

# Memo

**To:** All staff members  
**From:** Marc Gardner, Acting Chief Executive Officer  
**CC:**  
**Date:** 4-Feb-22

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## Roper Gulf Regional Council - Chief Executive Officer Directives – Biosecurity Zones

The following notice contains important information from Roper Gulf Regional Council's Acting Chief Executive Officer about the new Biosecurity Zones that have been introduced in the Northern Territory Top End.

On Thursday 03 February 2022, the Australian Federal Minister for Health, Greg Hunt issued Section 477 of the Commonwealth Biosecurity Act 2015, which enforces the Covid-19 Biosecurity Zones on most of the Top End.

The Northern Territory Government's Department of the Chief Minister and Cabinet sent through a Biosecurity Zone Q&A sheet yesterday, which has been attached along with this memo. Please read this sheet for detailed information on the Biosecurity Zones.

Please note that alongside the Biosecurity Zones, all Northern Territory Government Chief Health Officer directives still apply.

**IMPORTANT: Strict compliance with the requirements of this notice is mandatory for ALL staff**

### **Essential Workers Exempt from Biosecurity Zone Restrictions**

All Council staff that qualify as an essential worker will still be able to travel between the biosecurity zones if providing an essential service.

Please see Question. 6 of the Q&A sheet for a full list of essential activities.

If you are not sure whether or not you are an essential worker, please talk to your Manager or to Michelle Perner in the Office of the CEO.

### **Essential Workers Permit**

Council staff who qualify as an essential worker have been issued with an Essential Workers Permit which you must have on you when travelling between communities in the Biosecurity Zone.

If you do not have your pass, please see Michelle Perner in the Office of the CEO who will be able to supply you your pass.

Staff with exemption permits should be having them on them at all times to be eligible to be travelling to exclusion zones

### **Requirements for Staff Travelling within the Roper Gulf Region and to Katherine**

As well as having your essential workers permit, all staff who are travelling to a remote community in the Roper Gulf region must comply with the following directions:

- Perform a Rapid Antigen Test (RAT) and receive a negative result on the day you plan to enter the Biosecurity Zone.
- Submit an online declaration of your negative RAT on the Northern Territory Government website. The link is <https://coronavirus.nt.gov.au/stay-safe/symptoms-testing> and then click 'Rapid Antigen Test declaration form. This is really easy to do and takes only a couple of minutes.
- Complete a Journey Management Form for your travel and send it to your General Manager to approve (Note that Managers can no longer approve Journey Management Forms, these must be sent through to your department's General Manager).
- The Journey Management Form has been attached to this email for your convenience.
- Once approved, send your Journey Management Form to [covid19@ropergulf.nt.gov.au](mailto:covid19@ropergulf.nt.gov.au)

Council is asking that all work-related travel is restricted to absolute essential reasons only. Our RAT stock is currently quite low and we are not expecting another delivery until mid-February. Please carefully consider with your manager whether or not your travel is essential.

### **Excluded Areas**

#### Major Highways

The Territory's main roads are still open, including the Stuart, Arnhem, Barkly and Victoria highways.

The following towns are excluded from the Biosecurity Zone:

- Greater Darwin Area
- Tennant Creek
- Katherine
- Mataranka
- Adelaide River
- Nhulunbuy
- Pine Creek
- Larrimah
- Daly Waters
- Borroloola

#### Freehold Land

Freehold land granted under the Crown Lands Act 1992 (NT) is excluded from the Biosecurity Zone, except for:

- The Laramba community, which is **included** in the Biosecurity Zone.

- Aboriginal Community Living Areas are not granted under the Crown Lands Act 1992, and are therefore may be **included** in the Biosecurity Zone.

### Pastoral Properties

Pastoral leases are excluded, and workers associated with pastoral properties have an automatic exemption.

### National Parks

The following National Parks are not included in the Biosecurity Zones –

- Nitmiluk National Park
- Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park
- Litchfield National Park
- Kakadu National Park
- Eley National Park

### Staff Shortages

Council understands that there is a risk that services will be disrupted to a degree, especially as the positive cases continue to rise in our region and staff in community are contracting Covid-19. The safety of our staff and the people in our communities is our number 1 priority, so some services may need to shut down temporarily to prioritise staff safety.

### Residents or Non-Essential Workers

Those who do not class as an essential worker are only able to enter and exit a Biosecurity Zone to access food, fuel and other essential goods, but only if this cannot reasonably be undertaken within their Zone.

Staff & Community members who reside within the Biosecurity Zone need to apply to NLC for an exemption to enter / exit if it is for personal reasons and not work related.

Please find the link to this form below:

<https://www.nlc.org.au/media-publications/biosecurity-zones-covid-19-exemption-form>

### Reducing Staff Travel to and from Katherine

Council is looking into running a logistical supplies service, where one staff member from Katherine will be responsible for transporting supplies from Katherine to the Roper Gulf region. This will include food for Crèche and Aged Care, PPE, community mail etc. If you require anything to be transported from the Katherine office, please send an email to [covid19@ropergulf.nt.gov.au](mailto:covid19@ropergulf.nt.gov.au)

### **IMPORTANT: Strict compliance with the requirements of this notice is mandatory for ALL staff**

All directives from the Chief Health Officer (CHO) of the Northern Territory Government and the introduction of the Biosecurity Zones have been put in place to help slow the spread of Covid-19 in the Northern Territory.

The restriction on movement will further protect our remote Aboriginal Communities and our people and is expected that all staff comply with these directives.

If you have any questions about this notice, please talk to your Supervisor, Manager or General Manager.

Thank you and stay safe.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized initial 'M' followed by a long horizontal line.

Marc GARDNER  
**Chief Executive Officer (Acting)**