



RV status puts town up for more returns

MAYOR'S CHAIR ■ Camilo Blanco

The news Port Hedland has officially been named an RV-friendly town, the second of its kind in the Pilbara and the 300th in Australia, is a welcome development for the region.

This is a great opportunity to promote tourism in the town and encourage our friends and family travelling around WA to make Port Hedland a key part of their travel itinerary.

I congratulate the small businesses of Port Hedland, as these are the reason travellers have enjoyed their visits so much in the past.

These businesses will greatly benefit from our new label in the coming years, with research from last year showing there was an estimated \$500,000 flow-on effect in the local economy.

The Port Hedland Visitors Centre had a 200 per cent increase in foot traffic when the RV overflow campsite was announced on Facebook last year, and had one of its busiest seasons yet.

Newman is the Pilbara's other RV-friendly town, achieving the status in October.

The encouragement of tourism trade from travellers in RVs is one change of the many we are hoping to see in the near future as we move forward in promoting the Pilbara

region as one of WA's great tourist destinations.

This year, for the first time, the Tourism Council WA will be visiting the Pilbara to deliver tourism training from February 15-16.

Hosted by the City of Karratha and supported by the Pilbara Regional Council, the Shire of Ashburton, the Town of Port Hedland and the Shire of East Pilbara, this multi-session event will provide tourism operators, local businesses and local governments with a unique opportunity to build their skills and knowledge in the tourism industry.

We encourage our local businesses to sign up for the range of workshops available, to gain further knowledge and improve key skills that can help them to make the most of the influx of tourists that will be coming in the fast-approaching RV season.

Tickets start at \$45, and sessions cover identifying business opportunities, providing targeted customer service and how to build an online presence to meet the needs of the tourism industry.

Buy tickets online at tourismcouncilwa.com.au/tourism-boost.

■ Camilo Blanco is the Town of Port Hedland mayor.



RV dump point for Victor

VICTOR HARBOR - After eight years of discussion Victor Harbor is now moving forward to have a Recreational Vehicle (RV) and Caravan waste dump point. At its January council meeting elected members endorsed the Victor Harbor Tourism Information Bay on Adelaide Road as the preferred location for a dump point. Councillor Moira Jenkins said it is time Victor Harbor was RV friendly.

“This will be the beginning

of a good relationship between the City of Victor Harbor and grey nomads who contribute to the region’s economy. We will continue to look for an appropriate site for low cost parking for self-contained RV vehicles. It would be ideal to have a dump point and low cost camping area in the same location,” Cr Jenkins said.

Member of the Campervan and Motor Home Club of Australia Neil Hosking was at the council meeting and

said there was a need in Victor Harbor for a dump point and for low cost accommodation for self contained RV vehicles.

“It is frustrating to see Yankalilla and Alexandrina with dump points, but not Victor. Victor is the gateway to KI and a small investment can gain real benefits for the city. It makes you feel welcome and the site on Adelaide Road is fine,” Mr Hosking said.

— MICHAEL SIMMONS



RV FRIENDLY: City of Victor Harbor councillor Moira Jenkins and motorhome owner Neil Hosking at the proposed dump site off Adelaide Road.



Contingency plans needed for Spirit of Tasmania cargo: Labor

FREIGHT BALANCE

BY HAYDEN JOHNSON

THE state government must “strike a balance” between the amount of freight and passengers using the Spirit of Tasmania ships, state Labor has declared.

As freight volumes on the ships increase, Labor’s spokesman for Public Transport and Infrastructure Craig

Farrell said the government must ensure it did not affect soaring passenger numbers.

The RV industry said space on the ship was an issue.

■ HAYDEN JOHNSON
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Calls for government to fix freight space

THE state opposition has called on the government to manage the growing amount of freight carried on the two Spirit of Tasmania ships while passenger numbers continue to soar.

Some North-West Coast residents have complained about the limited space available - for larger cars and caravans - on the Spirit of Tasmania ships over the peak tourist season.

Campervan and Motorhome Club of Australia Tasmania representative Don Mackrill said a lack of space on the two ships for RVs had

been an “issue from day one”.

Labor’s spokesman for Public Transport and Infrastructure, Craig Farrell, said more should be done to “strike a balance” between freight and private vehicles.

“Labor has been calling on the government to put contingency plans in place to deal with growing demand for fresh freight from our state while tourism continues to boom,” he said.

“The government and Minister Rene Hidding must show leadership to ensure

the TT- Line and freight services can strike a balance to manage these peaks.”

Responding to the comments, Mr Hidding slammed Labor for opposing the “refurbishment of the two Spirits” which led to a rise in passenger and freight numbers.

When pressed on what Labor would do to address the balance, Mr Farrell said “Labor would closely negotiate with all freight companies to address priorities”.

According to TT- Line freight volumes have increased by 1.9 per cent since 2012-13.



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In 2015-2016 the ships carried 100,626 twenty-foot equivalent units - compared to 102,309 in 2014-2015.

Mr Mackrill said the ships were often “chock-a-block” in the tourist seasons and would support initiatives to make RV travel easier - without affecting freight costs.

- HAYDEN JOHNSON