



VISITOR NUMBERS IN FEBRUARY STAY CONSISTENT

Accommodation occupancy rates in Dubbo and Wellington have increased by eight per cent during February, compared to the previous year.

Dubbo Regional Council's Tourism Market Report revealed the rates were 73 per cent and 53 per cent for Dubbo and Wellington respectively.

Overall, attractions in the region received mixed visitation for the month, ranging from an increase of 94 per cent visitation at Western Plains Cultural Centre to a decline of 22 per cent at Taronga Western Plains Zoo.

Dubbo Regional Council Mayor Mathew Dickerson said coming off the back of school holidays it was not uncommon to see a fluctuation in attraction figures.

"The increase can be partially attributed to the large-scale sporting events Dubbo hosted during the month, including the NSW Touch Association Junior State Cup. This event alone drew an estimated 7,000

visitors to the city,” he said.

“Events such as the state cup and the Little Athletics Region 3 Championships generated a lot of phone enquiries about accommodation in the region and many travellers were spoken to at our Visitor Experience Centres as they travelled through the region and stopped to purchase hampers and souvenir.”

“Visitation to the Royal Flying Doctor Service Visitor Experience decreased by two per cent, Old Dubbo Gaol by 10 per cent and the Great Big Adventure Pass uptake was down eight per cent however compared to the four-year average, attraction facility figures remain consistent,” Cllr Dickerson said.

Manager Regional Experiences Jamie Angus was pleased to see the boost in visitor numbers at the Western Plains Cultural Centre.

“The Centre had a solid increase in visitation numbers in January, so seeing a similar result this month is fantastic. The current exhibitions and program of events attract a broad audience. ArtExpress has made a return for the first time since the pandemic and this exhibition has attracted a number of school groups,” he said.

Visitor numbers at the Wellington Caves recorded a 43 per cent decrease.

“Wellington Caves saw a decrease in visitor numbers of 43 per cent and this is primarily due to the ongoing impact of flooding at the Wellington Caves Complex.

“While visitors cannot fully experience the activities the Caves Complex

offers, Discovery Lab sessions and the Ancient Landscapes Gallery are available and Gaden Cave tours operate with limited numbers. The larger Cathedral Cave remains closed to the public, as does the Fossil Mine,” Mr Angus said.

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