



Destination
North Coast NSW

North Coast News & Views No. 131

NSW Moves To Next Stage Of Reopening As Booster Program Ramps Up

The NSW Government is urging people to book in for their COVID-19 booster shot with restrictions easing today as part of the reopening roadmap.

The new settings that come into effect today include:

- Density limits will cease and masks will only be required on public transport and planes, at airports, and for indoors front-of-house hospitality staff who are not fully vaccinated;
- QR check-ins only required at high-risk venues including hospitals, gyms, business premises for personal services, pubs, small bars, registered clubs, nightclubs, and for indoor music festivals with more than 1,000 people;
- Proof of vaccination only required for indoor music festivals with more than 1,000 people and cruises with more than 100 passengers;
- Businesses can still require proof of vaccination at their own discretion;
- COVID safety plans will be optional for businesses and will be supported by SafeWork NSW.

More than 93 per cent of people aged 16 and over have been fully vaccinated as NSW continues its responsible and measured approach to reopening.

Revisit the [NSW Government roadmap of changes](#).

Read [Media Release](#).

After 141 days, the [Queensland border re-opened](#) this week which is a welcomed change ahead of the summer holiday season.

Staying COVID Safe This Summer - Assets For The Travel And Accommodation Industry

As we head into the summer and holiday season, more people will be moving around our state. To support accommodation providers and other businesses hosting holidaymakers maintain COVID safe behaviours and compliance, the NSW Government have developed a [toolkit/information pack](#) to help commercial and short term accommodation businesses prepare to welcome guests in a COVID safe way.

This pack includes tailorable content including newsletter/web copy, social media assets and posters to help communicate with businesses, staff and guests.

Changes To State Significant Event Fund To Support Events Industry

The NSW Government's \$200 million [State Significant Event Fund](#) has been refocused to turbocharge the recovery of the events industry, with Expressions of Interest (EOI) open for events which can be delivered in 2022 and that will significantly stimulate the visitor economy, create jobs, support businesses and contribute to the cultural and social fabric of the state. Potential applicants should carefully consider the [State Significant Event Fund Guidelines](#) before completing your application.

Events including sporting, entertainment, and cultural will be considered under the Fund, and proposals should fit into a distinctive and compelling event calendar that considers off-peak event and travel periods.

Following the first two years focusing on event recovery, the Fund will return to its original purpose of attracting State Significant Events to NSW.

Events proposed to be held before 30 June 2022 are encouraged to submit their EOI submission by 20 December 2021. A second round of EOIs for events to be held in the 2022/23 financial year will open in February 2022.

Support Extended For Small And Medium Sized Businesses

The [SME Recover Loan Scheme](#) has been [extended](#) by a further six months to 30 June 2022. SMEs who are dealing with the economic impacts of COVID-19 with a turnover of less than \$250 million will be able to access loans of up to \$5 million over a term of up to 10 years.

Buy Regional This Christmas And Get The Bush Buzzing

Gift givers looking for the perfect present, festive feasts, and tasty treats are again turning to regional NSW businesses in the lead up to Christmas, helping to ensure cash registers in the bush will be ringing this festive season.

Deputy Premier and Minister for Regional NSW Paul Toole said more than 800 businesses listed on the [NSW Government's Buy Regional](#) webpage were stocked and ready to send presents, food and wine in time for an unforgettable Christmas.

[Register your business for Buy Regional](#) or find the perfect Christmas gift.

Read [Media Release](#).

Simplified Policies To Drive Planning Reform

Transparency and certainty lie at the heart of the NSW Government's plan to simplify the [state's planning policies](#).

Minister for Planning and Public Spaces Rob Stokes said by consolidating State Environmental Planning Policies (SEPPs) and introducing a set of people-focused principles, the entire planning system will be reoriented to become simpler and easier to understand.

