

## CENTRAL WEST IS OPEN

### Industry Messaging Toolkit – March 2026

#### Supporting consistent visitor messaging during the Great Western Highway disruption

##### KEY MESSAGE

The Central West remains OPEN and ACCESSIBLE. While the Great Western Highway is closed at Victoria Pass and diversions are in place, visitors can still reach the region via multiple routes. Businesses, events and experiences across the Central West continue to welcome visitors.

##### SUGGESTED MESSAGE FOR BUSINESSES

*“The Central West remains open and accessible via several alternative routes. Visitors are encouraged to plan ahead, check current road conditions and allow a little extra travel time when travelling to the region.”*

##### RESPONDING TO VISITOR ENQUIRIES

Visitors may ask if the region is still accessible. Suggested response:

*“Yes – the Central West is open and welcoming visitors. While diversions are in place on the Great Western Highway at Victoria Pass, there are several alternative routes available.”*

##### ALTERNATIVE TRAVEL ROUTES FROM SYDNEY AND GREATER NSW

Visitors can access the Central West via several alternative routes:

- Great Western Highway – Diversion via Darling Causeway and Chifley Rd to Lithgow
- Bells Line of Road via Lithgow
- Golden Highway via the Hunter Valley and Mudgee
- Castlereagh Highway via Mudgee
- Hume Highway and Goulburn–Oberon Road via Goulburn and Oberon
- Hume Highway and Mid-Western Highway via Cowra

Alternative routes may add travel time but offer scenic journeys through the Blue Mountains, Oberon Plateau and Hunter Valley.

Visitors should check Live Traffic NSW for the latest road conditions before travelling.

##### CHECK CURRENT TRAVEL CONDITIONS

- [Live Traffic NSW](#)
- [Transport for NSW](#)

## VISITOR TRAVEL TIPS

- Plan ahead and check road conditions
- Allow extra travel time during peak periods
- Consider travelling outside peak traffic times
- Consider extending your stay
- Enjoy scenic towns, food and wine experiences and attractions along the way

## VALUE-ADD IDEAS FOR VISITORS

Some visitors may need to allow additional travel time while alternative routes are in place. Small gestures can help maintain visitor confidence and create a positive experience.

Businesses may wish to consider offering simple value-adds such as:

- Flexible check-in times where possible
- Late check-out where availability allows
- Sharing local travel tips or scenic stop suggestions along alternative routes
- Highlighting nearby experiences visitors may not have planned to explore
- A complimentary drink, tasting or small local product on arrival

These small touches can help visitors feel welcomed and turn the journey into part of the experience.

## CONSISTENT REGIONAL MESSAGE

Use positive messaging when communicating with visitors. Instead of saying 'the highway is closed', emphasise that the Central West remains open and accessible via alternative routes.

## SUGGESTED SOCIAL MEDIA POST

*"We're open and welcoming visitors. While the Great Western Highway is currently closed at Victoria Pass in the Blue Mountains, there are several alternative routes into the Central West. Plan your trip, check road conditions and enjoy the journey, we look forward to seeing you."*

## KEEP PROMOTING EVENTS AND EXPERIENCES

Events, food and wine experiences, markets, sporting events and seasonal activities across the Central West continue to operate. Promoting these experiences helps maintain visitor confidence.

## HOW BUSINESSES CAN HELP

- Reassure visitors that the region remains open
- Share accurate travel information
- Promote upcoming events and experiences
- Use consistent regional messaging across websites and social media

## HERE TO SUPPORT YOU

Destination Central West will continue monitoring industry impacts and working with councils, government and industry partners to support the visitor economy during this period.

## RESOURCE: Quick Tips for Managing Unexpected Change – Destination NSW

Destination NSW's capability-building NSW First Program has released a guide to assist tourism businesses during evolving external conditions. It provides practical tips for assessing impacts, adapting products and processes, managing staff and communicating effectively. [Download the guide today.](#)

## ABOUT THE CENTRAL WEST

The Central West of New South Wales is a diverse regional area located west of the Blue Mountains and within a few hours' drive of Sydney. The region includes the Local Government Areas of Bathurst Regional, Blayney, Cabonne, Cowra, Forbes, Lachlan, Lithgow, Mid-Western Regional, Oberon, Orange City, Parkes and Weddin Shire. Together these communities form a connected visitor destination known for its heritage towns, food and wine experiences, major events, natural landscapes and welcoming regional hospitality.