

FEBRUARY 2023

DENILIQVIN AND SURROUNDS LOCAL AREA PLAN AND RECOMMENDED ACTIONS



Destination
Riverina Murray NSW



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land and waters that surround the Murray River. We acknowledge and respect their history, culture and continuous connection to Country.

We pay our respects to elders – past, present and emerging who have cared for this Country for over 60,000 years.

This landscape, rich in story and opportunity, plays a pivotal part in our visitor economy and we thank Victoria and New South Wales' First Peoples for sharing this with us all.



L1 302-304 Barkly St, Brunswick VIC 3056
+61 3 9482 3888 urbanenterprise.com.au

AUTHORS Mike Ruzzene
Agathy Patsouris
Julia Cretan
Alana Grollo

DISCLAIMER Neither Urban Enterprise Pty. Ltd, Murray River Region Tourism Ltd or Destination Riverina Murray, nor any member or employee of Urban Enterprise Pty. Ltd, Murray River Region Tourism Ltd or Destination Riverina Murray, takes responsibility in any way whatsoever to any person or organisation (other than that for which this report has been prepared) in respect of the information set out in this report, including any errors or omissions therein. In the course of our preparation of this report, projections have been prepared on the basis of assumptions and methodology which have been described in the report. It is possible that some of the assumptions underlying the projections may change. Nevertheless, the professional judgement of the members and employees of Urban Enterprise Pty. Ltd., Murray River Region Tourism Ltd., and Destination Riverina Murray have been applied in making these assumptions, such that they constitute an understandable basis for estimates and projections. Beyond this, to the extent that the assumptions do not materialise, the estimates and projections of achievable results may vary.

COPYRIGHT © Copyright, Urban Enterprise Pty. Ltd, Murray River Region Tourism Ltd. and Destination Riverina Murray, 2022.

This work is copyright. Apart from any uses permitted under Copyright Act 1963, no part may be reproduced without written permission of Urban Enterprise Pty. Ltd, Murray River Region Tourism Ltd. or Destination Riverina Murray.

CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	1
1. DENILQUIN AND SURROUNDS LOCAL AREA PLAN	3
1.1. THIS PROJECT	3
2. DESTINATION SNAPSHOT	5
2.1. VISITOR ECONOMY	5
2.2. TARGET MARKETS	7
2.3. AWARENESS	8
2.4. MURRAY REGION PRODUCT STRENGTHS AND MARKET ASSOCIATIONS	9
2.5. DESTINATION STRENGTHS AND UNIQUE SELLING PROPOSITION	10
2.6. GOVERNANCE	11
3. CONSIDERATIONS FOR TOURISM DEVELOPMENT	13
4. RECOMMENDED ACTION PLAN	15
4.1. PRODUCT, EXPERIENCE AND EVENTS	16
4.2. INFRASTRUCTURE AND PLANNING	18
4.3. BRAND, MARKETING AND VISITOR SERVICING	19
4.4. INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT AND WORKFORCE	20
APPENDICES	22
APPENDIX A DOCUMENTS REVIEWED	22
FIGURES	
F1. STUDY AREA	3
F2. VISITOR ECONOMY OVERVIEW	6
F3. CONSUMER AWARENESS OF MURRAY REGION NATURE-BASED ASSETS	8
F4. MURRAY REGION PRODUCT STRENGTHS	9
F5. PERCEPTION OF THE MURRAY REGION	9
TABLES	
T1. TARGET MARKET OVERVIEW	7
T2. AWARENESS OF DESTINATIONS IN THE MURRAY	8
T3. GOVERNANCE OVERVIEW	11
T4. CONSIDERATIONS FOR TOURISM DEVELOPMENT	13
T5. RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	16
T6. RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	18
T7. RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	19
T8. RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	20

ACRONYMS

DMP	Destination Management Plan
DN	Destination Networks
DRNSW	Department of Regional NSW
DRM	Destination Riverina Murray
GMW	Goulburn Murray Water
LALC	Local Aboriginal Land Council
LAP	Local Area Plan
LGA	Local Government Area
MDBA	Murray-Darling Basin Authority
MRAT	Murray River Adventure Trail
MRT	Murray Regional Tourism
NPWS	NSW National Parks and Wildlife Services
NVS	National Visitor Survey
PTV	Public Transport Victoria
RDV	Regional Development Victoria
TRA	Tourism Research Australia
VFR	Visiting Friends and Relatives

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Daytrip Visitor	Those who travel for a round trip distance of at least 50 kilometres, are away from home for at least 4 hours, and who do not spend a night away from home as part of their travel. Same day travel as part of overnight travel is excluded.
Overnight Visitor	People aged 15 years and over who undertake an overnight trip of one night or more and at least 40 kilometres away from home are referred to as overnight visitors. Only those trips where the respondent is away from home for less than 12 months are in scope of the NVS.
International Visitor	A person is defined as an international visitor to Australia if they are currently a resident overseas, have been in Australia less than one year and are aged 15 years or over.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

OVERVIEW

Murray Regional Tourism and Destination Riverina Murray have prepared Local Area Plans for 10 of the Murray region’s prominent destinations.

The Local Area Plans are strategic documents that capture local aspirations and directions at a high-level to inform the Murray Region Destination Management Plan 2023-27 (available for download [here](#)) and NSW Riverina Murray Destination Management Plan 2023-30. This has ensured local needs and priorities have been captured across both Destination Management Plans.

The Local Area Plans provide the framework for local stakeholders to work collaboratively and in partnership with Murray Regional Tourism and Destination Riverina Murray towards strengthening the regional visitor economy.

This Plan has been prepared for the destination of Deniliquin and surrounds. This includes the destinations in proximity, as described in Section 1.

ANNUAL VISITOR ECONOMY SNAPSHOT

216K

Visitors

\$46M

Spend

UNIQUE SELLING PROPOSITION WITHIN THE MURRAY REGION

Deniliquin offers an alternative destination to other bustling Murray River destinations. The USP for Deniliquin is the tranquil heritage village amongst the natural environment on the Edward River.



RECOMMENDED ACTIONS FOR THIS DESTINATION

A range of recommended actions have been identified through consultation with industry and local government stakeholders during the Local Area Plan workshops, assessment of existing local documents and strategies, and in response to visitor economy needs and opportunities for the destination.

These actions are a guide only. It is the role of stakeholders to further investigate the viability and opportunity of each project.

The table below provides a summary of the recommended actions.

