Break O'Day COUNCIL

Business Survey

December 2019 – February 2020

Pic Credit: East Coast Tourism

Version: 1 – Date: July 2020

Introduction

This survey has been designed to capture economic and visitor trends in the Break O'Day region and will be sent to businesses at least two times a year.

The survey is distributed via a link directly emailed to a business database. If you would like to be included on this database, please email Jayne.richardson@bodc.tas.gov.au.

The first survey was sent out to a business database of 132 with 48 Businesses responding. This is a response rate of around 36%, mostly from the St Helens area.

Survey Details

In order to be able to compare like for like information, the survey has been largely designed to be multiple choice. By doing this it allows us to group data together and compare like information with like information.

The survey has also been broken in to several sections in order to allow us to separate out accommodation businesses and ask them specific questions about occupancy and overnight stays.

The first survey, sent in August 2019, was designed to establish a benchmark so that we could more accurately represent the impact the Mountain Bike Trails will have on our area. In order to really understand any changes to visitation and the economy we will need 12 months of collated data.

Due to the way the survey has been designed, we are also able to offer businesses individual records of their data so that they can use this information for their own purposes. Please get in touch with Jayne Richardson at Council if you would like an individual report.

Key Findings of this survey (December 2019 – February 2020)

- St Helens is the main business district of the region
- The majority of visitors to our area over the summer were Tasmanian.
- The increase in Tasmanian visitors were outside of the usual 'Shackie' and could be attributed to COVID-19
- Businesses experiencing an increase in business are reporting between 11-20%, more than the winter survey.
- The timing of the survey (summer) would expect increases in business and visitation
- The majority of businesses in our area are small owner operator style businesses.
- Staffing levels have largely remained the same compared to this time last year as well as compared to the August survey 2019.
- Business types have remained largely the same when compared to the previous survey.

General Information

Q1. - Business Name

This remains confidential

Q2. Position of person completing the survey.

This remains confidential

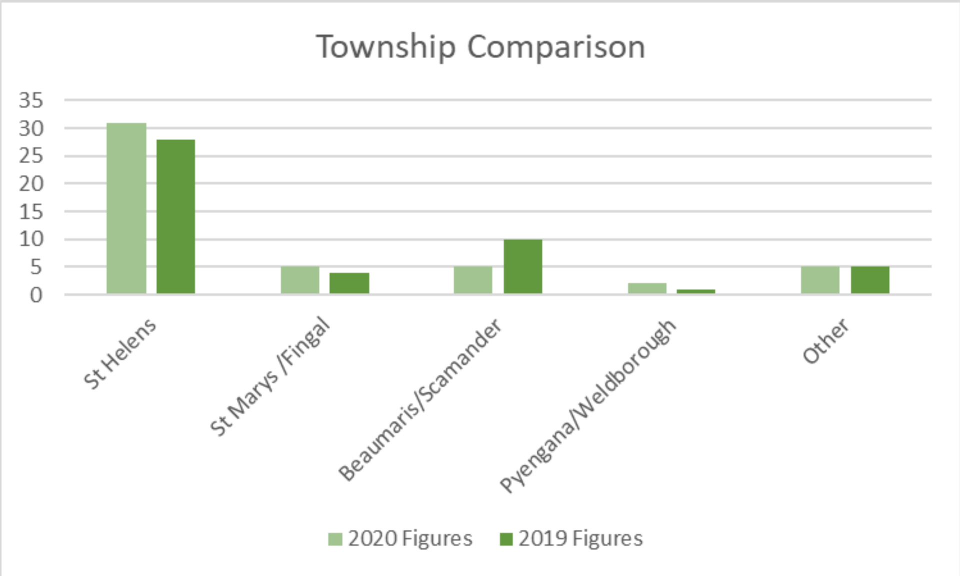
Q3. Town where your business is located

The majority of respondents were from the St Helens area

• St Helens	31	(64.58 %)
• St Marys/Fingal	5	(10.42%)
• Beaumaris/Scamander	5	(10.42%)
• Pyengana/Weldborough	2	(4.17)
• Other	5	(10.42%)

Of the five Other respondents - three were based in Binalong Bay, one in Binalong Bay and St Helens and one in Falmouth / Beaumaris.

Comparison with August 2019 Survey



Conclusion:

St Helens is undoubtedly the main business district of the region and is therefore represented as such in the data above.

The increase in businesses participating in the survey from the St Helens is minimal and could be attributed to a slight increase in business development in the township or simply a reflection of an increase in business from St Helens taking the survey.

Where are visitors coming from?

Q4 and Q5. Regarding business growth when compared with the same time last year. Q6. The origin of visitors over last 3 months. Q7. Origin of visitors generally.

If respondents stated they had experienced an increase in business when compared to the same period last year for Q4, they were automatically sent to Q5 and Q6 where they were asked where they thought this increase in visitation came from.

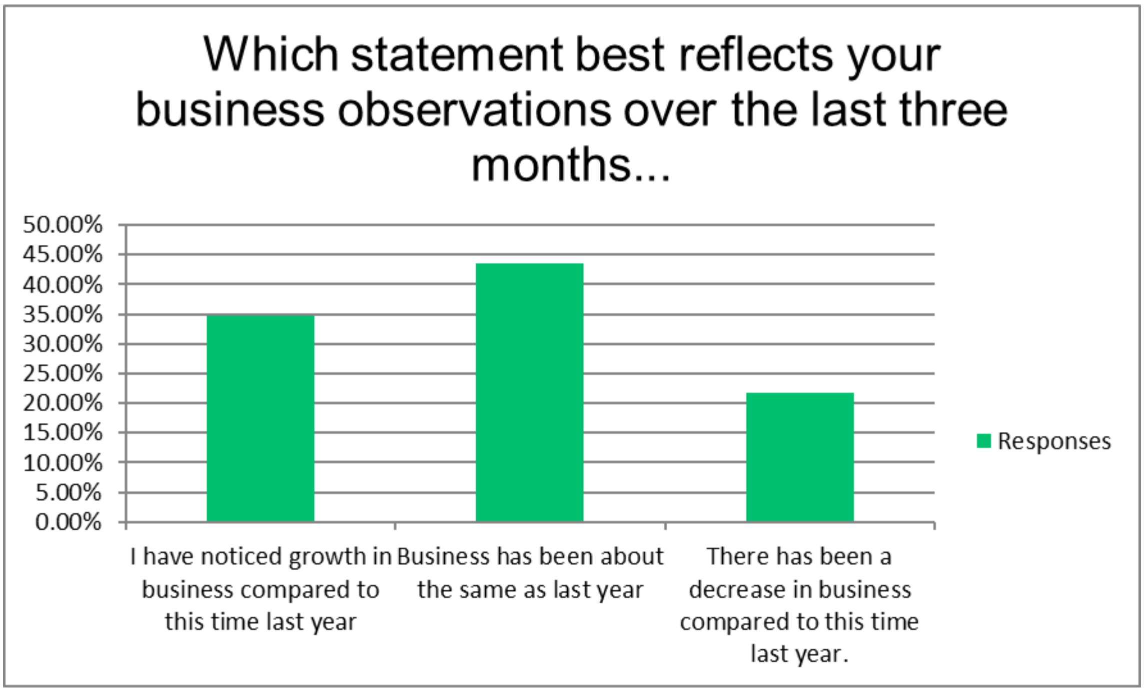
Two respondents skipped Q4, 16 answered they had experienced an increase, and were then sent to answer Q5 and Q6.

Just over 40% of the 46 participants reported that business was about the same as last year. These businesses were from a range of sectors including hospitality, retail, services and real estate.