The changes include:

- Introduce nine planning principles to guide the planning system, creating clear strategic approaches to delivering housing, jobs, infrastructure and good design;
- Consolidate 45 existing SEPPs into 11 aligned with the planning principles to bring together controls and set a roadmap for ongoing planning reform; and

- Simplify and rationalise other policy including Ministerial directions and planning circulars to align with the planning principles.

Reforms will come into effect from 1 March 2022 to allow time for stakeholders to become familiar with the new framework.

Read [Media Release](#).

Helping Hand For Country Shows

Christmas has come early for country shows right across the State with funding available to ensure these much-loved community events come back bigger and better than ever in the New Year. Deputy Premier and Minister for Regional NSW Paul Toole said 190 agricultural shows being staged in 2022 can apply for funding under the NSW Government's [\\$5 million Country Shows Support Package](#) which is part of the \$200 million Regional Recovery Package.

Funding can be used for a range of reasons, including ensuring shows are COVID-Safe, subsidising stall fees, equipment hire, upgrading show facilities or engaging locally based artists or musicians. Applications close 29 April 2022, or when funding is exhausted.

Read [Media Release](#).

Supporting The Return Of Australian Live Music

Applications are open for the fourth round of the Commonwealth Government's \$20 million [Live Music Australia](#) program, designed to bring more home-grown music to Australian stages. Minister for Communications, Urban Infrastructure, Cities and the Arts Paul Fletcher said the Government was providing \$2.5 million in funding under this round to support venues in their recovery from the pandemic.

Under the program, the Commonwealth Government has invested more than \$8 million to support more 300 live music venues and the recovery and sustainability of the live music sector. Applications close 20 December 2021.

NSW Superyacht Guide To Attract Lucrative Market

The NSW Government through [Destination NSW](#) has released the [NSW Superyacht Guide](#) which features many North Coast marinas and destination.

The guide is a comprehensive handbook to the more than 2,000 kms of spectacular NSW coastline with premium marinas to welcome superyachts of varying sizes. The guide, which features information on superyacht and tender access points, was developed in collaboration with Superyacht Australia, Transport for NSW, Port Authority of New South Wales and Department of Primary Industries.

In the most recent economic impact assessment on the Australian superyacht industry, it was valued at \$1.97 billion, including a tourism value of \$190 million.



EV Chargers For All Regional Hotels And Motels

Carmaker MG has announced it will donate 1,000 [electric vehicle chargers to regional and rural motels and hotels](#). The chargers are set to be delivered within 12 months and won't only be accessible for MG drivers. The chargers will be fitted with the now Type 2 plug standard, the 7kW (single phase) and 11kW (three phase) so visitors can charge up an electric vehicle overnight while the driver sleeps. MG has also flagged that if the program is successful it could be extended to other types of hospitality providers.

\$6 Million To Support 60 NSW Cultural Infrastructure Projects

Sixty museums, theatres, performance spaces, galleries and Aboriginal Keeping Places will share in over \$6 million as part of Round 1 of Minor Works and Equipment Projects through the [NSW Government's Creative Capital program](#). See the [full list of projects funded](#) with several across the North Coast including expansion of the Coffs Harbour Regional Conservatorium; upgrades to Yarrawarra Aboriginal Cultural Centre; refurbishment of the Slim Dusty Centre to create a regional art gallery and other immersive spaces and upgrades at the Manning Entertainment Centre among them.

Round 2 of Minor Works and Equipment Projects will open on 11 July 2022.

The Alfresco Dining Package

The [Alfresco Restart Package](#) will bring the streets of NSW back to life through a number of initiatives that will support outdoor dining, live music and entertainment.

Initiatives include:

o The [Festival of Place](#) which includes:

- Long Summer Nights Program
- [Streets as Shared Spaces Program](#)
- [Summer Night Fund Program](#)
- [Open Streets Program](#)

o Changing the [outdoor dining planning rules](#) permanently to allow pubs and small bars to implement outdoor dining more easily

o Setting up [emergency temporary alfresco dining measures](#) for businesses to setup dining in parks and public spaces

o Offering [\\$5,000 rebates for hospitality businesses](#) to get their outdoor dining ventures in a park or public space off the ground.