Product, Experience and Events	Infrastructure and Planning	Branding, Marketing and Visitor Servicing	Industry Development and Workforce
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activate Agricultural Experiences • Cruising Experience Investment • Food, Drink and Entertainment Activation • Signature Events Calendar • Waterfront Activation Precinct • Activating the Night Time Economy • Implementation of Peppin Heritage Centre Masterplan • Yarkuwa Indigenous Knowledge Centre • Accommodation Investment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amenity to Service Caravaners • Events Infrastructure • New Footbridge to Island Sanctuary • Infrastructure Servicing • Water Access Infrastructure • Advocacy to Address Housing Crisis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bookable Product and Packaging • Marketing Plan • Visitor Information Review and Delivery • Murray Region Local Ambassador Project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional Workforce Pathways and Promotion Program • Skills Development Plan • Capacity Building and Networking • Digital Literacy for Operators • Weekend Trading • Youth Leadership Program

1. DENILIQVIN AND SURROUNDS LOCAL AREA PLAN

1.1. THIS PROJECT

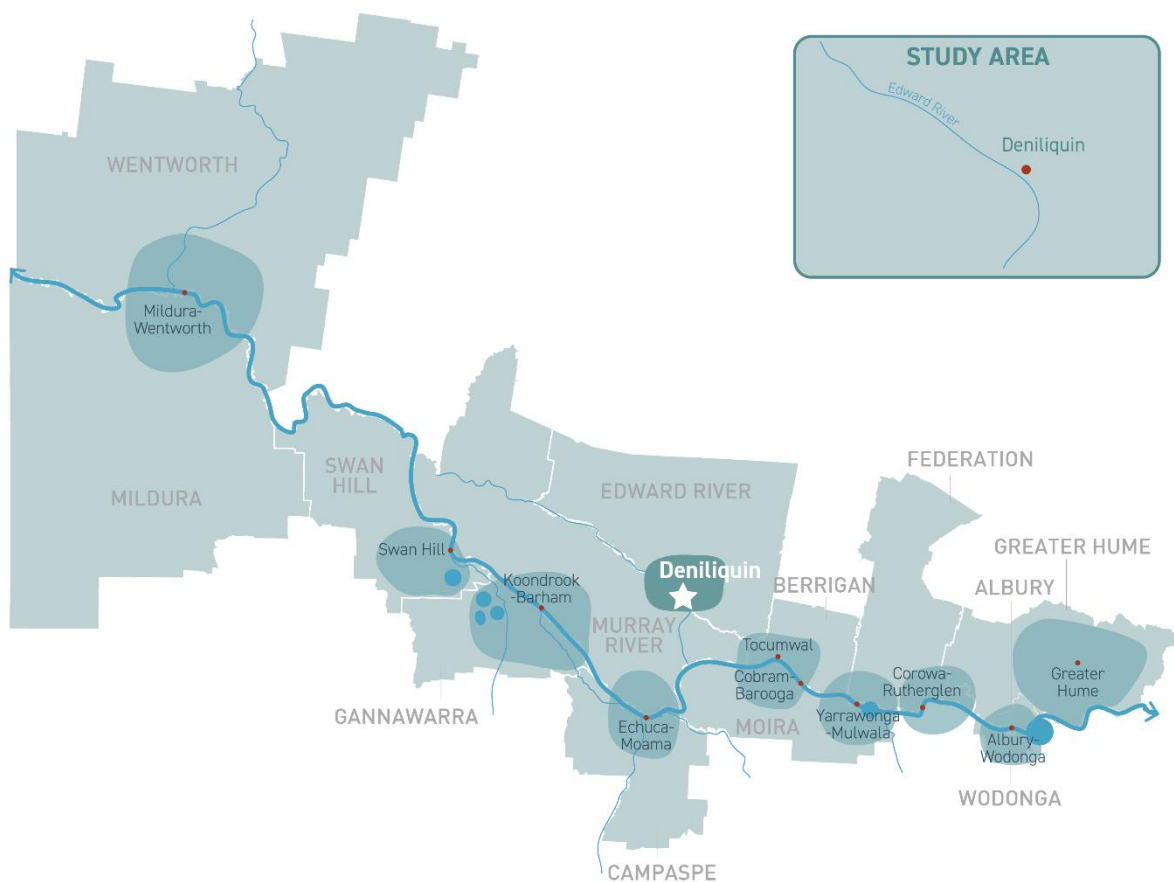
Murray Regional Tourism (MRT) and Destination Riverina Murray (DRM) have prepared Local Area Plans (Plan) for 10 of the Murray region’s prominent destinations, as shown in the map below.

These are strategic documents that capture local aspirations and directions at a high-level to inform the Murray Region Destination Management Plan (DMP) 2023-27 and the NSW Riverina Murray Destination Management Plan 2023-30. This has ensured local needs and priorities have been captured across both DMPs.

The Local Area Plans provide the framework for local stakeholders to work collaboratively and in partnership with MRT and DRM towards strengthening the regional visitor economy.

This Plan has been prepared for the destination of Deniliquin and surrounds. This includes the destinations in proximity, as shown in the map below, and does not encompass all towns within the relevant Local Government Areas (LGAs).

F1. STUDY AREA



This project has been funded by Murray Regional Tourism, Destination Riverina Murray, the Victorian State Government and Destination NSW.

PURPOSE AND INTENDED USE OF THE LOCAL AREA PLANS

The Local Area Plans are a partnership between MRT, DRM, Local Government, and industry stakeholders.

The purpose of these Plans is to respond to visitor economy needs and opportunities for key Murray region destinations, through a range of recommended actions and suggested next steps. It is intended that stakeholders will collaborate to further define the project specifics and drive the outcomes, in line with local priorities and resourcing.

The Plans are intended to be a reference document and a tool for local stakeholders and partners to collaborate at the destination level. The Plans do not replace local tourism plans and internal council plans.

METHOD

An overview of the project method is shown adjacent.

This Plan has been informed by engagement with local visitor economy stakeholders, review of existing local documentation, and destination research using Tourism Research Australia (TRA) and market research undertaken for the Murray region.

A full-day workshop was undertaken with key stakeholders from industry, local government and other agencies as relevant to the destination. The purpose of the workshop was to identify local issues and opportunities, identify the unique selling proposition for the destination, and develop ideas and solutions for the visitor economy.

This process has ensured the Plan is grounded in local needs and aspirations for the destination.



Context

Review of state, regional and local research, strategies and plans.
A full list of documents reviewed can be found in Appendix A.



Destination Snapshot

Review of visitation data, key products and experiences, market research and target markets.



Key Stakeholder Workshop

1 workshop with 12 operators and government stakeholders.



Project Identification and Prioritisation

Development of projects unique for this destination.

