



8 March 2020

SUMMARY

- Council requests visitors that do not have advanced bookings for the 2021 season to look at alternative holiday solutions in an effort to manage visitor numbers and preserve Exmouth's unique environment and status as a premium travel destination.

BOOK BEFORE VISITING NINGALOO COAST AS OVERFLOW FACILITIES NOT GUARANTEED

Like other coastal holiday communities, Exmouth has benefited from attracting a greater number of intrastate tourists as a result of the travel restrictions. A housing supply shortage combined with increased visitor demand from Western Australians holidaying at home is likely to affect Exmouth's hospitality sector's ability to provide its normal high standard of service, which earned it the title of Top Tourism Town in 2019.

With limited worker accommodation, the ability to employ seasonal, temporary workers to service the tourism industry will impact service quality this year. Therefore, the Shire is requesting visitors to not make the long journey off the North West Coast Highway without having pre-booked accommodation.

The Shires natural environment is fragile, and the built infrastructure and services are limited and cannot cope with the increased demand, such as that experienced last year. Last year, the worker accommodation issue was not an issue as the seasonal workers required for 2020 were already in Exmouth prior to the COVID-19 travel restrictions.

The Shire of Exmouth has a no free camping policy. It will be increasing its compliance to restrict all free camping to protect the environment and its reputation as a premium tourism destination. By further limiting its emergency overflow, it is actively capping its capacity to ensure those visitors who have booked have the best experience possible.

Council urges all tourists and seasonal staff to be respectful and rethink their stay if they cannot secure accommodation before arrival.

COMMENTS ATTRIBUTED TO THE SHIRE – SHIRE PRESIDENT MATT NIIKKULA

"Exmouth has been a jewel in the West Australian Travel Crown for some time, and it is wonderful that so many people want to discover and explore Exmouth. Local businesses, the Ningaloo Visitor Centre, and every single community member, worked very hard to encourage this demand - but we are now at risk of loving it to death."

"Please consider Exmouth as a year-round destination so that we can meet the demand and provide a quality experience as opposed to the current seasonal nature of tourism."

Shire of Exmouth MEDIA RELEASE



"Please plan ahead and book accommodation when visiting this amazing place and if your fortunate enough to have secured accommodation this season, please be patient due to the seasonal worker shortage and look after our unique environment.

If you have not been able to secure accommodation, we look forward to welcoming you in future years. "

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Given that the Shire has received a large number of queries related to the current accommodation issue, a separate FAQ-Sheet is available here: <https://bit.ly/3ef8FfO>

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