



AUSTRALIA'S ULTIMATE DESERT RACE
 KINGS BIRTHDAY WEEKEND - June 6th to 9th 2025

Tatts Finke Desert Race 2024 Survey results and organisers response

Thank you to all who took the time to complete the survey that was sent out after the 2024 event. This survey had two parts which serve different purposes, but both are key to the future success of the event.

The first part is an independent economic analysis with the results shared with the Northern Territory Government and the Northern Territory Major Events Company who provide funding for the event.

The economic analysis revealed the following;

	2024	2023
Total Attendance*	22,711	19,120
Total Individuals	6,526	5,040
Bed nights - Alice Springs	32,408	30,222
Bed Nights - Northern Territory	45,173	39,559
Direct In-Scope Spending Impact - Alice Springs	\$8.41M	\$6.7M
Direct In-Scope Spending Impact – Other NT	\$3.31M	\$1.8M
Total NT Spending	\$11.71M	\$8.5M

*Total Attendance is the cumulative total of daily attendances including Presentation Night.

As you can see the event not only provides a stimulus to Alice Springs in terms of bed nights and spending but extends across the Northern Territory. This will include those who visited and stayed in Darwin for the V8 Supercars, visited Uluru Kata Tjuta National Park and more broader touring in the NT. These 2024 figures are encouraging given the current economic climate which saw reduced competitor numbers for 2024 in the bike section.

The second part is the feedback to organisers on the what people's views were on the event including what improvements you would like made to the event. We have provided a list of those suggestions that were the most popular and have provided a response to those and others in a table format.

In terms of suggested improvements there was a very good response of 450 answers to the question of '*what one improvement you'd suggest that could have the greatest impact on improving your experience*'. Most of these responses mirrored the responses to the question of '*what would the Tatts Finke Desert Race need to do in order to rate us a 9 or 10*'.

Given that, we have grouped the most common responses which we will take into consideration as we plan for this year's event. Having said that there are some interesting one-off thoughts posed by individuals which we will give some thought to.

The most consistent suggestions not in any particular order were;

- Provide more shade and seating
- Shorten Scrutineering due to competitors up early the next morning
- More activities during the weekend for families/children
- More choice of food/coffee
- Lower competitor entry fees
- Clearer and timely information for competitors including information on pre-qualification requirements
- Improved signage/directions at Start Line in Alice Springs
- Additional merch designs with more bigger sizes and easier to purchase

Most of these are short term fixes although shade may take longer. With seating, we will definitely encourage spectators to bring their own folding chairs as we simply can't seat all that attend the start line.

In terms of lowering competitor entry fees, I think it's fair to say that unless our supplier costs decrease, these entry fees won't go down. However, I can confirm that competitor entry fees will be unchanged in 2025.

There were many other suggestions that I've listed in table form with the FDR response.

Incorporate Helicopter footage into livestream.	We only have access to limited helicopters across the weekend as they are used for safety purposes. We will be using increased in-car vision.
Prologue sign on and riders briefing can be 3-4 hours before competition	Once you've signed on and attended the riders briefing, you can return to your accommodation if you wish; you don't need to remain at the venue.
Another coffee provider, particularly for early morning rush	We hope to have additional early morning coffee vendor available in 2025.
Better instructions for volunteers from team leaders	We will review the briefings we give our team leaders to improve instructions given to volunteers.
Provide showers at Finke	Unfortunately, this is not logistically possible
Baby change area availability.	This is available at the main toilet block in Alice Springs; we will improve signage.
Be able to test drive a buggy around prologue track	Unfortunately, there are no test drives available immediately prior to the event due to the number of people either working in proximity to or walking the track. However, both the Alice Springs Off Road

	<p>Racing Club and Motorcycle Club offer practice days earlier in the year using the prologue track.</p> <p>Competitors are able to walk or cycle the prologue track on certain days during registration week.</p>
More foodies at Start line to alleviate long wait times	It's a balancing act with foodies; too many and they may not wish to attend. We will look to see if we can accommodate a moderate increase to reduce wait lines. Friday night is particularly busy.
Keep livestream going till last rider	Unfortunately, this is not practicable as the TV crew need to set up at presentation night. They will have been working all day as it is.
Close sections of the service road whilst competitors are on the nearby racetrack	We will need to consider our response to this suggestion. We already close the section between Deep Well and Rodinga during competition.
Poor phone service	That happens when a lot of people try to use their smart phone all at same time. It's a service provider issue which we don't have control over.
Open service road closed section to crews only for recovery	We will consider this however make no commitment.
Live stats and live track mapping on stream	We will speak with our IT people. At present only the car section has GPS units fitted.
More toilets at start line	Unfortunately, there aren't any more portable toilets in town. We hire as many as we can get.
More seating at presentation night	We will speak to the Convention Centre about additional seating. We will also improve sound at the rear of the room.
More information about food at Finke	We will publish more information earlier about food options at Finke. There will be a catering truck in the Race camp again in 2025.
First time campers at Finke info/ first timers good camping spots info and estimated competitor passing time.	Lots of information is available online and on social media. We will publish the timeline on expected first competitor arrival at each checkpoint/finish line on our website.
Sale merch in different location	This will be discussed with the Merchandise crew however staffing is an issue.
Cameras at fuel stops	We will speak with our IT people. This will require an additional investment for equipment and connectivity. No promises.
We need a clear explanation of what constitutes pre-qualifying	We will produce a clearer guide so prospective competitors can see what they need to have don't to be able to enter.

Allow dogs in compound	With a large number of people on site and in close proximity to each other, we don't consider it practicable to allow dogs on site.
Display competitor times at prologue on the big screen	These were difficult to read; we should be able to increase the sizing of results on big screen.
Advertise section road closures well in advance	Agreed, this is something that we will advertise in advance to allow people to plan their camping travels.
Volunteer registration in town	We will consider this; perhaps for a few day during event week? It will be volunteer and site dependant.

We appreciate all those that took the time to respond to the survey and after reading this you can appreciate; we had a lot to consider.

This is not an exhaustive list of suggestions/feedback but gives an idea of what people's thoughts are. Some suggestions are easy fixes. Others are not so simple and there are those that aren't practicable.

On behalf of the committee, we hope you appreciate our responses and look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at the 2025 event.

Antony Yoffa
President