2. DESTINATION SNAPSHOT

2.1. VISITOR ECONOMY

This section provides a snapshot of the Deniliquin and surrounds visitor profile, drawing on data from Tourism Research Australia (TRA), the widely accepted Australian Government data source tracking visitation across Australia.

A profile of existing domestic daytrip and overnight visitation has been provided for the 2019 calendar year¹, in order to reflect a business-as-usual scenario prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Data has been provided for the Edward River Local Government Area, due to sampling constraints that prevent further fine-grain analysis.

OVERVIEW

This destination attracts 216,000 annual visitors on average, making up 3% of visitation to the Murray region. Visitors generate \$46 million in visitor expenditure, majority of which is generated by the overnight visitor market.

Daytrip and overnight visitors to this destination make up equal proportions of overall visitation, however daytrip visitors contribute only a small proportion to overall expenditure (\$10 million) in comparison to overnight visitors (\$36 million).

Visitors to this destination are low yielding when compared to the average for the Murray region. Daytrip visitors spend on average \$91 per person and overnight visitors spend on average \$338 per trip in Edward River.

DOMESTIC VISITOR PROFILE

Domestic daytrip visitation to Deniliquin is primarily driven by the business market (39%), as well as holiday and leisure travellers (25%) and those visiting their friends and relatives (VFR) (18%). Majority of daytrip visitors are visiting from NSW (65%) and Victoria (35%).

Domestic overnight visitation to Deniliquin is largely driven by the holiday and leisure market (43%) and the VFR market (34%). Unlike daytrip visitors, majority of overnight visitors to this destination originate from Victoria (62%) and NSW (31%).

Due to the strong VFR market in this region, it is crucial that locals are aware of attractions and experiences within their own township to help promote the region to their visiting friends and relatives and extract greater yield from this market.

Visitors to Deniliquin engage in a variety of activities whilst visiting the destination, the largest proportion dining out at a restaurant or café.

Majority of activities engaged in by visitors to this destination are passive experiences, including visiting friends and relatives, fishing, visiting public gardens and general sightseeing. These activities are generally low yielding and contribute to the overall low visitor spend in the destination.

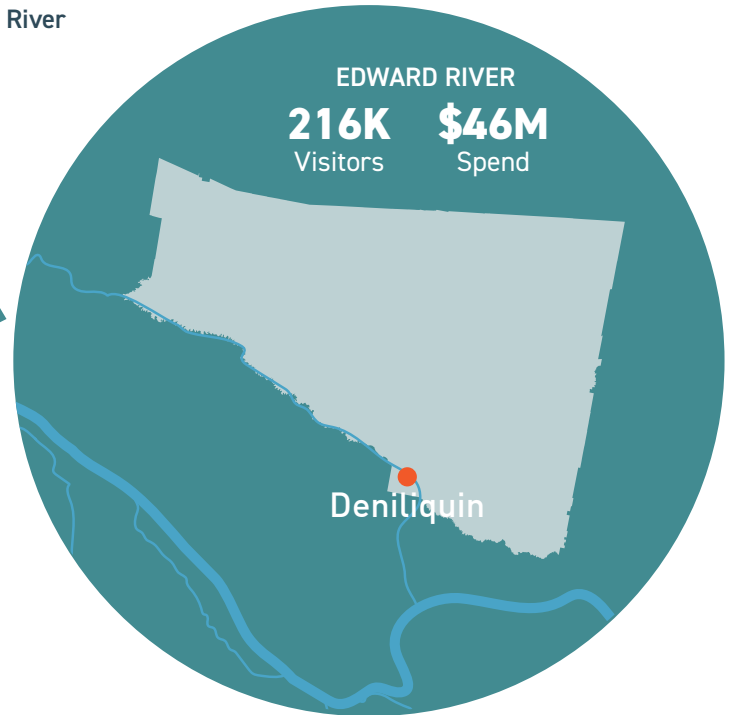
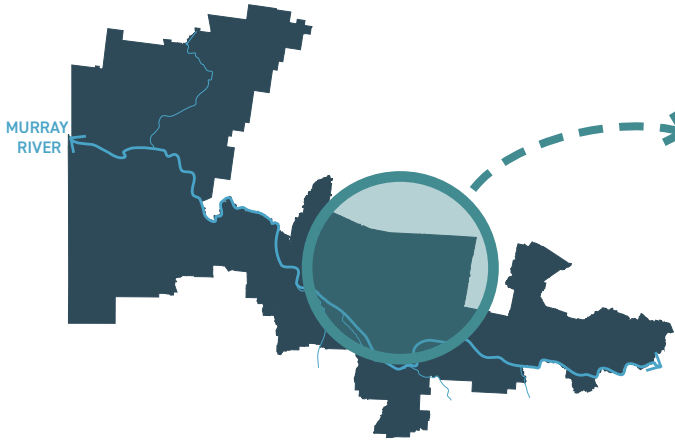
¹ Source: TRA, Visitor numbers, TRA, 2019, based on 2017-19 3 year average. Average spend per visitor, TRA LGA Profile, 2019, based on 2016-19 4 year average. Total spend, calculated by Urban Enterprise, average spend applied to visitor numbers.

VISITOR ECONOMY OVERVIEW

DENILQUIN AND SURROUNDS

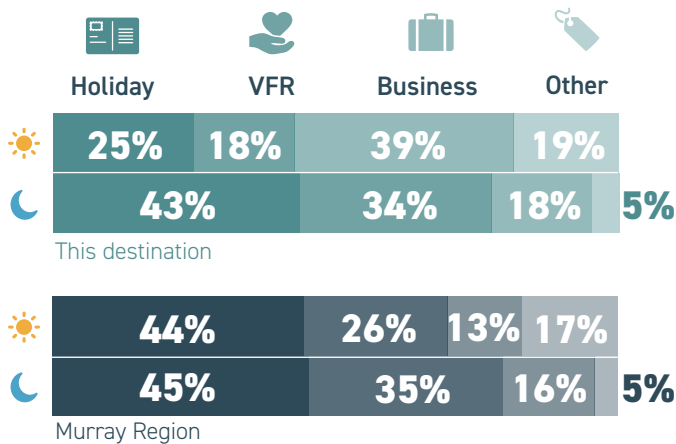
Based on Tourism Research Australia (TRA) data for Edward River Council.

