

**Media Release**

**20 October, 2016**

## **Domestic visitors increase their spend in Mildura**

Domestic overnight visitors to our region spent \$220 million during 2015 – 2016, a 5% increase over the previous year and an average of \$154 a night.

Year End (YE) June 2016 travel data released by Mildura Tourism shows that, after a patchy 12 months that included several periods of decline, visitation numbers bounced back to reveal only a modest overall downturn for last financial year.

Steady tracking throughout the year suggested a decline was likely. After two years of growth, history shows that it's not unusual for domestic visitor numbers to either slip back or plateau.

Mildura Tourism CEO, Rod Trowbridge, said that during the year's softest quarters a significant overall decline looked possible.

"For this to level out to a final result of only a small net decrease should be considered very encouraging" he said. "There is also further evidence that strong visitor numbers have continued since July 2016."

On another front, internationally, our visitor performance was at its highest in five years.

Overall the YE June 2016 figures show that :

- The Mildura-Wentworth region received 469,000 domestic overnight visitors, down 1.8% on the previous year.
- Domestic visitor nights totalled 1.4 million, down 3.5% on YE June 2015.

- As mentioned, while domestic numbers were down slightly, these visitors spent \$220 million during 2015 – 2016, a 5% increase for the year and an average of \$154 per night.
- Internationally, our visitor performance was at its highest in five years. Albeit from a low base, overseas visitor numbers increased to 20,000, a 9.6% jump, while international visitor nights totalled 745,000, a 20% increase on YE June 2015.
- Regional Victoria (28%) provided our main source of domestic overnight visitors, followed by SA (23%), Melbourne (22%) and regional NSW (17%).

Other key features include :

- 'Friends or relatives property' (35%) was the most popular accommodation type used for domestic nights in the region. 'Caravan park' (16.2%) was the 2nd most popular.
- Closely aligned with visitor number figures, the most popular sources of domestic visitor nights were regional Victoria (26%); Melbourne (24%); SA (23%); and regional NSW (18%).
- Domestic overnight visitors stayed an average of 3 nights, down a fraction from 3.1.
- 42.5% of domestic visitors were aged 55+; while it was encouraging to note that 19% were aged 25-34.
- The region received 220,000 domestic daytrip visitors, down 23% on YE June 2015.
- Day-trippers spent an estimated \$37 million, an average of \$167 per visitor; while internationals spent \$26 million, an average of \$35 per night.
- The top five single source origins for international travellers were NZ (14%); UK (11%); Malaysia (10.4%); Germany (10.1%); and Taiwan (8%).
- Internationals aged 25-34 was the biggest group (24%) of overseas visitors.

- In terms of international market share, Mildura-Wentworth received 35% of visitors and 51% of visitor nights within the VIC-NSW Murray region.