River Road borders with WA.



Better Together: strengthen partnerships to deliver our vision.

- DIPL convened a signage working group including Tourism NT, Tourism Top End, Tourism Central Australia and Hospitality NT to report on and action poor roadside signage.
- Tourism NT developed pastoral and agricultural tourism case studies to encourage new product development along drive routes.
- Tourism NT facilitated access for local governments to the Australian Regional Tourism's 'Local Government Professional Development Program'.
- Tourism NT allocated over \$2 million of funding for 17 businesses under the Roadhouse to Recovery Round 3 grant program.
- Tourism NT allocated over \$1.2 million of funding for five local governments under the Tourism Town Assets Round 2 grant program.



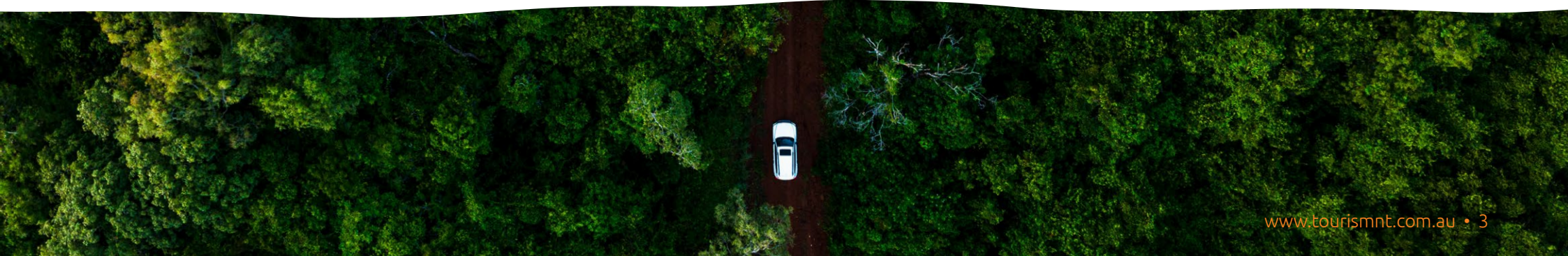
Digitally Enabled: enhancing the visitor experience through digital technology will be a game changer for the Territory.

- Telecommunications coverage improved under a NT Government co-investment program with Telstra, with new connections at Top Springs, Larrimah and Wilowra.
- Optus installed infrastructure for new or upgraded connections at 14 drive tourism locations throughout the NT.
- NT Government supported the delivery of NBN Fibre to the Premises (FTTP) services in Jabiru.
- Online bookable product reviewed along major drive routes.
- Signage templates were finalised to reduce the cost of signage design and encourage consistency.
- Parks and Wildlife NT implemented an online booking platform for campsites and walking trails.



Marketing: enhancing the Territory's brand reputation and encouraging new visitor markets.

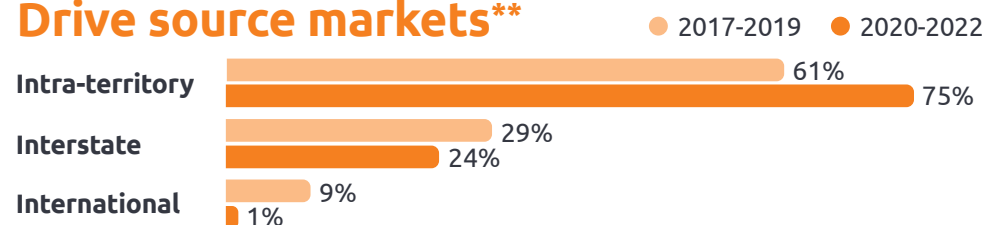
- There were 704,000 drive visitors to the Northern Territory in 2022.
- Undertook photo shoots to increase imagery in regional locations, including Savannah Way and roadhouses.
- Partnered with motorhome providers to market the NT as a road trip destination.
- Tourism Top End and Tourism Central Australia developed collateral for the drive market, including guides and maps.
- Hosted influencers on the Red Centre Way to promote the region and increase social media interactions.
- Partnered with media group Mamamia to promote NT drive holidays across their platforms.
- Delivered integrated marketing campaigns in Australia promoting drive holidays.
- There were 61 million opportunities which drove 20,000 Australians to northernterritory.com. Off this 7,000 people downloaded the drive guide and 2,500 people clicked through to view a drive travel deal.