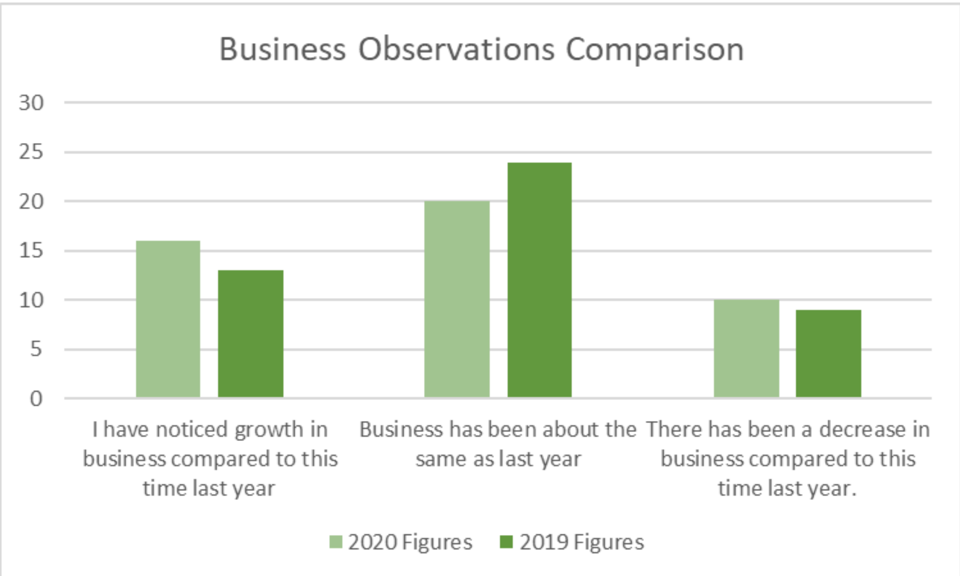
Almost 35% noticed growth and 21% said they had experienced a decrease.

Of the 16 businesses that reported experiencing an increase; six reported 1-10% increase, nine 11-20%, with one reporting 21-30% increase. The majority of businesses attributed these extra visitors as being from Tasmania, 56.25% and 31.35% believed they were from the mainland. This is different to the winter survey last year which reported the majority of accommodation businesses reporting that their increase in visitation came from the mainland.