This destination ■
Murray Region ■

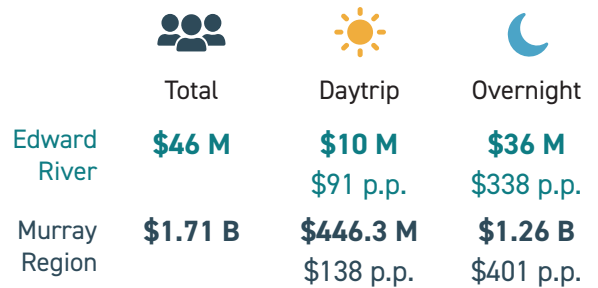


DOMESTIC VISITOR PROFILE

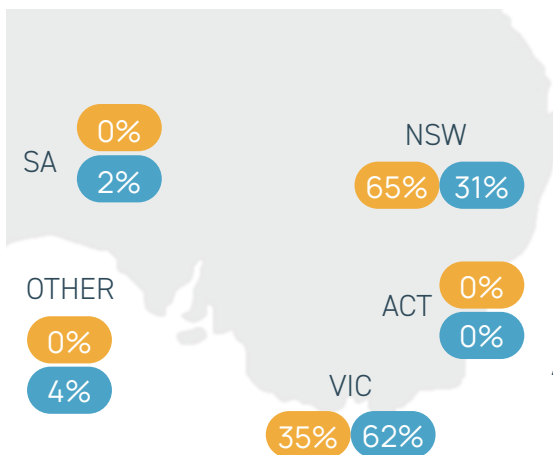
PURPOSE OF VISIT



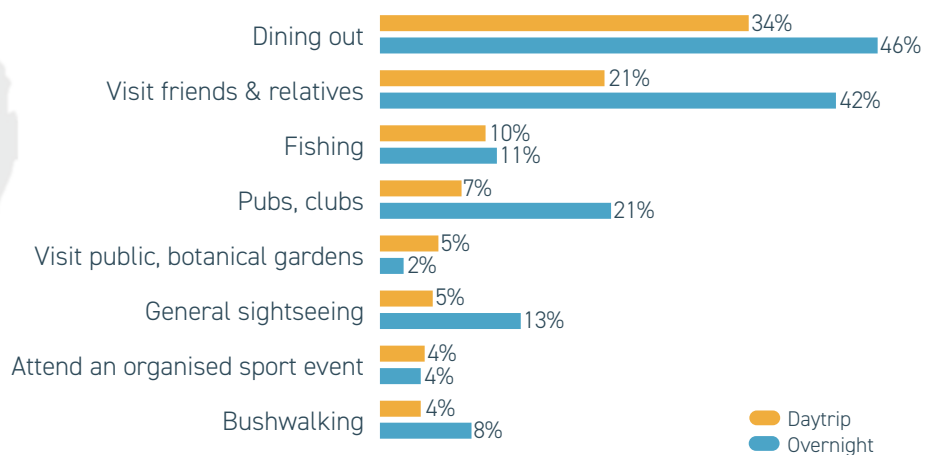
VISITOR SPEND



VISITOR ORIGIN



VISITOR ACTIVITIES



Source: Tourism Research Australia (TRA). Visitor numbers, TRA, 2019, based on 2017-19 3 year average. Average spend per visitor, TRA LGA Profile, 2019, based on 2016-19 4 year average. Total spend, calculated by Urban Enterprise, average spend applied to visitor numbers.

2.2. TARGET MARKETS

The Murray region has a market of 5.1 million Australians. This represents past and potential visitors to the region, as identified through representative market research undertaken of 2,000 Australian residents.

These are visitors that travel regularly to regional Australia (at least once every two years pre-COVID) and are highly likely to book a future trip to the Murray region.

Segmentation of the Australian market for the Murray region is shown below, which helps to identify the current and target markets for this destination, to provide a focus for investment and marketing.

Each markets alignment with this destination has been determined below.

T1. TARGET MARKET OVERVIEW

Proportion of Murray Region Target Market and Market Size				
Murray Habituals 38%	Back to Basics 8%	Road Trip 8%	Explorer and Discoverer 35%	Luxury Travellers 10%
				
1.93 Million	0.43 Million	0.40 Million	1.78 Million	0.52 Million
The traditional Murray visitor who travels to the Murray at least once every two years - the Murray's biggest advocate.	The simple traveller, the free spirit - escaping to nature to press pause on real life, spend time with loved ones, and hit reset.	Inspired by the freedom of a road trip, this market wants to explore the country, see new destinations and escape the city.	Socially conscious and adventurous travellers, open to travelling to new destinations and seeking new, unique experiences.	With a holiday mindset of indulgence, the luxury traveller seeks relaxation achieved through high quality experiences.
Strength of Market Alignment to Deniliquin and surrounds and Reason for Target				
Strong	Strong	Strong	Moderate	Weak
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Self-sufficient travellers who typically self-cater and stay in holiday homes, caravan parks or free camping. - Stay for long trips during peak periods. - Travel in large groups, typically family groups, friend groups or multi-generational family groups. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - High overlap in characteristics with Murray Habituals, but don't regularly visit or have a strong allegiance to the region. - Seek a relaxing nature-based experience away from the hustle and bustle of town. - Camping and caravanning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Travel for longer periods than other segments - opportunity to increase yield and length of stay. - Most likely to travel midweek and off peak – assist in reducing seasonality. - Opportunity for dispersal across the region as open to exploring all the Murray region's destinations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The largest market segment, predominately Millennials, not yet fully captured by the Murray region. - Young and open to new experiences, most likely to engage in a diverse range of experiences. - Want to pack their trip with activities and experiences - a key opportunity to increase visitor yield. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Critical market opportunity to grow visitor yield and support investment in more boutique offerings. - Attracted to food and wine, so growth in this sector is an opportunity to support local producers. - A shift in the perception of Murray region destinations.

Source: Murray Region Market Research, Urban Enterprise, 2022.

2.3. AWARENESS

The following section demonstrates the awareness and reputation of the Murray River and its surrounding regions through consumer research of a representative sample of 2,000 Australians, undertaken in 2022.

Awareness

A high proportion of the Australian market have not heard of Deniliquin (39%). Low awareness is mostly attributed to this destination being relatively small and lacking well-developed products and experiences.

Only a small portion of the Australian market have heard of the destination and have interest in visiting (26%). The remainder either have visited in the past or have heard of the destination and are not interested in visiting.

There is strong potential to increase awareness of this destination due to it being located within one local government area and a well-developed brand as well as a high-quality destination website. Deniliquin is in a strong position to grow awareness with foundations already in place, including a high quality website.

