



# JANUARY SCHOOL HOLIDAY VISITATION

Dubbo Regional Council (DRC) has released the latest tourism figures for January 2023.

Dubbo's average occupancy for surveyed operators was recorded at 68 per cent, a three per cent increase when compared with the four-year average for January, with Wellington recording an occupancy rate of 53 per cent.

Overall the region experienced lower than average visitation numbers for the month which can be attributed to a number of factors including the mixed weather, reduced tour capacities at the Wellington Caves and lower than usual traveller numbers for the summer school holiday period.

DRC Mayor Mathew Dickerson spoke about the visitor numbers from the region's attractions.

"When comparing January's visitation with the four-year monthly average, Taronga Western Plains Zoo, Old Dubbo Gaol and the Royal

Flying Doctor Service Visitor Experience recorded only slight changes between one and three per cent, whereas the Western Plains Cultural Centre saw a 38 per cent increase of visitors.”

“Unfortunately due to ongoing impacts from adverse weather and flooding events in 2022 the Wellington Caves have limited tour capacity which resulted in 55 per cent lower visitation compared to the average in the past four years,” Cllr Dickerson said.

Audience Development Officer Tammy Pickering was pleased with the visitor numbers to the Western Plains Cultural Centre.

“The increase can be partly attributed to a recent digital awareness campaign in collaboration with Tourism Australia, our diverse exhibitions throughout the month that appealed to new audiences, and referrals from our regular local audiences who had friends and family visiting over the holiday period.”

The Wellington Caves continues to only operate the Gaven Cave on a day to day basis, with limited spots of 12 people available per tour. The Cathedral Cave and the Fossil Mine remain closed to the public.

Several large sporting events were held throughout January, attracting an estimated 3,200 visitors including the NSW Production Sedans, Cricket NSW State Challenge, Athletics NSW Country Championships and Swimming NSW Country Regional Meet.

Visitor Information Coordinator Jane Bendall provided an insight into February visitation: “We’ve had some big events in February and also noticed an influx of Grey Nomads travelling through the region post school holidays. February is usually a quiet time of year so we are

expecting strong numbers in the next tourism market report,” Ms Bendall said.

Last Edited: 17 Jul 2023