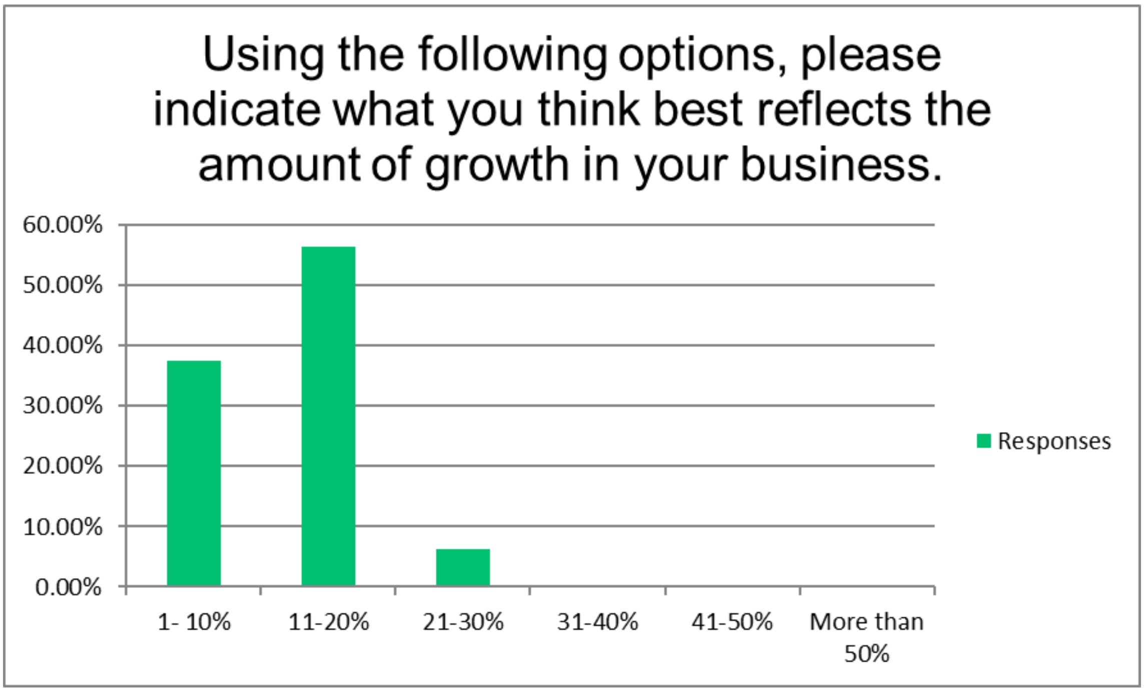
Q4

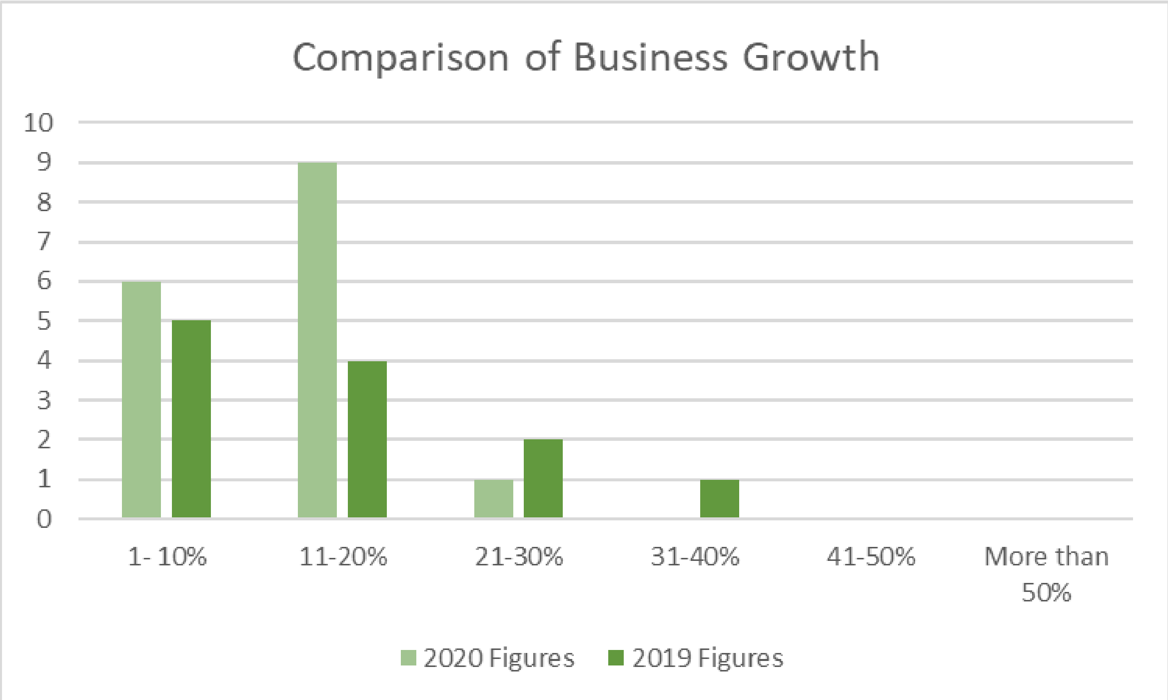


Comparison with August 2019 Survey

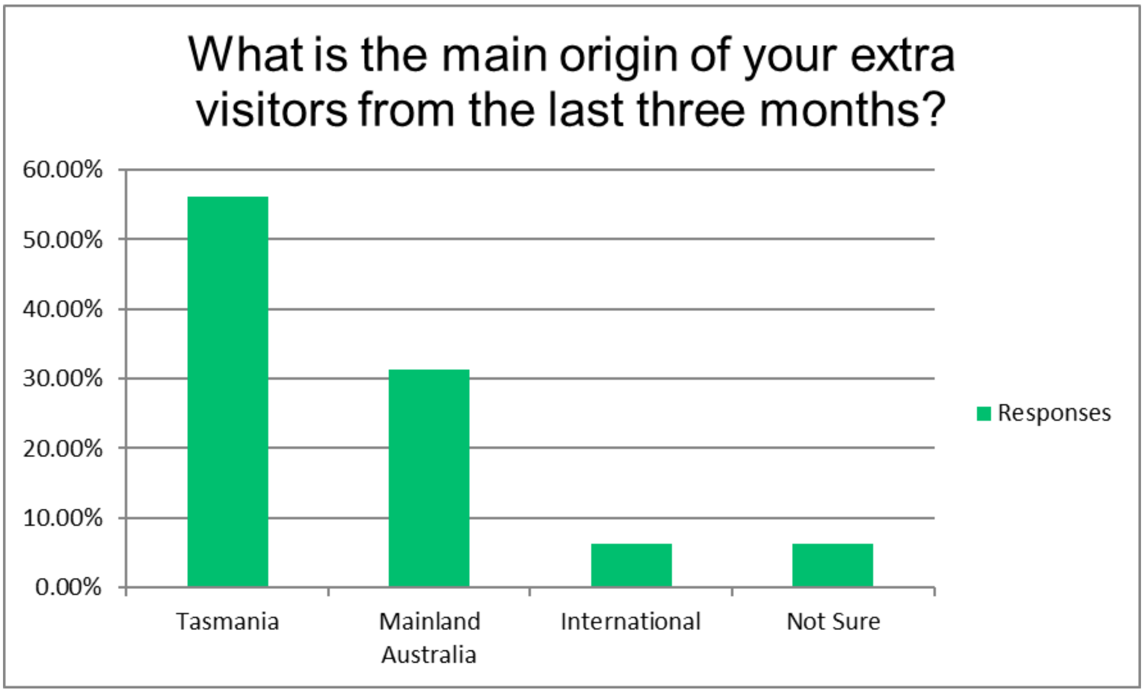


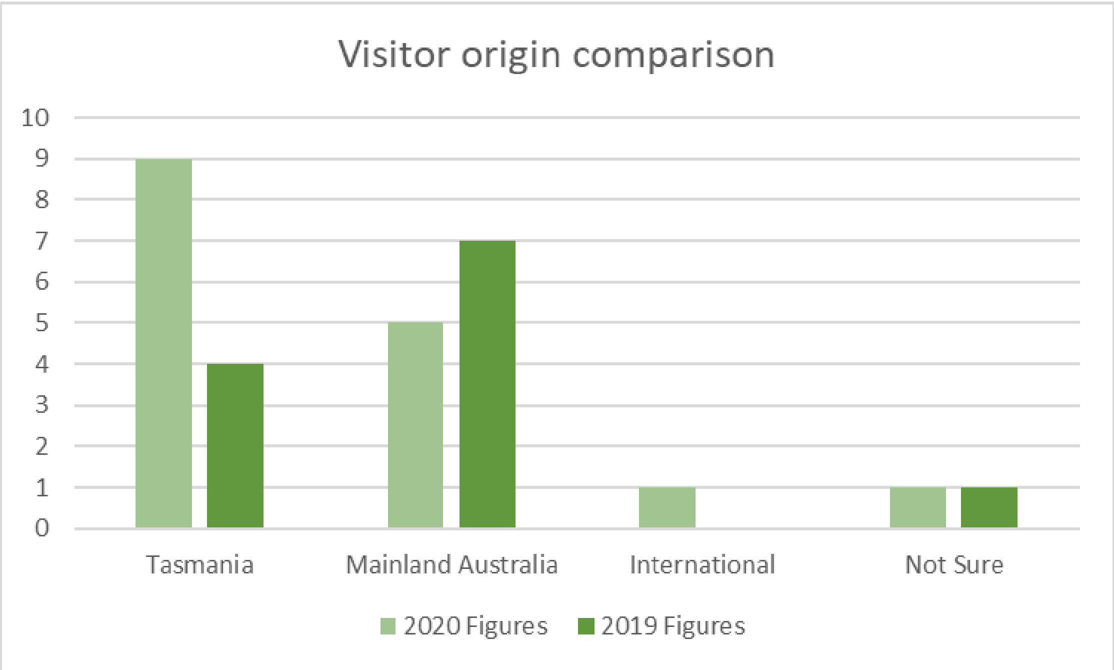
Q5


Using the following options, please indicate what you think best reflects the amount of growth in your business.
60.00%
50.00%
40.00%
30.00%
20.00%
10.00%
0.00%
1- 10%
11-20%
21-30%
31-40%
41-50%
More than 50%
Responses

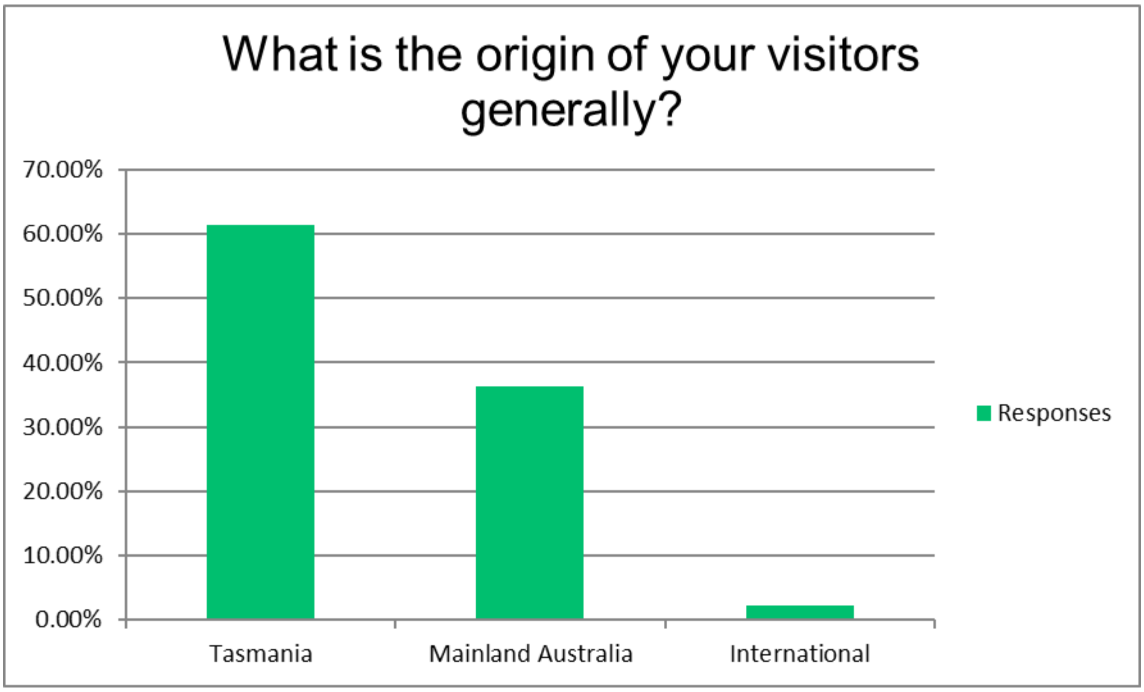

Comparison of Business Growth
10
9
8
7
6
5
4
3
2
1
0
1- 10%
11-20%
21-30%
31-40%
41-50%
More than 50%
2020 Figures
2019 Figures

Q6

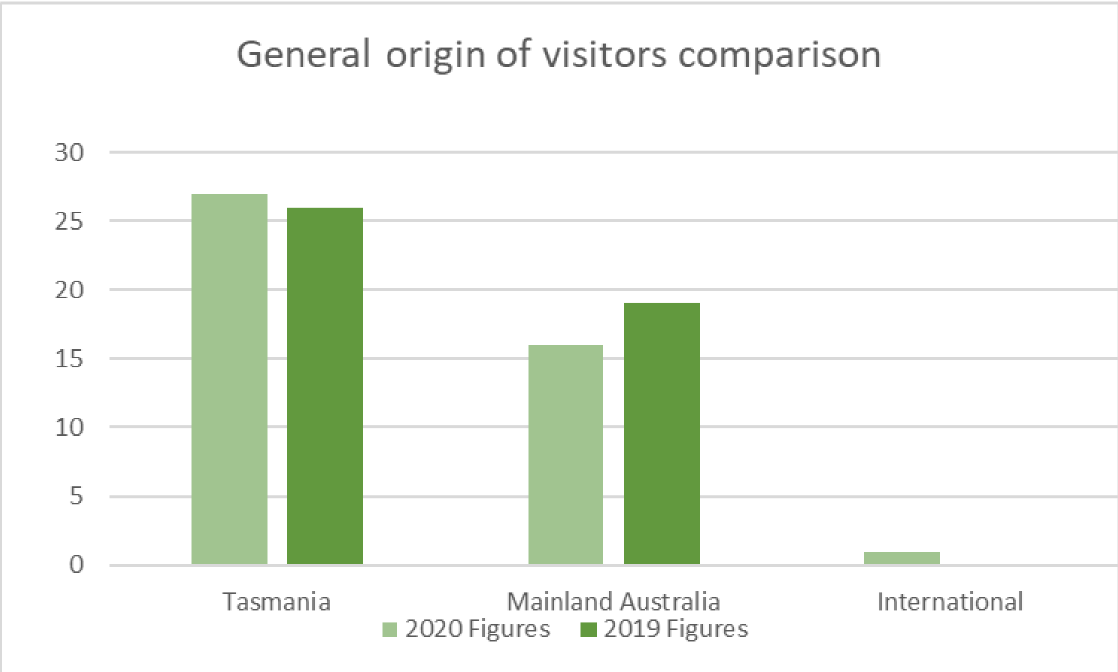

What is the main origin of your extra visitors from the last three months?
60.00%
50.00%
40.00%
30.00%
20.00%
10.00%
0.00%
Tasmania
Mainland Australia
International
Not Sure
Responses


Visitor origin comparison
10
9
8
7
6
5
4
3
2
1
0
Tasmania
Mainland Australia
International
Not Sure
2020 Figures
2019 Figures

Q7



What is the origin of your visitors generally?
70.00%
60.00%
50.00%
40.00%
30.00%
20.00%
10.00%
0.00%
Tasmania
Mainland Australia
International
Responses



General origin of visitors comparison
30
25
20
15
10
5
0
Tasmania
Mainland Australia
International
2020 Figures
2019 Figures

Conclusion

The majority of visitors to our area over the summer months were Tasmanian. As these figures are recorded by accommodation visitors we can assume that these visitors are separate from the influx of ‘shackies’ we experience during the summer months.