Around Our Region

DATE CHANGE - North Coast Tourism Symposium & Awards Celebration

Please note the North Coast Tourism Symposium and Awards Celebration will now be held on **Thursday 28th July 2022 in Grafton**. It was previously planned for 19 May 2022 but a mid-year date brings us back to our usual alignment with the NSW State Tourism Awards.

Update your diaries with more information to unfold in the New Year.

Northern Rivers Rail Trail

Destination North Coast recently completed three Northern Rivers Rail Trail Product & Experience Development Workshops (with one more to be held in [Byron on 2 February 2022](#)) with new and experienced operators and business owners gaining an understanding of how best to develop products and experiences along and around the trail.

Construction on the rail trail has commenced for the Tweed section following input from industry experts and stakeholders including traditional owners, local residents, businesses, community and interest groups. Read [Media Release](#).

National Parks & Wildlife Service Updates

NSW National Parks & Wildlife Service are in the process of completing a major overhaul of Gondwana World Heritage interpretation signs and are [replacing/renewing or creating new ones across the North Coast](#). On top of this list, Parks are also renewing signage and improving the interpretation at Minyon Falls to reflect the cultural significance of the site. Barrington Tops are also getting upgrades under the [Gondwana World Heritage interpretation project](#). The North Coast is receiving the majority of the funding and attention across the World Heritage listed national parks with this project due for completion by the end of this Financial Year.

Tweed Hidden Gems Campaign Launches

The Hinterland Gems Campaign aims to inspire visitors to journey beyond the Tweed's famous coastline to immerse themselves in the green country landscapes, ancient forests, creative communities, farm-grown goodness and friendly local welcomes.

The campaign activity is supported by strategic partnerships with Tripadvisor, Australian Traveller and Must Do Brisbane (Phase Two), as well as Television Commercials, Print Media, Social Media advertising, digital, Trueview, media and influencer famils.

[Download the Operator Toolkit](#) to get involved.

Congratulations to Tweed Tourism Co for [production of this video](#) as part of the campaign for TV commercials, social videos and Youtube.

Tweed Byron Local Aboriginal Land Council Land Management Agreement

[Tweed Byron Local Aboriginal Land Council](#) will manage a new reserve being created on culturally-significant land on Fingal Head at Tweed Heads. This historic appointment is the [first time an Aboriginal Land Council has been appointed as a Crown Land Manager in NSW](#).

The appointment will preserve and rehabilitate the area's biodiversity via bush regeneration, protecting native species and wildlife, cultural assets and stories, and joint community projects.

Lismore Visitor Centre Reopens

A partnership between Lismore City Council, Rous County Council and the local Aboriginal Community has seen the reopening of the [Visitor Information Centre in Lismore](#).



Bonville Golf Resort Voted As Australia's Favourite Tee Off

[Bonville Golf Resort](#) has been voted Australia's Favourite Golf Course for the sixth year in a row in the [Golf Australia Magazine 50 Favourite Golf Courses poll](#). The Resort is currently offering social play on Mondays and Tuesdays and has turned its attention to all-inclusive Stay, Play and Dine packages. Golf Australia readers voted for their favourite three Australian courses with 320 golf courses receiving at least one vote.

Macleay Valley Coast Partnership With TripAdvisor

Macleay Valley Coast's partnership with TripAdvisor will be live until mid-2022 with visitors to see a range of sponsored content from Macleay Valley Coast while they are using the TripAdvisor site to plan their next adventure.

Operators benefit too as your listings will have an extended reach during this period, so there's no better time to [create or update your TripAdvisor listing](#) to help us all make the most of this opportunity!

Industry Insights

Domestic Tourism Forecasts

Tourism Research Australia (TRA) have released their [domestic tourism forecasts](#) with domestic tourism expected to continue to rebound, returning to around its pre-pandemic level in 2022-23.

