



MEDIA RELEASE

Date of Release: 1 September 2019

Approved by: Chair of Central NSW Joint Organisation, Cr John Medcalf, Mayor of Lachlan Shire Council

What do visitors really spend in the Central West?

Visitor expenditure is a significant contributor to the NSW economy but regional councils find it impossible to get complete, reliable and up to date data on their local contribution to the sector. A project that is being trialled in the Central West aims to solve this issue.

The project is jointly funded by the Western Research Institute (WRI), Central NSW Joint Organisation of Councils and its ten Central NSW member councils and Destination Network Country and Outback NSW.

Destination NSW estimated the 6.2 million visitors to the Central West region added \$1.8 billion to the NSW economy in the year ending March 2019.

“Central West tourism activities grew by almost 21% compared to the previous year. If all business sectors in the Central West offered that level of growth, it would be extraordinary” Cr John Medcalf, Chair of Central NSW Joint Organisation said.

“We know the contribution from the Central West visitor expenditure is significant and growing. We’d like to know how much councils contributed individually. That information is not available for all councils. Even where it is available, it isn’t a complete picture and it is not up to date” Cr Medcalf added.

WRI has identified how to fill the gaps and provide councils with current estimates of what they contribute to the NSW visitor economy.

“The ten Central NSW councils participating in the pilot project will help WRI collect information to estimate the number visitors who come to each local government area, how much they really spend and how long they stay.” WRI CEO Kathy Woolley said.

“We also want to consider what is added to the local economies from hosting over a third of visitors to the Central West who stay in the homes of friends or relatives rather than in a hotel, motel or other accommodation type. The share accommodation sector is also strong and not counted in typical visitor economy estimates.”



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“The WRI Regional Tourism model will also include additional data to build a more complete picture of the number and the impact visitors to the Central West have.”

An ongoing survey to be completed by visitors at the accommodation providers, visitor information centres and major venues will commence on 16 August 2019. Additional surveying will seek responses from those who host their friends and relatives when they visit the region. The first results will be provided to participating councils and partners in December 2019.

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