This increase of intrastate visitation could be contributed to the effect of COVID-19 on interstate and international travel to Tasmania.

While the majority of businesses are reporting that business has been the same when compared to last year, those that have experienced an increase are reporting between 11-20%. This is an increase of businesses experiencing growth as well as an increase in the amount of growth when compared to the August survey.

Considering the timing of the survey, this increase is not surprising and will only have true meaning when we can compare year on year.

Employment

Q8. How many people do you employ. Q9, 10, 11 Increase, decrease or stable workforce and FTEs.

The first of the employment questions asked how many people, including yourself did the business employ. This question was skipped by 4 respondents.

About two thirds of businesses employed between 1 -5 people, this is comparable to the previous winter survey. The remaining businesses were split as follows, 10 had 6-10 employees, one had 11-15, one 16-20 employees and two, more than 20 employees.

Just over 80% of these businesses reported that staffing had not changed over the last three months, two businesses employed extra staff, and three stated they had to lay off staff. This is a decrease from the winter survey where seven businesses reported laying off staff. Three respondents selected other with one business reporting they had all volunteers, another as being a sole operator and the third that employees also had other work.

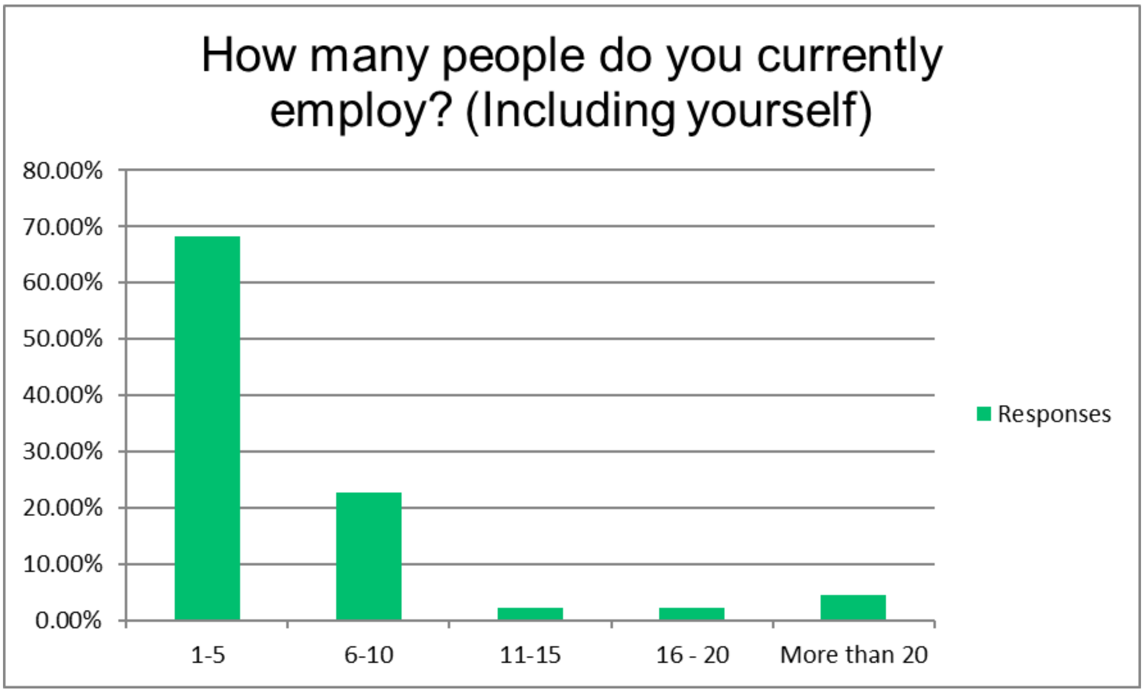
Of the 48 respondents, 4 skipped Q8 and Q9.

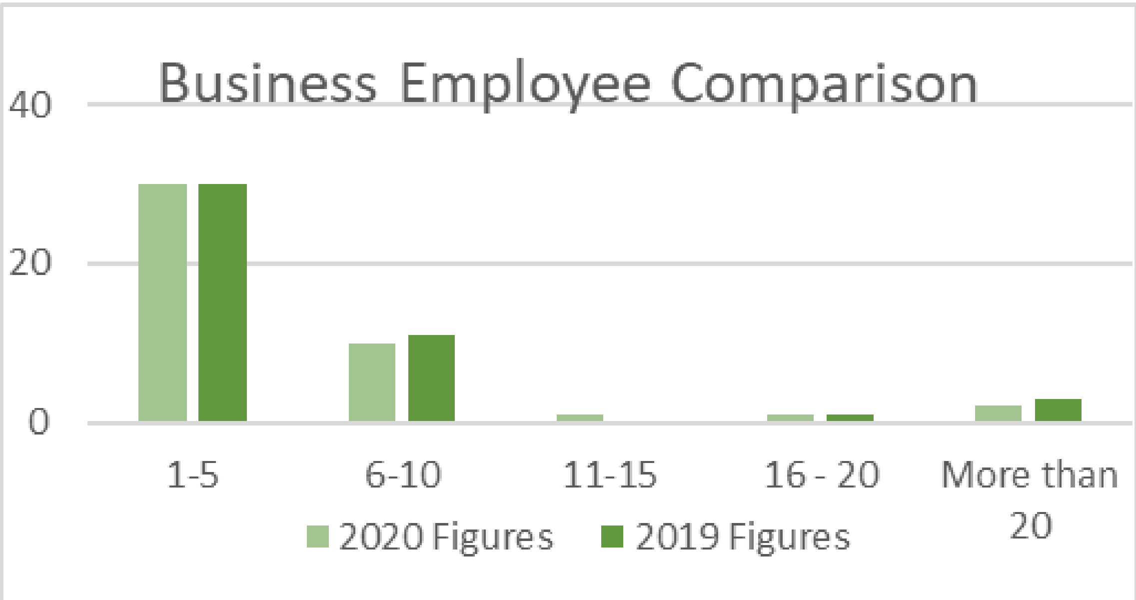
The two respondents that reported they had increased their staff were then directed to questions to understand this increase in employment. Both reported they had put on one additional staff member; These positions equated to 1FTE and one 0.2 (12hrs pw). (As this was an open question there is no graph to depict this.)

Three respondents reported 'Other' in regard to Q9. Of these three businesses, 1 was a volunteer organisation, 1 stated staff had existing work and 1 was a sole operator.

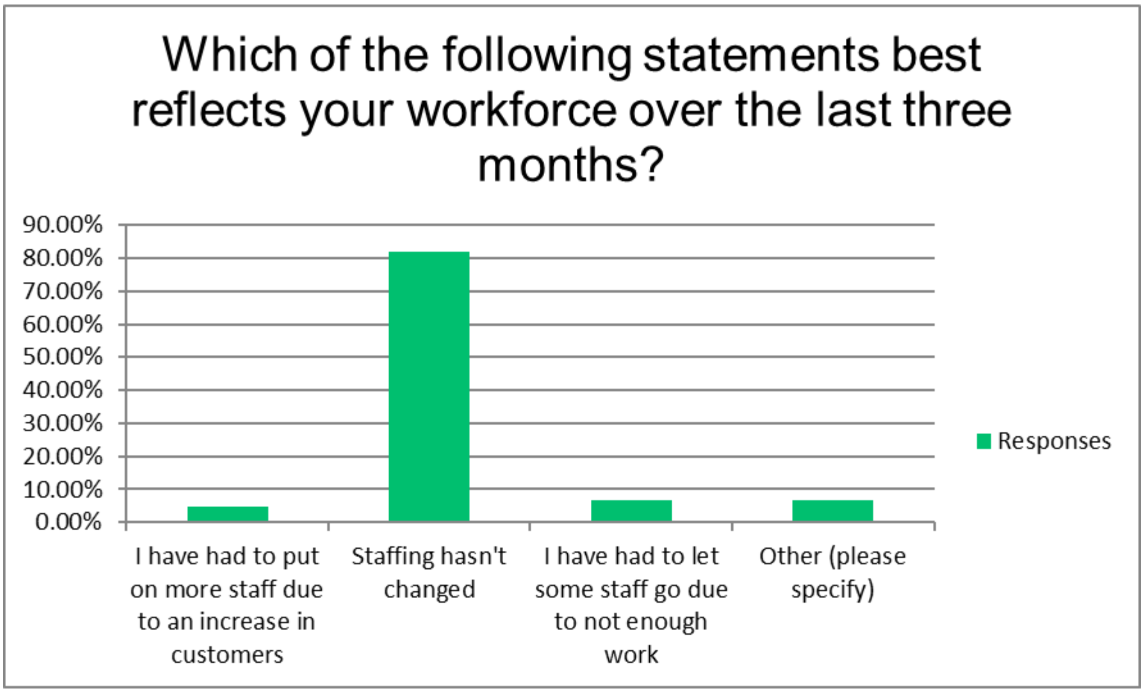
Of the businesses who reported putting on staff, 1 was a FT position and the other was 0.2FTE.

