

MEDIA RELEASE

27 April 2020

Media Release – Family and Friends play an important role in tourism growth

Mildura region's strong tourism performance during Year End (YE) December came at the right time for industry as the latest official figures reveal an overall tourism increase for the 2019 calendar year.

Year End (YE) December 2019 travel data released to Mildura Regional Development shows that the Mildura region received 523,000 domestic overnight visitors, an increase of 2.7% on YE Dec 18. Visitors spent over 1.8 million nights in region which was up by 21.6% on YE Dec 18.

Overall the YE Dec 2020 figures show that :

- As mentioned, Domestic visitor nights totalled 1.8 million, up by 21.6% on YE Dec 2018
- Domestic overnight visitors spent \$262 million in the region – an average of \$145 per night.
- Holiday (39.1%) was the largest purpose for visitors to the City, followed by 'visiting friends and relatives (VFR) (31.8%) and business' (20.9%).
- VFR' (41.1%) was the largest purpose in terms of nights in the region, followed by 'holiday' (38.7%) and 'business' (15.4%). Compared to YE Dec 18, 'VFR' increased by 11.0%
- Regional Victoria (54%) provided our main source of domestic overnight visitors, up by 2%, followed by SA (22%) who showed an impressive increase, up by 16%.

Excellent visitation throughout December was welcome news for tourism, particularly in light of current circumstances, according to Mildura Regional Development CEO, Brett Millington.

"We understand that figures after this period will show a decrease in visitation due to COVID-19, so it's refreshing to know that at the end of the calendar year positive results for our region occurred, he said"

These results not only highlight the importance of the VFR market - Australian's travelling to visit friends and relatives, but also the role this market will play when attracting visitors back to the region in future once COVID-19 travel restrictions are lifted.

"We know that one of the first things people are going to want to do once restrictions are lifted, is visit their family and friends who live afar, so it's encouraging to note that domestic holiday visitation to friends and relatives could just be what helps re-build our visitor economy" Mr Millington said.

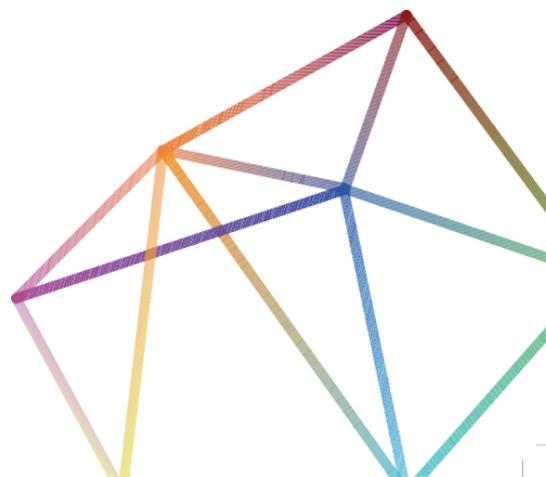
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