Industry Development & Other Opportunities

Destination NSW On-Demand Webinars: Sell Bookable Tourism Products Online

Join a series of three on-demand Sell Online webinars for tourism businesses to find out how to increase bookings through online sales - both direct and indirect - by using [online booking software](#), creating effective [ATDW-Online listings](#), and working with [online travel agents](#) (OTAs) to grow online visibility.

These webinars are presented by Destination NSW as part of the [NSW First Program](#), designed to assist tourism businesses to develop, promote and sell tourism products and experiences.

Australian Tourism Exchange 2022 - Sydney

Sydney will host the Australian Tourism Exchange (ATE), Australia's largest tourism trade event, in 2022, giving tourism operators the chance to meet and do business with travel wholesalers and agents from around the world.

In partnership with Destination NSW, Tourism Australia's premier event will take place at the International Convention Centre (ICC) from 15 - 18 May 2022. It is expected to attract around 1,700 delegates and contribute millions to the local economy.

Building on the success of ATE in 2021, Tourism Australia will deliver the event in a hybrid format. Following the in-person event at ICC Sydney, ATE Online will run from May 24-26 to connect those unable to travel to Australia.

NSW tourism businesses are encouraged to [register before applications close on 7 January 2022](#).

APEC Tourism Working Group Survey

The Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Tourism Working Group is seeking feedback to understand the vulnerability of the tourism sector to support future policy development. Tourism industry members are invited to [complete this survey](#), exploring preparedness and the use of information and communication technology in response and recovery efforts. The survey closes 7 January 2022.

REMINDER: Have Your Say: THRIVE 2030 (The Re-Imagined Visitor Economy)

Industry is strongly encouraged to provide feedback on the proposed strategy for the visitor economy, THRIVE 2030 (The Re-Imagined Visitor Economy) via [a short survey](#). The strategy will be the national long-term plan to rebuild and return the visitor economy to long-term sustainable growth. It includes actions for governments and industry. The survey closes 3 January 2022.

Regen Tourism



Cameron Arnold, Chair of Destination North Coast, has spent the last few months, considering how best he can use his extensive tourism knowledge and experience to assist the industry through recovery. This week he launched [Regen Tourism](#), an [online accommodation coaching business](#) for the tourism accommodation industry recognising there is little support currently available in this space.

Funding & Other Opportunities

REMINDER - Experience Development Fund

The [Experience Development Fund](#) is available to businesses that are proposing to develop a **new attraction or experience** in NSW that directly aligns with the NSW strengths identified in the Visitor Economy Strategy 2030.

For more information please review the:

- [Program Guidelines](#)
- [Handy Hints](#) for completing your Experience Development application

Applications close on 16 January 2022.

Building Better Regions Fund - Round Six Opens

The Australian Government's Building Better Regions Fund Round Six has \$250 million available for the Infrastructure Projects and Community Investment streams of the fund.

The [Round Six Infrastructure Projects Stream](#) supports investment-ready projects that provide economic and social benefits for regional and remote areas. Grants of \$20,000 to \$10 million to cover 50% or more of eligible project costs are available.

The [Round Six Community Investments Stream](#) supports new or expanded local events, strategic regional plans or leadership and capability strengthening activities that provide economic and social benefits to regional and remote areas. Grants of \$5000 to \$1 million to cover 50% or more of eligible project costs are available.

Incorporated not-for-profit, local government agencies or bodies and non-distributing co-operatives are encouraged to apply across both streams with applications closing 10 February 2022.

Cultural Tourism Accelerator Program - Partnership Initiative

Funds initiatives that [develop a partnership with hospitality, accommodation, retail or events businesses](#) to increase visitation and develop cross markets. Closes 25 January 2022.

[Surf Club Facility Program](#)

Assists Surf Life Saving Clubs throughout NSW to develop facilities that will enable increased participation in Surf Life Saving for all people, increased facility usage, and improved safety. Closes 21 January 2022.

[Indigenous Contemporary Music Program](#)

Funds Indigenous-led organisations who provide professional industry-based opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander musicians and bands. Closes 31 January 2022.

