

Southern Gulf NRM and the COVID-19 Pandemic

UPDATE 31 March 2020

Like every responsible organisation in Australia, Southern Gulf NRM must join the massive community effort underway to minimise the rate of spread of the COVID-19 virus. This will disrupt elements of our work, but we are proud to be playing our part in keeping our community healthy.

We will constantly monitor and be guided by the direction and advice of government health departments and our regional local governments. We will also respect and conform to the COVID-19 responses of our delivery partners and clients.

New Government regulation and directions issued during the past week has required that we update our response.

This message summarises how Southern Gulf NRM will conduct its operations.

Southern Gulf NRM Office and Staffing Arrangements

- Southern Gulf NRM staff may work from home.
- The Southern Gulf NRM office will remain open but will be limited to a maximum of five staff present at any time working from their own enclosed offices. Strict hygiene and social distancing practice must be observed.
- Staff who choose to continue to attend the Southern Gulf NRM office must strictly observe the social distancing rules required by Governments when they are away from the office.
- The Southern Gulf NRM office will be closed to visitors, other than brief visits by delivery drivers or when contractors are required for urgent needs.
- The office landline telephone will be normally be monitored and staff will be available on their mobile phones or via email. See <https://www.southerngulf.com.au/about/meet-the-team/> for staff mobile numbers.

Meetings and Events

- Southern Gulf NRM will not conduct any activity that involves assembling a group of people. Any previously scheduled meetings, workshops, field days and similar activities are cancelled.

Project Operations

- Southern Gulf NRM staff will cease all visits to property homesteads. This is consistent with the direction of governments in relation to social distancing. NRM project activities may continue, but only if they can be delivered remotely.
- Subject to the agreement of the relevant property manager, on-ground operations delivered by Southern Gulf NRM staff or contractors may continue if minimal face to face contact is required. This will require property specific access protocols, and strict adherence to social distancing by staff or contract crews when away from the site.

Indigenous communities

- Southern Gulf NRM will respect the very important priority of keeping our remote Indigenous communities safe. We will suspend any face to face engagement with Indigenous communities until the COVID-19 crisis passes and look forward to rebuilding relationships when it is safe to do so.

We hope you will accept that these measures are responsible, proportionate and relevant to the nature of our regional community. We wish you well in these difficult times.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or comments about how Southern Gulf NRM can best continue to serve our regional community during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Andrew Maclean

Chief Executive Officer

31 March 2020