

[from Mark Hewitt, ALC CEO, 22nd November 2012]

In response to the ongoing COVID-19 situation in Katherine, Robinson River and surrounds, the ALC will be extending its travel restrictions to the Groote Archipelago (per below, due to end tonight [22nd November] at 6pm) until **6.00pm Wednesday, 24th November**.

This is aligned with the extension to the Katherine lockdown announced by the Chief Minister today.

For so long as there remain concerns about COVID-19 having spread to nearby communities, we deem these travel restrictions necessary to ensure that the virus does not enter the Groote Archipelago while contact tracing and testing continues.

We would like to thank GEMCO, Airnorth, Sealink and all charter companies for their significant cooperation so far, and all stakeholders and travelers for their understanding and compliance, which does not go unnoticed.

If you have any questions, please contact Racheal Kleinschmidt on RKleinschmidt@alcnt.com.au.

Travel restrictions to be extended until 6pm Wednesday 24th November:

1. All charter flights and ferry services to the Groote Archipelago from the mainland (including from Darwin, Katherine, Numbulwar, Ngukurr and Nhulunbuy but excluding the GEMCO charter) **cease immediately** until Monday, 22nd November at 6.00pm. We have contacted the charter and ferry companies and have cancelled all existing ALC-booked charter and ferry services from the mainland.
2. At this stage, the ferry service or charter flights between Groote Eylandt and Bickerton Island can continue in compliance with the CHO directions (e.g. facemasks to be worn at all times), however the Board is requesting that all pilots and captains are fully vaccinated. As of yesterday, no flights can travel directly to Bickerton Island from the mainland (except in an emergency).
3. All passengers (including residents, workers and visitors) on all inbound commercial flights (e.g. Airnorth) travelling from Darwin to Groote Eylandt from tomorrow, Thursday 19th November until Monday, 22nd November at 6.00pm must be fully vaccinated and return a negative rapid antigen test prior to boarding. Airnorth is coordinating the rapid antigen tests at Darwin Airport and we understand they have already been in contact with affected travelers. Airnorth is strongly encouraging anyone travelling on these flights to arrive at the airport earlier than usual to allow time for these tests to be undertaken.
4. To the extent possible, we will monitor boats travelling to the Groote Archipelago (including Bickerton Island) from the mainland.