



Fast Facts for Local Government

Tourism Research Australia (TRA) in partnership with Tourism Western Australia (TWA) commissioned a study to identify and measure the key factors that are likely to affect demand and supply of caravan accommodation in Western Australia both now and in the future.

To download the full report, go to <http://www.tourism.wa.gov.au/caravanresearch>. Alternatively collect the Fact Sheets that provide snapshots of the key findings.

Why are Caravan Parks important?

- During 2006 international and domestic caravan or camping visitors spent \$6.5 billion within Australia.
- Between 2005 and 2006 site occupancy rates remained stable at 51% and takings from accommodation increased by 6% to \$881 million. This was despite a decrease in the number of actual caravan parks.
- There are a number of different types of caravan park tourists in WA each with different travel patterns and lengths of stay. Grey Nomads travel the most widely staying 104 nights and visiting the most tourism regions in the State. Winter Drifters travel mostly to the Coral Coast in the winter. Families are most prevalent in the South West.
- Caravan park visitors inject dollars into the local community by self catering, eating out and visiting local attractions.
- Caravanners support local operators (particularly small businesses) in peak tourist times. As a result businesses upgrade their services which benefits locals as well as visitors with the number of available jobs increasing during peak times.
- Caravan park facilities underpin a lot of events/functions in smaller towns.
- Caravan parks also provide a low cost housing alternative in some areas. However, indications are that there is a greater economic impact on the local economy from tourism than permanent residents.
- Since 1995 there has been a 278% increase in the manufacture of caravans which will result in significant demand for caravan sites.



Understanding the Caravan Industry in WA

Fact Sheet

Local Government and Caravan Parks

- Local Governments are “an essential ingredient” in the development and maintenance of caravan parks in WA.
- Town Planning Schemes should consider appropriate locations and zonings for caravan parks to ensure capacity for the industry is maintained.
- Operators are concerned that increasing operating costs will price caravan parks out of the market.
- Local Governments have the power to issue, renew or refuse to grant licences and to control illegal caravanning camping in unauthorised places.
- Generally owners believed that Local Governments are doing a good job in reviewing licences.
- There is industry concern that there is too much inconsistency in the interpretation of the Act between Local Governments. The industry believes there needs to be clearer guidelines so that all Councils operate within the same guidelines.
- Most Local Governments are conscious of the significant contribution that tourism makes to their area. There are some Shires however whose caravan parks are experiencing significant development pressure. Too greater a loss of caravan parks will impact on the ability of some Shires to service this market in future years.
- Getting Local Government and Regional Development Commissions on-side is important to the future development of the caravan park industry, to ensure that future regional decisions are made with consideration to the impact on the industry.
- Through the Landbank initiative Local Governments can work with Tourism WA to identify and release land for caravan park development. Tourism WA is currently working with the Shires of Broome, Busselton and the Town of Port Hedland to test the feasibility of new caravan parks in those locations.

The report Understanding the Caravan Industry in WA has identified some potential strategies to increase supply of caravan park sites in WA as well as support and protect existing parks. These strategies are currently being considered by the State Government.