Q8


How many people do you currently employ? (Including yourself)
80.00%
70.00%
60.00%
50.00%
40.00%
30.00%
20.00%
10.00%
0.00%
1-5
6-10
11-15
16 - 20
More than 20
Responses


Business Employee Comparison
40
20
0
1-5
6-10
11-15
16 - 20
More than 20
2020 Figures
2019 Figures

Q9

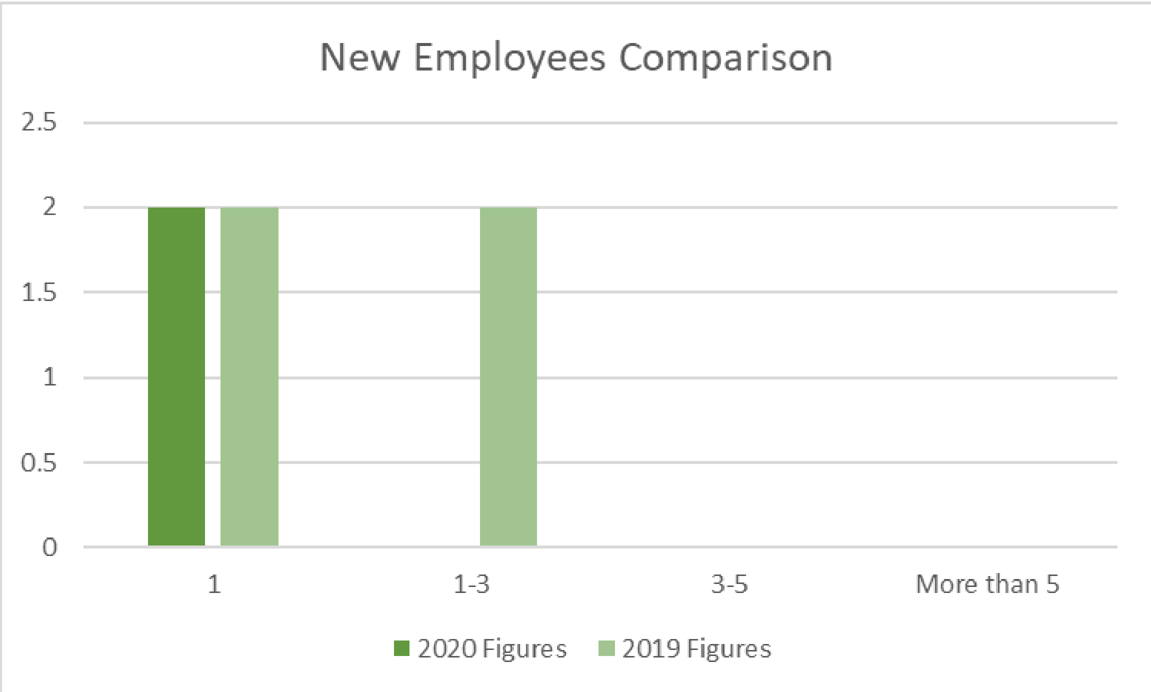


Which of the following statements best reflects your workforce over the last three months?
90.00%
80.00%
70.00%
60.00%
50.00%
40.00%
30.00%
20.00%
10.00%
0.00%
I have had to put on more staff due to an increase in customers
Staffing hasn't changed
I have had to let some staff go due to not enough work
Other (please specify)
Responses

Workforce comparison
40
35
30
25
20
15
10
5
0
I have had to put on more staff due to an increase in customers
Staffing hasn't changed
I have had to let some staff go due to not enough work
Other (please specify)
2020 Figures
2019 Figures

Q10

How many new staff have you put on in the last 3 months?
120.00%
100.00%
80.00%
60.00%
40.00%
20.00%
0.00%
1
1-3
3-5
More than 5
Responses



New Employees Comparison
2.5
2
1.5
1
0.5
0
1
1-3
3-5
More than 5
2020 Figures
2019 Figures

Conclusion

The majority of businesses in our area are small owner operator style businesses.

Staffing levels have largely remained the same compared to this time last year as well as compared to the August survey 2019.

Considering there was not a considerable spike in visitation for the period, it is understandable that staffing levels have remained almost static.