T2. AWARENESS OF DESTINATIONS IN THE MURRAY

Destination	I have heard the name and have interest in visiting	I have never heard of this place
Albury Wodonga	29%	23%
Cobram-Barooga	28%	43%
Cohuna	21%	55%
Corowa-Wahgunyah	23%	50%
Deniliquin	26%	39%
Echuca-Moama	26%	35%
Holbrook	23%	49%
Koondrook-Barham	19%	60%
Mildura	38%	12%
Rutherglen	24%	47%
Swan Hill	36%	22%
Tocumwal	19%	55%
Wentworth	31%	33%
Yarrawonga-Mulwala	23%	47%

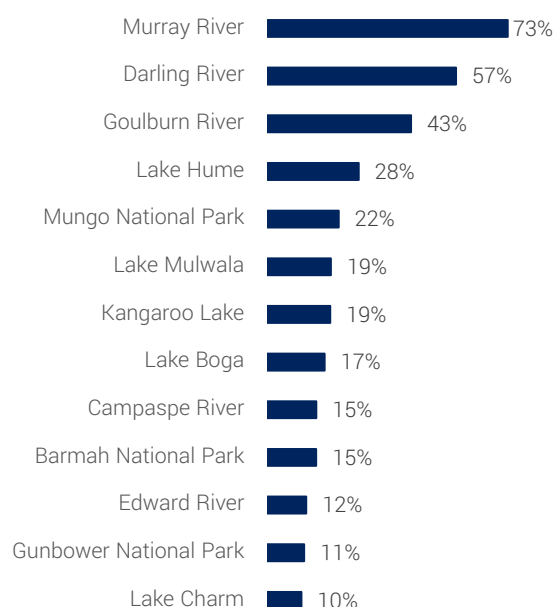
Source: Murray Region Market Research by Urban Enterprise, 2022.

There is very low awareness of Edward River (12%), a key nature-based asset for the region. Product and experience development and promotion will help to activate these natural assets and increase their awareness.

The Murray River has the highest levels of awareness within the Australian market (73%), which highlights the importance of connection to the Murray River to strengthen destination awareness and association. However, the Murray River is a key feature of all destinations across the Murray region, therefore destinations cannot rely on the river as a point of difference.

Destinations must develop hero products and experiences to differentiate themselves from the rest of the Murray region. The Edward River presents a unique comparative advantage for this destination which should be leveraged.

F3. CONSUMER AWARENESS OF MURRAY REGION NATURE-BASED ASSETS



Source: Murray Region Market Research by Urban Enterprise, 2022.

2.4. MURRAY REGION PRODUCT STRENGTHS AND MARKET ASSOCIATIONS

Murray Region Product Strengths

A number of regional product strengths within the Murray region were identified in the 2018 Murray Region DMP. These have been highlighted in the below figure.

The Murray River is the key strength of the Murray region. With this, a number of products and experiences have been developed to capitalise on this natural asset, including camping, bushwalking, water sports, fishing and river cruising and houseboating.

F4. MURRAY REGION PRODUCT STRENGTHS

Primary Strengths	Secondary Strengths
Water Sports	Nature based
Food, Wine and Produce	Business Events
Fishing	
Houseboats/River Cruise	Emerging Strengths
Golf	Indigenous
Festivals and Events	Arts and Culture
History and Heritage	Adventure

Source: Murray Region Destination Management Plan, 2018.

What is the Murray Known for?

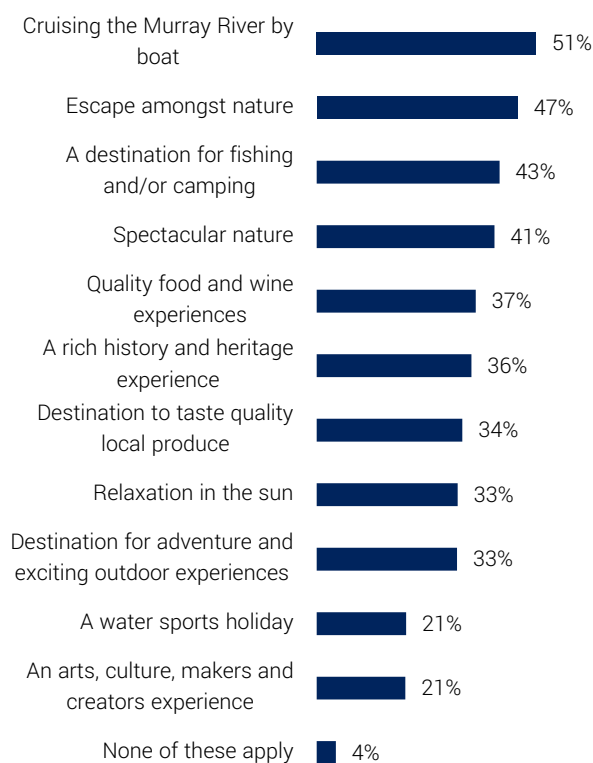
Nature-based attractions and experiences are at the core of what the Australian market perceives to be the "Murray experience".

The below figure shows the broader Australian market expects to cruise the Murray River by boat (51%), escape to nature (47%) and fish or camp (43%) when visiting the Murray region.

The broader Australian market lacks understanding of the breadth of products and experiences currently offered in the Murray region, as indicated by comparatively low perception of the Murray region as a destination for quality food and wine experiences (37%) and quality local produce (37%).

Nature based experiences are considered a primary strength of Deniliquin and the surrounding region. There is opportunity for further investment and development of nature based experiences and waterway activation to grow the visitor economy.

F5. PERCEPTION OF THE MURRAY REGION



Source: Murray Region Market Research by Urban Enterprise, 2022.

2.5. DESTINATION STRENGTHS AND UNIQUE SELLING PROPOSITION

Product Strengths and Potential Hero Experiences for this Destination

Whilst Deniliquin is a developing destination, there is great potential for growth in the visitor economy. Council has invested in improved streetscaping and amenity in the town centre which has led to a vast improvement to the presentation of the town centre. Other projects are also being delivered by Council which will see the establishment of new venues and support towards arts and events.

The heritage streetscape of Deniliquin on the banks of the Edward River presents a number of product development opportunities.

Product strengths of Deniliquin and the surrounding area include:

- Safe waterways that are free of powered boats.
- Nature-based tourism, including the Island Sanctuary, Murray Valley Regional Park and the Hay Plains.
- Waterways and river beaches including the Edward River and lagoons, and associated activities including birdwatching and fishing.
- History and heritage including well preserved homesteads and The Depot.
- Large-scale events including the Deni Ute Muster.
- Scenic Air experiences, including Murray Darling Scenic Flights.
- Agritourism products and experiences, including farm stays.

Deniliquin Unique Selling Proposition (USP) within the Murray Region

Deniliquin offers an alternative destination to other bustling Murray River destinations. The USP for Deniliquin is the tranquil heritage village amongst the natural environment on the Edward River.



How to build on the destination USP?

