

**Subject:** Groote Archipelago COVID-19 ADVICE #12 – 14 May 2020

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## **Groote Archipelago COVID-19 ADVICE #12 – 14 May 2020**

Hi All

Please see below for an update of key COVID-19 information and how it relates to Groote Eylandt. Thanks to everyone for your continued efforts in keeping Groote Eylandt safe. Please be aware that this email advice is based on the most up-to-date information but the situation is rapidly changing. Further advice will be provided as required. Continue to check <https://coronavirus.nt.gov.au/>

### ***Territory Situation Update***

There continues to be no known cases of COVID-19 in the Groote Archipelago, and there are now only 2 active cases in the NT. These cases are Defence Force personal who contracted the virus overseas and were transported to Darwin for medical care.

There has been a total of 30 (28 recovered) confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the NT from 5,527. Please continue to check <https://coronavirus.nt.gov.au/current-status> for up to date case, testing and recovery numbers in the NT.

### ***Roadmap to a New Normal***

Stage 1 of the Roadmap to a New Normal has rolled out across the NT, which saw some facilities on Groote re-open. Stage 2 begins on Friday 15 May 2020. Please see full details here (<https://coronavirus.nt.gov.au/steps-to-restart/roadmap-new-normal>). Everyone should still maintain a 1.5m distance from people that are not from your household and continue to observe good hygiene practices such as regular handwashing and covering your nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing.

Among other things, Stage 2 allows pubs and restaurants to re-open and serve alcohol with food with a time limit of two hours. Please note that the Golfie has confirmed it will re-open, however the Lodge has confirmed it will remain delivery only at this stage due to the number of Essential Workers that are staying there and the ARC will remain closed to the public at this stage as it is being utilised as the Darwin FIFO mess. Please continue to check with individual businesses on their opening arrangements.

Please continue to check the GEMCO Community Facebook page for their latest updates, due to their FIFO segregation arrangements they are not re-opening some of their facilities at the same pace as the NTG roadmap stages.

Stage 3 of the Roadmap is due to commence on Friday 5 June 2020, however this will be confirmed closer to the date and will require successful outcomes from Stage 2.

It is important to note that there has been no date given for the lifting of interstate border restrictions and that this will likely be the last thing lifted. People entering the Northern Territory are still required to quarantine at their own cost on arrival.

### ***Biosecurity Act Determination Arrangements***

The current Biosecurity Act Determination arrangements that require people to quarantine prior to flying to a Designated Biosecurity Area (such as Groote Eylandt) are in place until 18 June 2020. While it is ultimately a decision for the Commonwealth Government yesterday the Chief Minister announced that he had reached agreement with the NT Land Councils to seek Commonwealth support to bring this forward to 5 June 2020, in line with the beginning of Stage 3 of the Roadmap to a New Normal.

If this occurs it would mean that Groote Eylandt residents would be able to leave Groote Eylandt and travel within the NT and return without requiring a 14-day quarantine period from 5 June 2020.

Further advice will be issued in the coming days if the Commonwealth Government agrees.

### ***Travel Advice***

Until there is confirmation of the above, NTG, Commonwealth and ALC advice continues to be that travel should only be undertaken for essential or emergency purposes. Interstate travel is still subject to forced quarantine at the cost of the traveller.

Anyone leaving the Designated Biosecurity Areas (including Traditional Owners) is required to serve a 14-day quarantine period before they will be allowed to travel the Groote Archipelago and at this stage you

must apply and be approved for a Groote Archipelago & Community Access Permit or Approved Remote Essential Worker (AREW) status prior to travelling.

TOs requiring assistance to complete a 14-day quarantine period in Darwin can contact Larrakia Nation on 1800 PATROL (1800 728 765) and non-Indigenous people can contact the Remote Travel Hotline on 1800 518 189 for assistance.

### ***New Testing Capability for Groote Eylandt***

The Commonwealth Government has confirmed that Groote Eylandt will be one of the remote sites to receive 'point-of-care' testing capability. This means there will be a Genexpert testing machine located in the Alyangula clinic that will return COVID-19 testing results for the Archipelago in approximately 45 minutes, rather than the current arrangements which require samples being sent off-Eylandt and takes days. Initially there will be capacity for up to 20 tests per week.

Training for Health staff will happen in the next week and I will provide a further update once the machine is operational.

### ***GEMCO Clinic***

The new GEMCO Clinic opened on Monday 11 May 2020 for GEMCO residential employees, contractors and their families residing in Alyangula. This reduces the impact on existing services and boosts capacity across the Archipelago during the COVID-19 preparation and potential response. This is a substantial investment from GEMCO and they are working closely with the Top End Health Service and Alyangula Clinic. The Clinic is staffed by a residential Doctor and two residential Registered Nurses.

Details include:

- Located at 50 Ayawarra Cres, Alyangula (opposite the Police Station)
- Open Mon-Fri 8.30am-5.30pm (closed between 12.30pm and 1.30pm)
- For appointments phone 0436 651 219 or email [GEMCOclinic@outlook.com](mailto:GEMCOclinic@outlook.com)

After hours emergency presentations continue to utilise the phone outside the Alyangula Clinic or call 000.

### ***More Information***

More information is available at [coronavirus.nt.gov.au](https://coronavirus.nt.gov.au), [www.secureNT.nt.gov.au](https://www.secureNT.nt.gov.au), [www.health.gov.au](https://www.health.gov.au) and [anindilyakwasafe.net](https://anindilyakwasafe.net)

This is a rapidly evolving situation and I thank you all for continuing to stay informed and thanks to each and every one of you for taking the necessary steps to keep the Groote Archipelago safe. As always, if you would like to discuss anything further please contact me on 0438 304 647.

Stay safe.

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**Remote Travel Hotline 1800-518-189**

**Coronavirus Hotline 1800-020-080**

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