Business detail

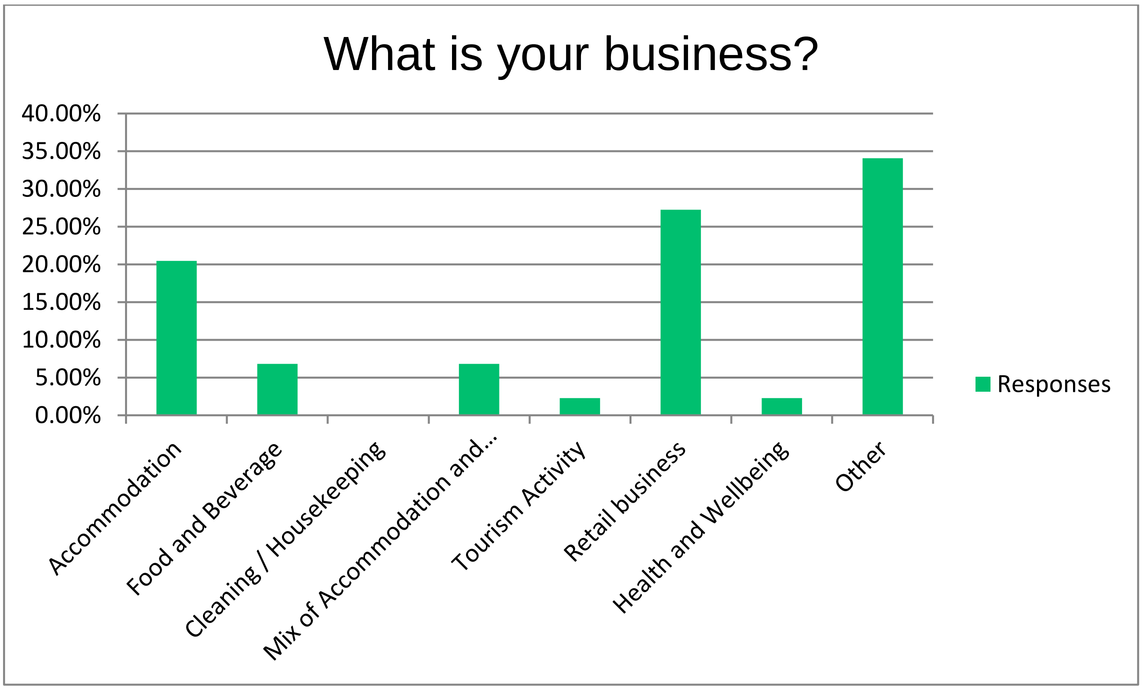
Q12 Type of business

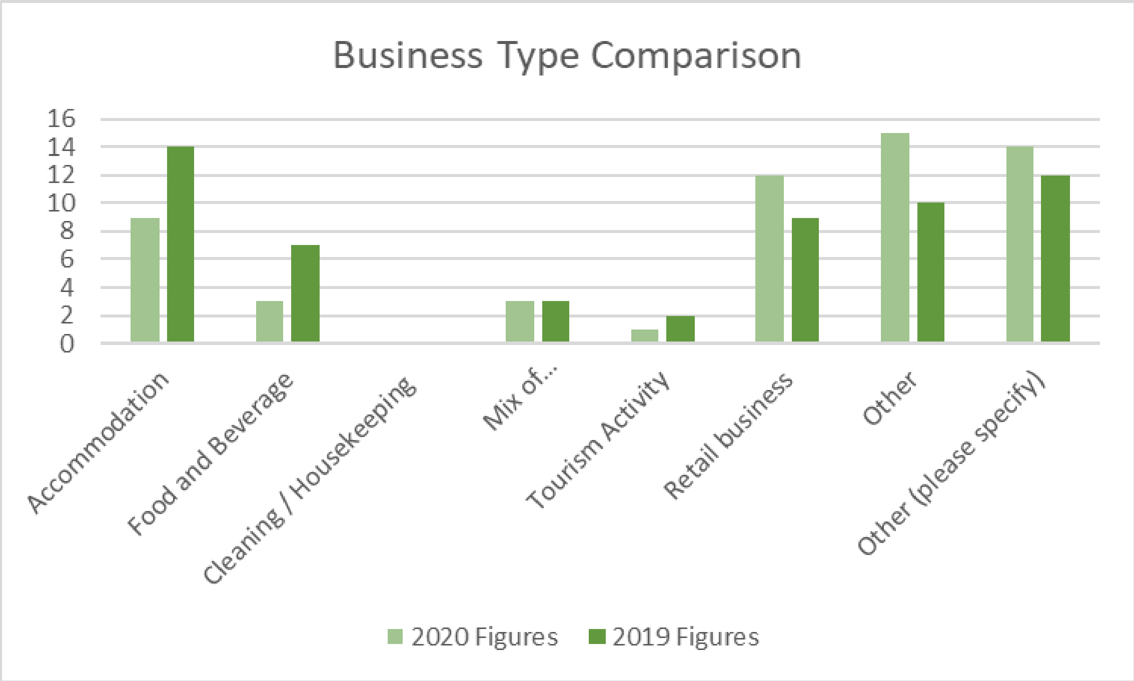
This question was designed to single out accommodation businesses so that we could gather a bit more information about night stays. After feedback from the previous survey we also added the categories Cleaning/Housekeeping and Health and Wellbeing. The results for this question are as follows.

• Accommodation	20.45%
• Food and Beverage	6.82%
• Cleaning / House Keeping	0.00%
• Mix of Accommodation and Food and Beverage	6.82%
• Tourism Activity	2.27%
• Retail Business	27.2%
• Health and Wellbeing	2.27%
• Other	34.09%

As the response to Other was so high, 15 respondents we examined this further and discovered that nine of these businesses could be classified as Trade, a new category we will now introduce, one could have been classified retail and one food and beverage, the remaining, for the purpose of this survey, sat comfortably in the other category.

Q12





In 2020 an additional category was also added; Health and Wellbeing which had 1 respondent.

Conclusion

Business types have remained largely the same when compared to the previous survey.

Accommodation

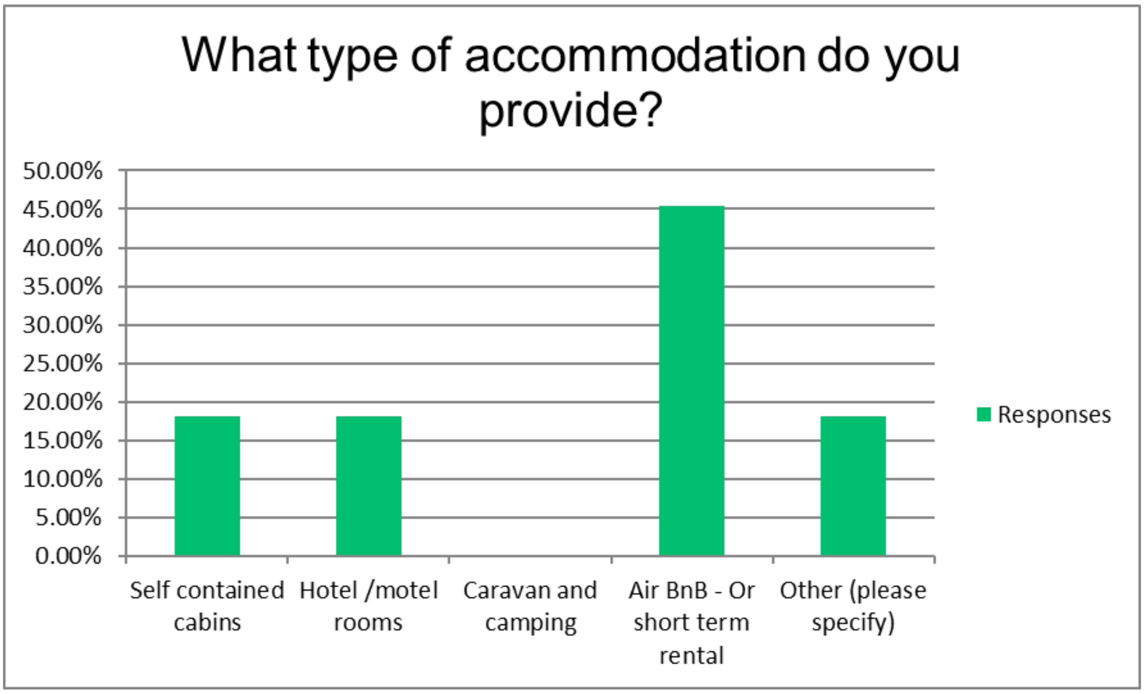
Q13, What type of accommodation do you provide?

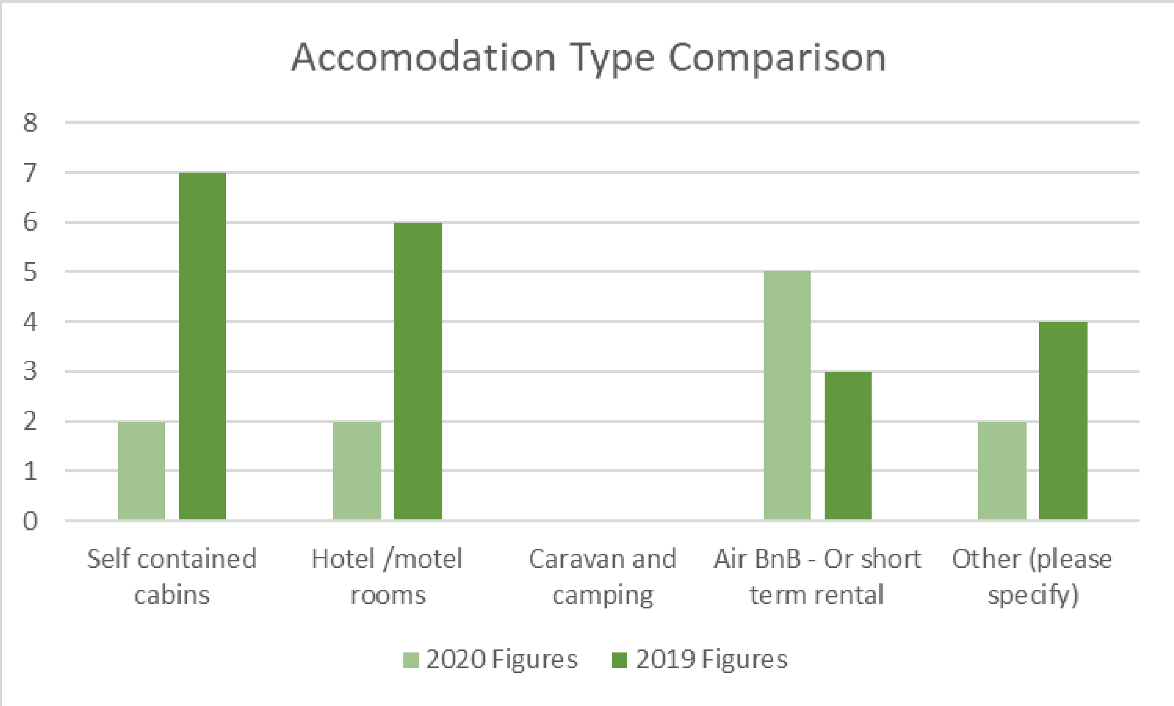
The following data was collected from just the accommodation businesses and was answered by 11 respondents, down on the previous survey which had 20.

Q13 asked the respondent to specify their accommodation business. Based on feedback received from the last survey, a new category was included, caravan and camping.