The USP needs to continue to evolve to meet market expectations, which means there is a need to continue to strengthen the arts and cultural offer and deliver quality and unique food and accommodation experiences. Opportunities include:

- **Indigenous cultural experiences.**
- **Contemporary food and beverage experiences, such as distilleries and breweries.**
- **Events and festivals to balance out visitation, including live music events and street performers.**
- **Waterway activation, including equipment hire.**
- **Arts and culture activation, including heritage homestead tours.**

2.6. GOVERNANCE

The table below outlines the governance structure for tourism in this destination and the responsibilities for each of the key organisations.

Local Government plays a crucial role in supporting the visitor economy, particularly in working closely with industry to support product and experience development and industry growth.

Deniliquin and the surrounding region is in a unique position to grow its visitor economy with the destination being located within one Local Government Area.

T3. GOVERNANCE OVERVIEW

Organisation	Overview	Activities
Destination NSW	Lead government agency for the NSW tourism and major events sectors. Major role in positioning NSW as one of the world's premier tourism events destinations, as well as achieving the NSW Government's goal of tripling visitation expenditure by 2030.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Destination marketing. • Industry support and engagement. • Industry training. • Product development.
Office of the NSW Cross-Border Commissioner	The Office of the Cross Border Commissioner advocates and represents cross border communities and businesses. The NSW Cross-Border Commissioner works alongside local, state and federal bodies to ensure cross-border communities and businesses are not negatively impacted by two sets of legislations and policies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocacy. • Industry support.
Victoria's Cross Border Commissioner	Victoria's Cross Border Commissioner works with residents, businesses and community organisations along Victoria's border to identify and advocate for change. The Cross Border Commissioner also works with the Office of the NSW Cross-Border Commissioner to ensure economic and community benefits for border towns.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocacy. • Industry support.
Department of Regional NSW	The Department of Regional NSW is a central agency for regional issues, building regional economies and communities, managing the use of regional land, and ensuring that government investment into regional NSW is fair and delivers positive outcomes for local communities and businesses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional Economic Development Plans. • Regional Event funding. • Tourism Infrastructure Funding. • Regional Investment support. • Regional strategic planning.
Murray Regional Tourism	The Regional Tourism Board and peak tourism organisation for the Murray region in NSW and Victoria. MRT is the lead cross boarder entity for strategic planning in the Murray region and collaborates with government and industry partners to undertake planning, marketing, product, industry and infrastructure development, and advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Destination marketing; • Industry support and engagement. • Product development. • Investment attraction and facilitation.

Organisation	Overview	Activities
Destination Riverina Murray	DRM is one of seven Destination Networks (DNs) established by the NSW state government to represent the visitor economy in regional NSW. Its principal role is to represent and coordinate the growth and development of the NSW Riverina Murray visitor economy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocacy. • Product development. • Industry training. • Industry support and engagement. • Investment attraction and facilitation.
Local Government <i>Edward River Council</i>	Councils act as enabler for the visitor economy by providing the foundations, including strategic planning, infrastructure services, assistance in product development, investment attraction, and support to the local industry.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visitor services. • Destination marketing. • Investment attraction/facilitation. • Industry training. • Product development.
Deniliquin Business Chamber	Deniliquin Business Chamber is the peak body for business and industry in Deniliquin. The membership-based organisation aims to grow and promote the regional businesses in Deniliquin, including retail, agriculture, dining and professional businesses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local gift card. • Advocacy. • Industry networking. • Industry training and education opportunities.
Local Aboriginal Land Council <i>Deniliquin</i>	<p>Local Aboriginal Land Councils represent Aboriginal affairs at a local level and aim to protect the interests and further the aspirations of Aboriginal communities.</p> <p>This includes working for the return of the culturally significant and economically viable land, pursuing cultural, social and economic independence for Aboriginal people and preserving Aboriginal land rights.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land acquisition. • Establishment of commercial enterprises and community benefit schemes. • Maintenance and enhancement of Aboriginal culture, identity and heritage.

3. CONSIDERATIONS FOR TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

The following section examines the challenges and opportunities for this destination, which have been identified through research and engagement with local visitor economy stakeholders, and review of Council documentation.

These considerations have been used to inform the recommended actions for this destination.

T4. CONSIDERATIONS FOR TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

Markets

- Construction of the new Murray River crossing between Echuca and Moama has made Deniliquin more accessible and increased day trip and weekend visitation from Echuca.
- Visitation from NSW has increased post-covid, particularly from regions that historically did not travel to the Murray region, such as Wagga Wagga and Griffith.
- Summer visitor market is primarily families travelling in caravans and campers, as well as the “grey nomad” market seeking the warmer weather.
- High visitation from the sporting market, travelling for tournaments and sporting events, including lawn bowls, tennis, cricket, rugby union.
- Peaks and troughs in visitation make it difficult for businesses and tourism operators to operate.
- Existing product offering is well suited to older demographics, nature-based visitors and multi-generational family travel.
- Visitation is highly seasonal, revolving around key holiday and summer periods.
- Need for investment in product and experience to attract the younger millennial and higher spend markets.

Product, Experience and Events

- Lack of progressive, contemporary and inspiring product and experience.
- Need for retail and dining businesses to expand opening hours to better meet the expectations of visitors, particularly during weekends and public holidays.
- The Edward River is a particularly healthy natural river.
- Deniliquin provides an intimate, village experience, making it an attractive destination to get out of bustling Echuca. There is opportunity to leverage Deniliquin’s well-preserved town as a backdrop for contemporary experiences.
- Need for improved quality and diversity of dining experiences. Opportunity for destination dining experiences that can drive visitation from within the region, such as high quality restaurants, waterfront dining, breweries, distilleries etc.
- The current, temporary location of the Visitor Information Centre is making operation difficult and is confusing to visitors.
- Increase Indigenous nature-based tourism through storytelling, guided tours and experiences co-designed with the Aboriginal community.
- Develop a sustainable tourism events calendar through the enhancement of existing and development of new events to showcase the region, attract new visitors and balance visitation throughout the year.
- Increased costs for event operators, largely due to lack of local suppliers providing infrastructure and equipment – high freight prices.
- Activate public spaces and night-time economy through music, performances and lighting activations. Developing the night-time economy is critical to creating an overnight visitor destination and generating more yield from visitors.
- Capitalise on the region’s strength in primary produce to deliver agri-tourism experiences, including providers, farm gates and food trails, such as the long paddock touring route.
- Develop the arts and cultural offering to enrich the visitor experience, including live music in streets and parks.

