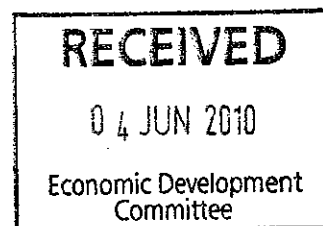


Inquiry into developing Queensland's rural and regional
communities through grey nomad tourism

Submission by Western Downs Regional Council – incorporating towns of Bell,
Dalby, Chinchilla, Jandowae, Meandarra, Miles, Tara and Wandoan.
Submitted by Merry Higgins

Supervisor Visitor Information Centre
Dalby
merry.higgins@wdrc.qld.gov.au
Western Downs Regional Council
PO Box 551
Dalby. 4405
Ph – 4662 1066



I have worked in tourism management positions in local government for 15yrs.
If 'grey nomads' are defined as being a certain age we need to begin looking at the
rapidly increasing number of Baby Boomers who travelling for 4-5 mths or travelling
continuously. There needs differ slightly from the grey nomads and any actions
undertaken in the foreseeable future should be considering the habits of the baby
boomers who are also part of the nomadic travellers.

1. What economic contribution do grey nomads make to rural and regional areas
of Queensland?

- All different depending on type of income and length of tour
- Most enjoy pension / senior discount on all items
- Often looking for cheap fuel – if fuel reasonably priced tourist will often stop
and that may be their decision to stay and spend more
- Average visitor on long tour does not spend much on "touristy" items
- Most travelling with own accommodation do not spend regularly on cafes /
takeaway
- High percentage of "where is" enquiries other than roads and accommodation
are
 - "is there a Woolies or Coles"; where is the hot bread shop; is there a
mall; is there a butcher and where is the Club

If the town has something special to offer e.g. unique tourist destination or
experience then the grey tourist is more likely to stop over for one or two nights

Average stay – 3.17 nights. Each domestic visitor to spends approximately \$78per
day.

2. Are the available statistics on grey nomads in Queensland useful, current and accessible?

The available statistics give an indication of the needs and habits of the grey nomads. However, the statistics are usually hard to find and the information depends on who has done the survey. For example statistics from the caravanning people differ from information provided by the RV groups.

From a local government perspective we would find the following information useful: Spending capacity, reasons for travelling, attractions or experiences being sought, how many people move on if there is no bush camping or free camping.

3. What are the public infrastructure requirements of grey nomads including health services, waste disposal site and signage?

- Waste disposal sites easily accessible and clearly signposted
- Signage re towns facilities and highlights on town approaches
- RV friendly signage
- Potable water readily available
- Roads comfortable and safe for average caravan / motor home experience
- Clean easily accessible public facilities in freely available overnight stopover sites relatively close to town centre
 - Easily accessible Centrelink facilities
 - Parking facilities for large vehicles close to CBD
 - Pharmacies and hospitals

4. Is the current infrastructure for grey nomads in Queensland adequate? What additional infrastructure is required?

Roads conditions are the biggest issue. Drivers are not confident driving on narrow highways.

More roadside bins.

5. What are the major issues relating to the regulation of Queensland's camping and caravan parks?

Limited road side stops and toilets. Limited roadside bins.

Grey nomads are prepared to pay a nominal amount for bush camping however, local by-laws often prevent or limit bush camping.

- Clean and tidy caravan parks with hygienic, well maintained amenities and polite and friendly efficient staff

Ablution blocks, laundry etc do not have to be "flash" but need to be in good working condition.

6. What is the best method of marketing Queensland's rural and regional communities to grey nomad tourists?

- Trade and travel shows
- Targeted print advertising
- Internet
- Word of mouth

7. How successful have existing programs been in utilising the skills of grey nomads in rural and regional Queensland.

Western Downs Regional Council hasn't been involved in any of these programs.

8. What can the government do to encourage grey nomads to use their skills by undertaking work in rural and regional areas?

Central point of jobs available

Skills audit

Provide reasonably priced accommodation-- camping areas