- 18% self-contained cabins
- 18% Hotel / motel rooms
- 0.00 Caravans and Camping
- 45% Air bnb
- 18% Other

Q13





Conclusion

This data indicates that we have had an increase in AirBnB properties. This information correlates with information that Council has been gathering through our New Resident Survey which is sent out to people who have recently purchased in the area. The New Resident survey was started in February 2020, has had 98 respondents to 30 July 2020. Respondents indicating they had purchased in the area with the intention of making the property g an Air BnB was 12%.

Night Stays
Q14, Q15, Q16 and Q17

The following data was collected from just the accommodation businesses and was answered by 20 respondents.

The following questions were developed to capture night stays and occupancy rates in the area.

The majority of respondents (18) reported that on average visitors stayed for 1 or two nights. Two respondents reported the average stay was three nights.

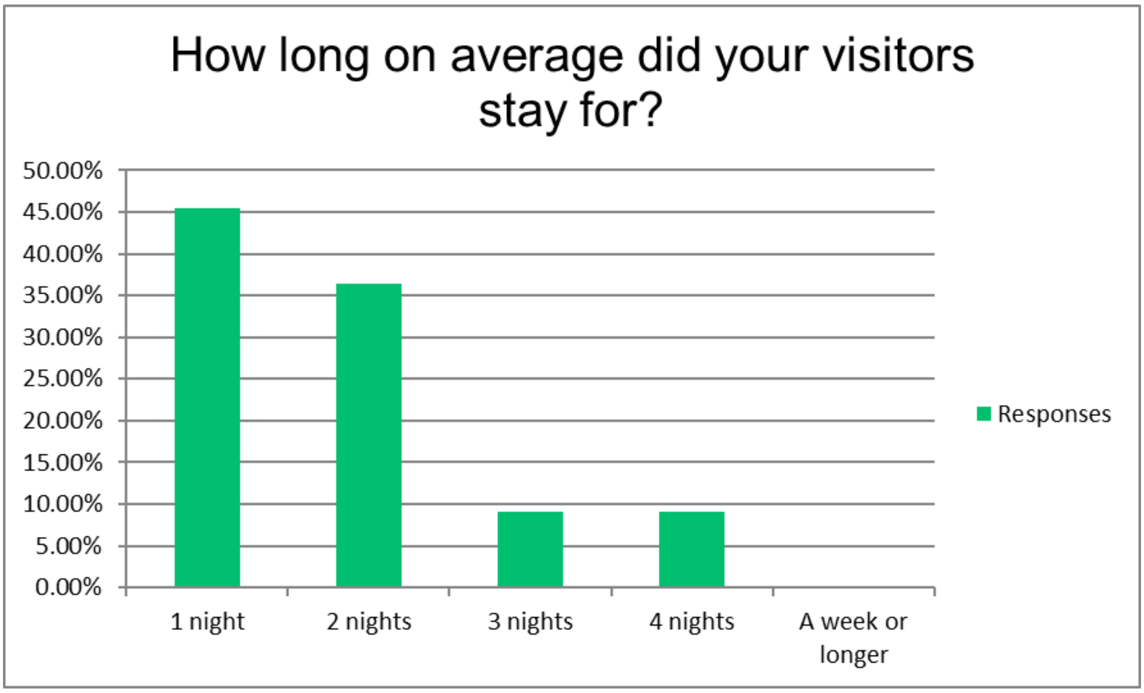
Compared to this time last year, the majority reported that occupancy levels were about the same. Four reported it had increased, while six reported it had decreased. When asked why a respondent thought this was, answers were varied and included:

- Upgrades and increase in marketing
- General increase or drop in visitation to the state.
- Air Bnb and unregulated accommodation properties etc.

(As this was an open question there is no graph to depict this.)

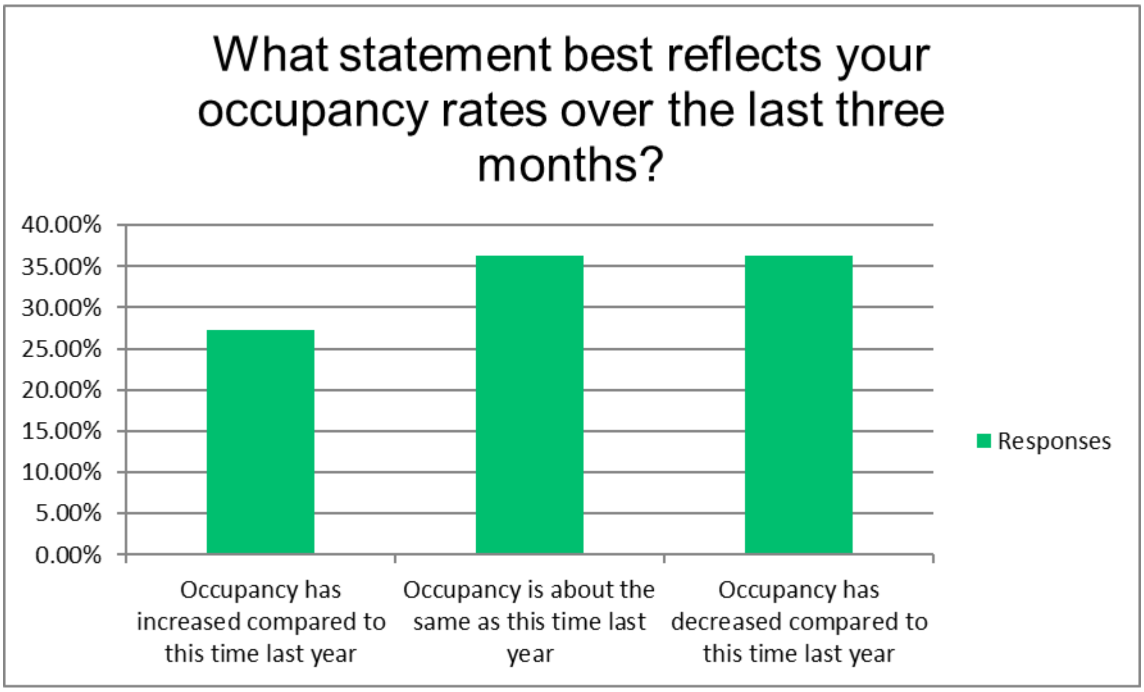
To get more of an idea on what occupancy rates looked like at the time of the survey, Q17 asked accommodation businesses to quantify their present occupancy rate with a percentage. Almost one third of the respondents reported their occupancy rates at the time were between 5 and 15% and another third between 16-25%. Interestingly, three of the respondents reported their occupancy rates as being more than 50%.

Q14

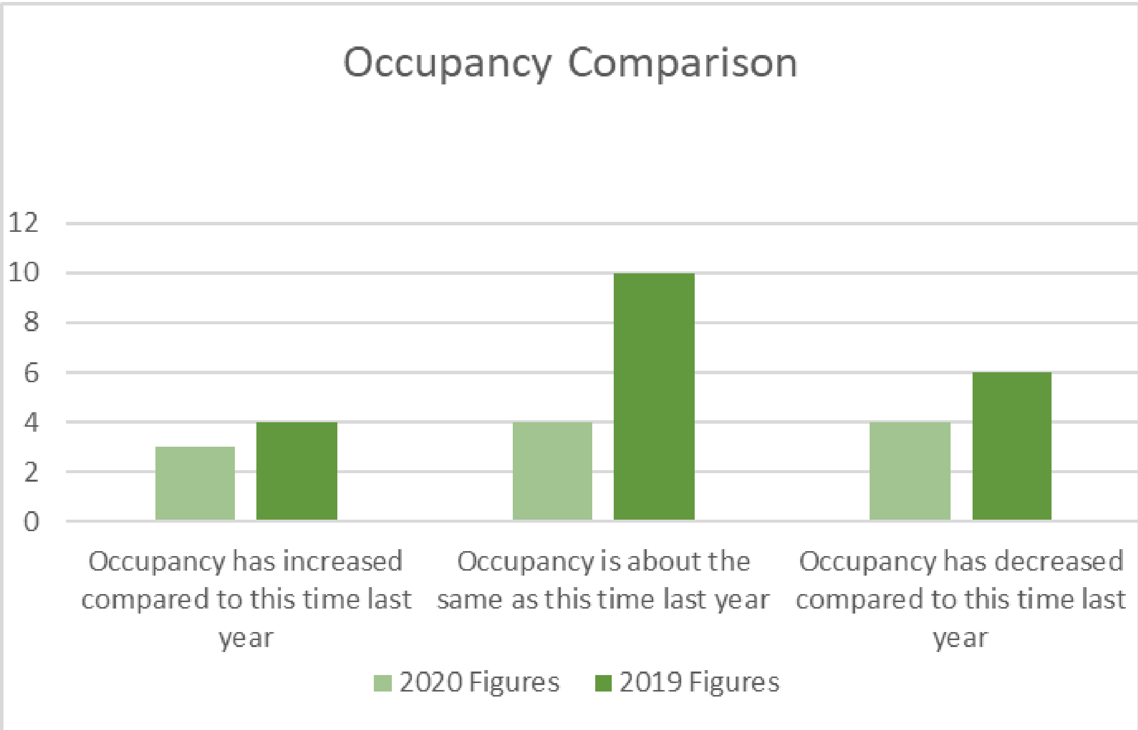

How long on average did your visitors stay for?
50.00%
45.00%
40.00%
35.00%
30.00%
25.00%
20.00%
15.00%
10.00%
5.00%
0.00%
1 night
2 nights
3 nights
4 nights
A week or longer
Responses