Strengthening Rural Communities

The [Strengthening Rural Communities \(SRC\) program](#) aims to give the thousands of small rural, regional and remote communities across Australia an opportunity to access funding to support broad community needs.

Grants are available for a broad range of grassroots, community-led initiatives that directly and clearly benefit local communities. Applications are accepted on an ongoing basis and assessed quarterly. Closes 22 February 2022.

North Coast Product And Experience Developments

[Hinterland Hikes - New Tour Operator](#)

Hinterland Hikes is owned and operated by Rori who offers two hinterland tours that cater for all walking abilities - Full Day Waterfall Tour and a Full Day Rainforest Immersion tour with visitor pick-up from Ballina and Lennox Head.

[Nightly Historic Projections](#)

Over December and January, Port Macquarie Council will be running a series of three stunning productions, projecting onto the Historic Courthouse every evening. Wakulda will continue to run, as well as a director's cut of locally produced 'The Christmas Bell' and a sneak preview of ArtWalk 2022's 'Connecting the Dots'.

[Ichi Restaurant - Port Macquarie](#)

'Ichi' is the word for one in Japanese. Many that have learnt the language or travelled there know it is a culture, the same experience that awaits guests.

Port Macquarie [Live & Local](#) is in support of local musicians, and we have put together 18 live gigs throughout the region in January.

[Echo Adventure Co](#)

Echo Adventure Co. is a professional guided hiking adventure company based in the Mid North Coast of NSW. Reconnecting guests with nature through hiking is a passion of Echo Adventures. Hiking provides an opportunity to slow down, disconnect, and enjoy the many benefits that being surrounded by pristine wilderness provides. Echo Adventure Co. is a National Parks & Wildlife Service accredited operator.

[E-Bike 2U](#)

E-Bike 2U are a Northern Rivers e-bike rental company who deliver and pick-up e-bikes to and from accommodation providers for use by their guests. With cycle infrastructure improving by the day, E-Bike 2U enables accommodation owners/managers to provide additional guest services without the worry of commitment, capital investment and e-bike maintenance.

[Artist Cottage at Grafton Regional Gallery](#)

As part of the extensive renovations of the Gallery an accommodation option was created.

[Sea Spice](#)

Authentic Thai cuisine in the recently refurbished Woolli Hotel

[Miss Saigon](#)

Miss Saigon on Lord Howe Island is now delivering dinners to BBQ spots or other Island locations.

North Coast In The News

Sydney Weekender At Reflections Holiday Parks Jimmys Beach

[Reflections Holiday Parks Jimmys Beach](#) in Hawks Nest is a magical part of the world and Sydney Weekender TV thinks so too. The holiday show's popular presenter Felicity Urquhart recently visited and you can watch the episode on [Sydney Weekender's YouTube channel](#).

North Coast Events

To aid in your planning, please note upcoming events across the region.

[Coffs Coast Food and Wine Festival](#) - The Coffs Coast Food & Wine Festival will boast 10 days of decadence with Dining Experiences & Foodie Workshops hosted at the best restaurants in the region. The festival will highlight local ingredients and producers at their finest. Each Dining Experience will be paired with art installations, live music & more. 4-14 March 2022.

[SWIFF Storyland](#) - A one day playground of live music and art, STORYLAND is held on the Coffs Coast waterfront at Park Beach Reserve, 23 April 2022.

[Junior National Oztag](#) - Local Associations throughout New South Wales, Australian Capital Territory and Queensland merge to form 13 Regions which enables the best of the best Oztag players aged 8 to 17 years to compete over a three day tournament. 11-13 Feb 2022, Coffs Harbour.

[NSW Touch Senior State Cup](#) - Port Macquarie, March 25-27

SAVE THE DATE - [LisAmore Italian Friendship Festival](#) - 5 June 2022

COVID-19 Resource Centre

The [DNC COVID-19 Resource Centre](#) makes it easy to access relevant information and find links to appropriate Government and other resources.