Regional visitor numbers and nights of drive tourists*

Region	Market	Total visitation 2022	Total visitation 2019	Average nights 2022	Average nights 2019
Greater Darwin	Domestic	326,000	293,000	2.4	2.8
	International	9,000	49,000	20.7	16.1
Kakadu Arnhem	Domestic	106,000	91,000	3.4	2.7
	International	2,000	24,000	3.0	2.9
Katherine Daly	Domestic	232,000	199,000	3.3	3.0
	International	5,000	27,000	16.6	6.8
Barkly	Domestic	57,000	64,000	2.7	1.8
	International	1,000	10,000	2.0	2.3
Alice Springs MacDonnell	Domestic	132,000	199,000	5.2	3.6
	International	3,000	29,000	3.0	4.6
Lasseter	Domestic	108,000	130,000	4.5	3.7
	International	6,000	27,000	4.8	2.8

Drive source markets**



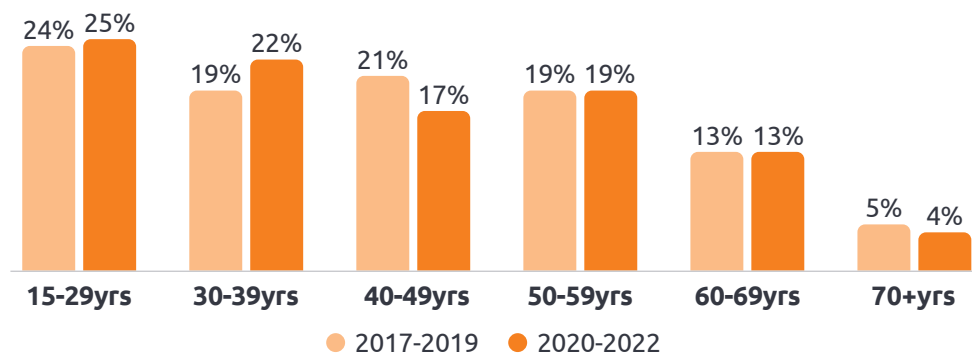
Top international	2020-22	2017-19
Germany	18%	15%
France	11%	10%
United Kingdom	10%	9%
New Zealand	8%	4%
Scandinavia	6%	3%
USA	5%	6%
Netherlands	5%	5%
China [†]	5%	8%

[†]Includes China, Taiwan and Hong Kong.

Top domestic	2020-22	2017-19
Victoria	23%	24%
Queensland	21%	19%
New South Wales	20%	22%
South Australia	19%	21%
Western Australia	12%	11%
Tasmania	3%	2%
ACT	2%	1%

Source market percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

Demographic profile of drive tourists***



Gender	2020-2022	2017-2019
Male	55%	62%
Female	45%	38%

Expenditure by drive visitors****

	2022	2019
Darwin (excludes outer Darwin)	\$438m	\$277m
Katherine Daly	\$258m	\$112m
Litchfield Kakadu Arnhem	\$161m	\$134m
Barkly	\$25m	\$64m
Alice Springs and MacDonnell	\$151m	\$217m
Lasseter	\$200m	\$189m

* Tourism Research Australia, National and International Visitor Surveys. Year ending December.

** Tourism Research Australia, National and International Visitor Surveys. With figures based on a 3 year average up to the end of calendar year 2019 compared to 2022.

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Future Focus

- Advocate to expedite the delivery of key drive infrastructure projects, such as sealing roads, with the Mereenie Loop Road a key priority.
- Undertake primary research to understand the profile of NT drive visitors, their journey experience and their level of satisfaction with destinations visited.
- Develop an Aboriginal Drive Market Toolkit to grow new and existing Aboriginal tourism products and experiences related to the NT's drive market, under a new Aboriginal Cultural Tourism Framework.
- Advocate for further electric vehicle infrastructure along priority drive routes and the Stuart Highway.
- Increase fly-drive packages available through key distribution partners.
- Enhance collaboration with State Tourism Organisations and Regional Tourism Organisations on cross border drive routes.
- Coordinate road upgrades and advocate for inclusion of supporting infrastructure and telecommunications.
- Support local governments to provide infrastructure for the drive tourism sector.
- Seek out relevant brand partnerships to extend the NT's audience reach, aligning with like-minded brands.
- Develop long term relationships with over 50 drive specific social media influencers to ensure audience reach is targeted.
- Continue to market the NT as a place to 'road trip differently'.

Further information

Please contact Tourism NT to learn more:
tourism.development@nt.gov.au or phone 08 8999 3981

Read the Northern Territory Drive Tourism Strategy here:
tourismnt.com.au/research-strategies/strategies/drive-tourism-strategy