Average Stay Comparison
10
9
8
7
6
5
4
3
2
1
0
1 night
2 nights
3 nights
4 nights
A week or longer
2020 Figures
2019 Figures

Q15

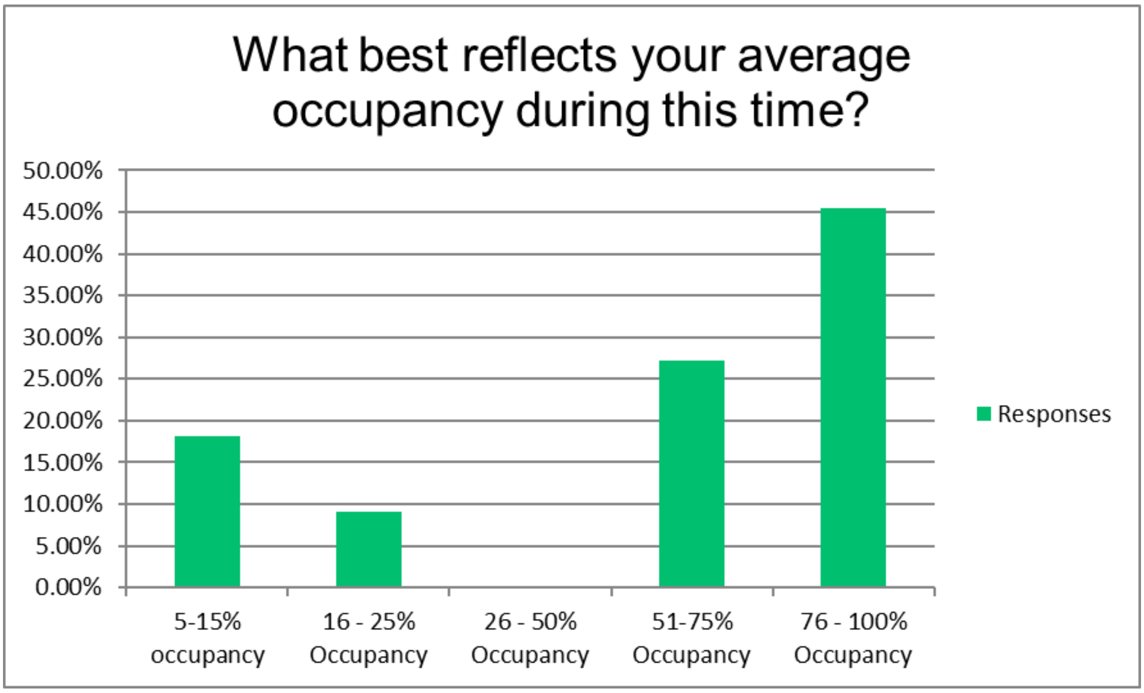


What statement best reflects your occupancy rates over the last three months?
40.00%
35.00%
30.00%
25.00%
20.00%
15.00%
10.00%
5.00%
0.00%
Occupancy has increased compared to this time last year
Occupancy is about the same as this time last year
Occupancy has decreased compared to this time last year
Responses

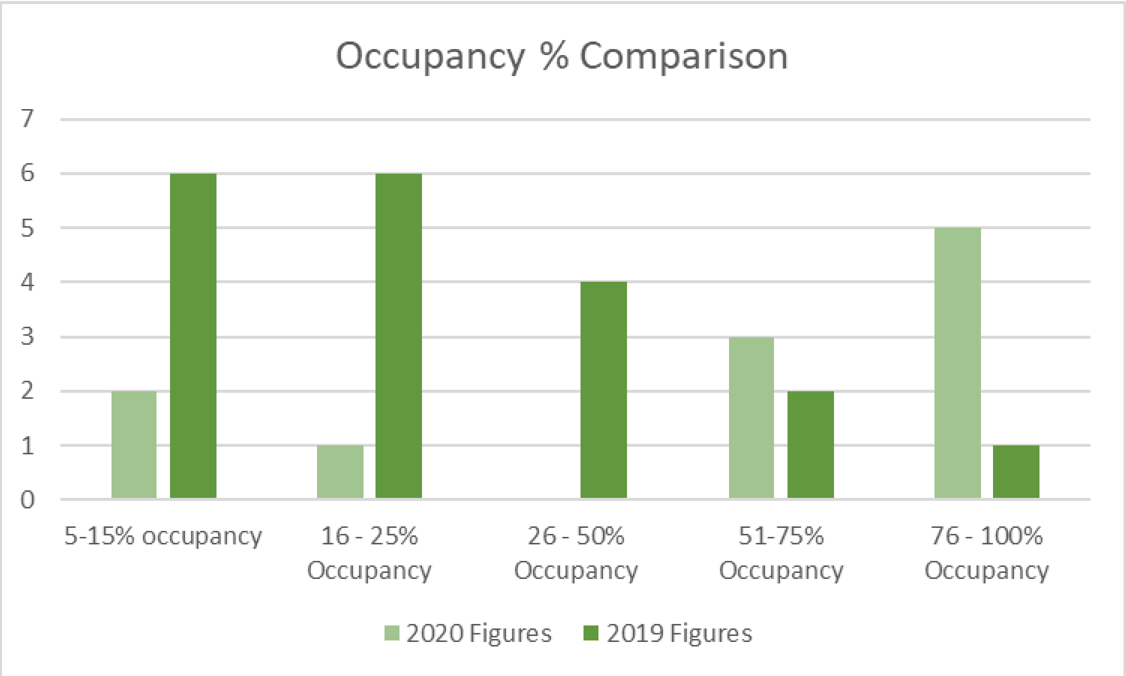


Occupancy Comparison
12
10
8
6
4
2
0
Occupancy has increased compared to this time last year
Occupancy is about the same as this time last year
Occupancy has decreased compared to this time last year
2020 Figures
2019 Figures

Q17



What best reflects your average occupancy during this time?
50.00%
45.00%
40.00%
35.00%
30.00%
25.00%
20.00%
15.00%
10.00%
5.00%
0.00%
5-15% occupancy
16 - 25% Occupancy
26 - 50% Occupancy
51-75% Occupancy
76 - 100% Occupancy
Responses



Occupancy % Comparison
7
6
5
4
3
2
1
0
5-15% occupancy
16 - 25% Occupancy
26 - 50% Occupancy
51-75% Occupancy
76 - 100% Occupancy
2020 Figures
2019 Figures

Conclusions

AirBnB properties appear to have grown since the August Survey and is backed up by New resident data and industry sentiment.

While it may appear that night stays dropped, it is interesting to note that four night stays showed an increase when compared to last year's data, however, considering that this survey shows summer detail, it could just reflect that visitors stay longer in the summer month. Year on data will be imperative in quantifying this statement.

Also expected was the spike in occupancy over this time which jumped from the majority of businesses sitting at 5-25% occupancy to 51-100% occupancy.

Anything Further to Report

Q18

As this was an open question there is no graph to depict this data.

We received 16 responses to this question with a real mix of feedback. Understandably some of this feedback centred around the Mountain Bike Trails. Of the 16 responses, six related directly to the MTB Trails with four businesses stating that the trails were having an impact of some kind even if it was just positive feedback on the trails from customers who also expressed they wanted to return to the area based on the trails. The other two comments were negative towards the trails claiming that there was no impact on their business. Interestingly, one of these respondents recorded an increase in business of mainly Tasmanians which, considering MTB visitation has been primarily Tasmanian, shows a direct correlation between MTB visitation and growth.

Other comments including four businesses stating that their business towards the end of this period was impacted by corona virus and in some cases by the fire and flood incidents we have experienced.