Accommodation

- Overall, a lack of accommodation throughout the destination. This prevents visitors from staying overnight in the region, particularly the sporting market and other large-groups due to lack of large-scale accommodation.
-

Infrastructure and Planning

- New Murray River crossing between Echuca and Moama, has made Deniliquin more accessible and increased visitation from Echuca.
- Need for a bridge to connect the town with The Island Sanctuary.
- Need for 3-phase power to activate the riverfront and allow festivals and events to be hosted in the space.
- Investment in formalised amenity for caravan and camping visitors, including access to power and parking for large vehicles.
- Poor road infrastructure throughout the region, including roads, signage and road shoulders.
- Deliver infrastructure to enhance nature-based attributes and promote engagement with the region's nature-based assets.
- Improve water-access and infrastructure such as wharves, boat ramps and moorings to meet the needs of visitors engaging in fishing, water sports and other water-based activities.

Brand, Marketing and Visitor Servicing

- Visit Deni branding is strong and consistent, continued buy-in from industry is needed to continue to cut through the market.
- There is a need to educate local operators and encourage them to become ambassadors for the destination.
- Increase digital presence of operators and utilisation of digital marketing.
- Expand the number of bookable products and explore the opportunity to package experiences or provide financial incentives to attract new visitors.
- Need to educate tourism operators on the advantages of extending operating hours and opening on public holidays and weekends.

Industry Development and Workforce

- High costs associated with training unskilled staff who do not necessarily stay in the businesses long enough.
 - Event operators prefer to source supplies and infrastructure locally – potential for local supply chain with the increase in locally held large-scale tourism events.
 - Labour shortages, including skilled and unskilled workers, exacerbated by lack of international migration.
 - Lack of affordable accommodation to support attraction and retention of workforce.
 - Improve engagement between the Indigenous community and tourism industry.
 - Collaboration and communication between operators is required to promote and elevate the destination.
 - Poor perception of hospitality and tourism as a career is a barrier to workforce attraction.
-

4. RECOMMENDED ACTION PLAN

READING THIS ACTION PLAN

Recommended actions have emerged as a result of consultation with industry and local government stakeholders during the Local Area Plan workshops, an assessment of existing local documents and strategies, and in response to considerations for tourism development.

The following provides a guide for interpreting the Recommended Action Plan.

Recommended Actions

Each of the recommended actions have been identified in response to the key considerations for tourism development in this destination, and aim to address visitor economy needs and opportunities over the next 5 years.

It is the role of key stakeholders to further investigate the viability and opportunity of each project.

Suggested Next Steps

The identified next steps are a suggestion to enable stakeholders to take forward the recommended actions.

The next steps are to be used as a guide, and will be informed by local resourcing and priorities.

Priority

The priority level for each of the recommended actions have been identified by determining their level of importance, logical staging, as well as which actions can be achieved relatively quickly.

The following priority levels have been used:

Short-term within 1 year	Medium-term 1-3 years	Long-term 4-5 years +
Ongoing		

Key Partners

Key partners have been identified for each of the recommended actions. Current roles and responsibilities of these stakeholders are identified in the Destination Snapshot section of this document.

Key partners include:

- Murray Regional Tourism
- Destination Riverina Murray
- State and Federal Governments and agencies, including;
 - Department of Regional NSW
 - Murray-Darling Basin Authority
- Local Government agencies, including:
 - Edward River Council (Council)
- Industry
- Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC)

4.1. PRODUCT, EXPERIENCE AND EVENTS

T5. RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

Recommended Actions	Suggested Next Steps	Key Partners	Priority
<p>Activate Agricultural Experiences Promote local produce by supporting development of farm open days and on-farm experiences.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conduct agritourism and value adding workshop in collaboration with MRT and Riverina Murray. 	<p>MRT DRM Local producers</p>	<p>Short term</p>
<p>Cruising Experience Investment Refer to the Murray Cruising Strategy for key project opportunities. Specific needs include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Water equipment hire locations. - Canoe/kayak trails. - Paddle sports hubs. - Fishing tours. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Council and stakeholders to facilitate cruising investment. - Work with existing cruise operators to elevate offering and address barriers to operation. 	<p>Industry Council MRT DRM</p>	<p>Short term</p>
<p>Food, Drink and Entertainment Activation Support attraction of dining and beverage establishments to activate the town and provide a contemporary experience within the destination. This includes attracting establishments, such as breweries and distilleries.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promote the opportunity to establish a brewery or distillery. - Undertake investment attraction of dining and beverage businesses across the region. - Identify opportunities for food and beverage experiences overlooking the Edward River. 	<p>Council Industry</p>	<p>Short term</p>
<p>Signature Events Calendar Deniliquin should review their events calendar with a focus on supporting new signature events including music, food and beverage and events.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review the events calendar and seek to provide funding to support new signature events that strengthen the Deniliquin brand. 	<p>Council Industry</p>	<p>Short term</p>
<p>Waterfront Activation Precinct Promote commercial activation of Deniliquin's waterfront on the Edward River. Encourage property owners and businesses to explore waterfront activation of premises.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work with property owners to explore opportunities for riverfront activation. - Investigate public works required to support the initiative – trails, services and infrastructure. 	<p>Council Property Owners Industry</p>	<p>Short term</p>
<p>Activating the Night Time Economy Expand the food and beverage offering and implement place making activations to establish a night time economy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop a night time economy strategy. 	<p>Council Industry</p>	<p>Medium term</p>
<p>Implementation of Peppin Heritage Centre Masterplan Development of new and enhanced displays, accessible multi-media exhibitions and improved accessibility at the Peppin Heritage Centre.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implement the Peppin Heritage Centre Masterplan. 	<p>Council Industry MRT DRM</p>	<p>Medium term</p>

Recommended Actions	Suggested Next Steps	Key Partners	Priority
<p>Yarkuwa Indigenous Knowledge Centre Educational workshops and tours through the Island Sanctuary.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop weaving workshops and tours through the Island Sanctuary. 	<p>Yarkuwa Industry MRT DRM</p>	<p>Medium term</p>
<p>Accommodation Investment Refer to the Murray Region Accommodation Study for project details to attract investment in the identified priority projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Serviced apartment/hotel, Deniliquin - Experiential accommodation along the Edward River, including eco-cabins, tiny homes and glamping experiences. - Motel refurbishment - Tourist park refurbishments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Council should facilitate investment by identifying suitable sites, with consideration of suitable zoning / need for rezoning. - Promote the opportunity to a developer and facilitate planning process. 	<p>Industry Council</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

