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CARAVAN TRIP: Tony and Joanne Lewis, who travelled from Queensland to Eyre Peninsula, said they enjoy the freedom offered by a caravanning holiday. Picture: Luca Cetta

Tourists want holiday options

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Mr Riddle said statistics showed people were taking shorter holidays, with four to seven days the average length.

The report also showed a rise in 'grey nomads' - retired people travelling for long periods - who were looking for

greater value on holiday, as well as those seeking 'back to basics' and 'nature-based' experiences.

Mr Riddle said overall travellers were demanding more out of their holiday, including quality customer service, high standards of accommodation, quality activities, food and local experiences.

"The market is changing and we need to ensure the product and experiences are meeting the consumer expectations," Mr Riddle said.

"Tourists are expecting a variety of accommodation types, particularly in this market, ranging from bush camping with no facilities through to caravan parks with four-star accommodation available."

Tony Lewis stayed at Shelly Beach Caravan Park over the weekend and chose Ceduna as a destination because of its fishing.

The 62-year-old and his

wife ventured from Townsville down to Eyre Peninsula and will make their way across to Western Australia for three or four months, before heading north and back across to Queensland.

He said freedom of choice made a caravanning holiday so attractive.

"It's the freedom of it, it's good to have the ability to move where you want and go when you want," Mr Lewis said.

"We have met a lot of people from all across Australia, from all walks of life.

"I like having open spaces and seeing friendly people running the place."

Tourism Research Australia predicts caravan and camping will be the main growth sector between now and 2020.

It also said the number of nights spent in caravan and camping accommodation would increase from



37 million to 45 million in
that period.



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**RDAWEP tourism
development manager Brad
Riddle**



Successful RV workshop

On behalf of Liverpool Plains Shire Council (LPSC), Deputy Mayor Councillor Doug Hawkins has extended thanks to the Australian Caravan Club (ACC) representatives who presented three workshops to give local business owners a better understanding of the benefits that can accrue through encouraging RVers to visit the Shire.

"The workshops highlighted awareness of the value of the industry, a breakdown of RVers' daily spending, how to encourage RVers to visit, the overall experience they are seeking and better ways to access the burgeoning market," Councillor Hawkins said.

"LPSC and ACC have developed a close working relationship to achieve a better outcome for all RVers as well as helping to drive local economic development. Council has invested in the establishment or upgrading of Freedom Camps at Willow Tree,

Wallabadah, Currabubula and Premer plus the Caravan Park in Quirindi. Work is underway to improve facilities at Spring Ridge and when a suitable location is agreed upon a new Freedom Camp will be developed at Werris Creek. Possibilities at Blackville are also being explored. These developments have seen the number of RVers

utilising Shire facilities increase greatly with flow on benefits for all

communities involved," he said

"Approximately 50 people attended the workshops held at Quirindi and Spring Ridge," he continued.

"Some of the information local businesses need to take on board includes Freedom

camping use increased 24 per cent over the last year. Growth is being driven by adult couples travelling without children. Overall though 50 per cent of the RV market is families with Grey Nomads accounting for 25-30 per cent. Families are more likely to stay at caravan parks, particularly at beach side locations, whilst couples and grey-nomads are more likely to utilise Freedom Camp sites," he said.

"The numbers are big! Nationally, over \$7 billion is spent each year by RV travellers, with 30 million domestic visitor nights spent in caravan parks and freedom camping grounds. Importantly for our Shire, 90 per cent of all visitor nights in the sector are spent in regional Australia.

"I've received positive feedback about the workshops with the business community appreciating being better informed about what the RVers are looking for when they visit.

"Businesses who missed out on attending can contact me for more details on 0407 001 048. I often hear businesses saying times are tough, we're not making enough,

well supporting Council's attempts to drive economic development by courting the RV market provides an opportunity for you to grow your business. The aim is to provide what the RV market requires and at the same time to help our Shire prosper," Councillor Hawkins concluded.