4.2. INFRASTRUCTURE AND PLANNING

T6. RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

Recommended Actions	Suggested Next Steps	Key Partners	Priority
Amenity to Service Caravaners			
Investment in formalised amenity to service caravan and camping visitors, including:			
- Parking for large vehicles	- Develop a plan to identify gaps in amenity for the caravan market.	Council	Short term
- Toilets			
- Picnic tables			
- BBQs			
Events Infrastructure			
Continued improvement to events infrastructure to support a growing events calendar. This includes:			
- Improve infrastructure at major events precincts including toilet upgrades, power upgrades and lighting upgrades, as well as 3 phase power at the river front.	- Undertake a plan for infrastructure upgrades at event facilities.	Council	Short term
- Investment at Pretty Pine Recreation Reserve for equestrian uses.	- Advocate for investment.	Industry	
- Investment in parking and access arrangements for Rotary Park.	- Prepare business cases where required.		
New Footbridge to Island Sanctuary			
Advocate for the delivery of a new footbridge into the Island Sanctuary to access tracks and trails from the township.	- Investigate opportunities to construct a new footbridge.	Council	Short term
Infrastructure Servicing			
Advocate for delivery of services infrastructure to enable new development and business investment, including:			
- Mobile network and coverage / NBN.	- Work with servicing authorities to advocate for delivery of required infrastructure.	Servicing authorities	Medium term
- Sewerage and water capacity where required.		Council	
Water Access Infrastructure			
Improve access to the Edward River at Deniliquin. Opportunities include:			
- Investment in standardised water access points for unpowered boats.	- Undertake a study which audits and identifies required moorings, jetties, fishing platforms and marinas across the Edward River.	Council	Medium term
	- This should include identification and design and consider private and public sector cruising opportunities.	MDBA	
Advocacy to Address Housing Crisis			
Continued advocacy to State and Federal Government to address housing crisis.	- MRT and Councils to work with regional stakeholders to quantify housing needs and delivery of programs to meet required demand.	MRT DRM DRNSW Council	Ongoing

4.3. BRAND, MARKETING AND VISITOR SERVICING

T7. RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

Recommended Actions	Suggested Next Steps	Key Partners	Priority
<p>Bookable Product and Packaging</p> <p>There are limited online bookable products in Deniliquin. This presents an opportunity to increase visitation, length of stay and improve the overall visitor experience.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop bookable product and product packages including accommodation and dining packages. 	<p>Industry</p> <p>Council</p>	<p>Short term</p>
<p>Marketing Plan</p> <p>Review current approaches to marketing and develop a Deniliquin Marketing Plan, including consideration of opportunities to leverage MRT cooperative marketing activities and opportunities for industry partnership.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Deliver a marketing plan with consideration of digital marketing. 	<p>Council</p> <p>MRT</p> <p>DRM</p> <p>Industry</p>	<p>Short term</p>
<p>Visitor Information Review and Delivery</p> <p>Undertake a visitor information and signage review across the Council area, and prepare a strategy to deliver the following needs as one destination:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Signage (wayfinding and tourism). - Gateway enhancements and interventions. - Visitor information touchpoints throughout the visitor journey. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Undertake a visitor information services review. 	<p>Council</p>	<p>Medium term</p>
<p>Murray Region Local Ambassador Project</p> <p>MRT to develop a region-wide program to encourage local knowledge of and local pride in the tourism industry. This should include ongoing initiatives that aim to educate local industry and residents about the product offering and events, including notification of new business, events and promotional activities to create engagement. This may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Incentive system for residents and industry to engage in tourism offerings and promote through social media. - MRT branded business swap card system to encourage cross-business promotion and visitor information. - Local area tourism industry communication framework. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MRT to develop and deliver plan. - Councils to deliver actions at local level. 	<p>MRT</p> <p>DRM</p> <p>Council</p> <p>Industry</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

4.4. INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT AND WORKFORCE

T8. RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

Recommended Actions	Suggested Next Steps	Key Partners	Priority
Regional Workforce Pathways and Promotion Program			
MRT to develop and implement a framework that promotes the attractiveness of the tourism industry and attracts new workforce. The program should be twofold:		MRT	
- Work in the Murray promotion to attract new tourism industry workforce (think Want To Work in Paradise promotion from Tourism Queensland). This should consider non-monetary incentives for new workers to the region.	- MRT to develop a regional workforce skills gap analysis and campaigns.	DRM	
	- MRT to work with local Councils and other stakeholders (jobs boards, LLENs etc) to promote opportunities.	Council	
- Development of pathways program to attract and retain staff, including:		Secondary schools	Short term and Ongoing
o Attraction of secondary students.		Higher education	
o Communication of clear progression pathways within and between business.		Employment networks	
o Encouraging use of staff sharing platform to provide consistency of work.			
Skills Development Plan			
Using the outcomes of the regional workforce gap analysis and feedback from industry, collaborate with TAFE's, LLEN's and higher education providers to deliver tailored and location-based industry training solutions.	- Undertake workshop with industry to identify specific skill and training needs.	Council	
	- Work with higher education providers to develop courses and course material.	Industry	
		MRT	Short term and Ongoing
		DRM	
		Higher education	
		TAFEs	
Capacity Building and Networking			
Ensure the tourism industry is well connected and supported through the development of networking opportunities.	- Host an annual round table for tourism and hospitality businesses.	Industry	
		Council	Ongoing
		MRT	
		DRM	
Digital Literacy for Operators			
Improve the capability of operators to utilise online visitor services, such as online booking services, social media and motivational websites.	- Deliver a digital literacy program for industry.	MRT	
		DRM	Ongoing
		Council	

Recommended Actions	Suggested Next Steps	Key Partners	Priority
<p>Weekend Trading</p> <p>There is a need to address the very limited trading hours of businesses within the region, including restaurants, cafes and retail stores. This includes extending businesses hours when major events are occurring in the region.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work with retail and hospitality businesses to encourage longer weekend trading hours during events, as a first step in extending trading hours. 	<p>Council Industry</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>Youth Leadership Program</p> <p>Conduct a youth leadership program to engage young people with the local visitor economy to encourage and foster innovation within Edward River's tourism industry.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Deliver a youth leadership program and promote within the local community. 	<p>Council Industry</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A DOCUMENTS REVIEWED

Regional Documents

- Murray Regional Tourism Annual Report 2019-20
- Murray Regional Tourism Strategic Plan 2021-24
- Murray Region Destination Management Plan 2018-2022
- Murray Region Cruising Strategy 2022
- Murray Region Accommodation Study 2022
- Murray Region Consumer Research 2022
- RDA Murray Strategic Plan 2019
- NSW Visitor Economy Strategy 2030
- Riverina Murray Destination Management Plan 2023-30
- Riverina Murray Accommodation Market Assessment 2019

Edward River Council

- Agribusiness Masterplan 2019-2024
- Edward River Economic Development Strategy 2018-2021

