



## LAN Link 2022 COVID Report

This is a report that aims to give the public information about the impact that the Coronavirus outbreak had on games communities throughout Australia. An online questionnaire was made available to administrators of games communities to fill out, for a period of 6 months. Administrators of known communities were directly informed about the questionnaire either via email, or through Facebook. A message about the questionnaire was also published on the home page of the LAN Link website.

Unfortunately, the quality of this report is severely compromised due to the lack of feedback that was received from the questionnaire. We contacted at least **24** games communities in Australia, however only **1** games community responded to the questionnaire with feedback. Nevertheless, this report will be produced as promised.

The following questions were asked in the questionnaire:

**1. What is the name of your group?**

This question was asked to assist in the removal of potential duplicate entries from particular games groups / communities. The name of the group that responded to the questionnaire will not be identified, for privacy reasons.

**2. Which state / territory are your group's events typically hosted in?**

The group that responded was from New South Wales.

**3. How has the Coronavirus caused your group to change the way it runs events?**

This was a multiple-choice question. The group responded with the following:

1. They reduced the frequency of events
2. They started hosting events online
3. They stopped events all together (presumably for a considerable period, before resuming)
4. They imposed a limit on the number of event participants
5. They imposed mandatory wearing of masks
6. They reconfigured seating layout

They did not, however, change the venue of their events, but they were clearly affected by the Coronavirus.

**4. Were there any participants (members of the public) who, to your knowledge, came to any of your events with the Coronavirus?**

The group answered "No".

**5. Where there any events that had to be either postponed or cancelled due to one or more of your group's administrators contracting the Coronavirus?**

The group answered "Yes".

**6. Was your group instructed directly by a higher authority to either reduce events, or stop events altogether at any time during the pandemic?**

This was as a multi-choice question, but only one answer could be selected. The group answered "Yes, venue management".

**7. How much has the Coronavirus affected your group's ability to host events?**

This question offered a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 was Not At All, and 10 was Immensely. The group answered with 4.

**8. How well do you feel that your group has handled or survived the Coronavirus pandemic?**

This question was optional, and offered a scale of 1 to 7, where 1 was Very Poorly, and 7 was Very well.

The group answered with 2.

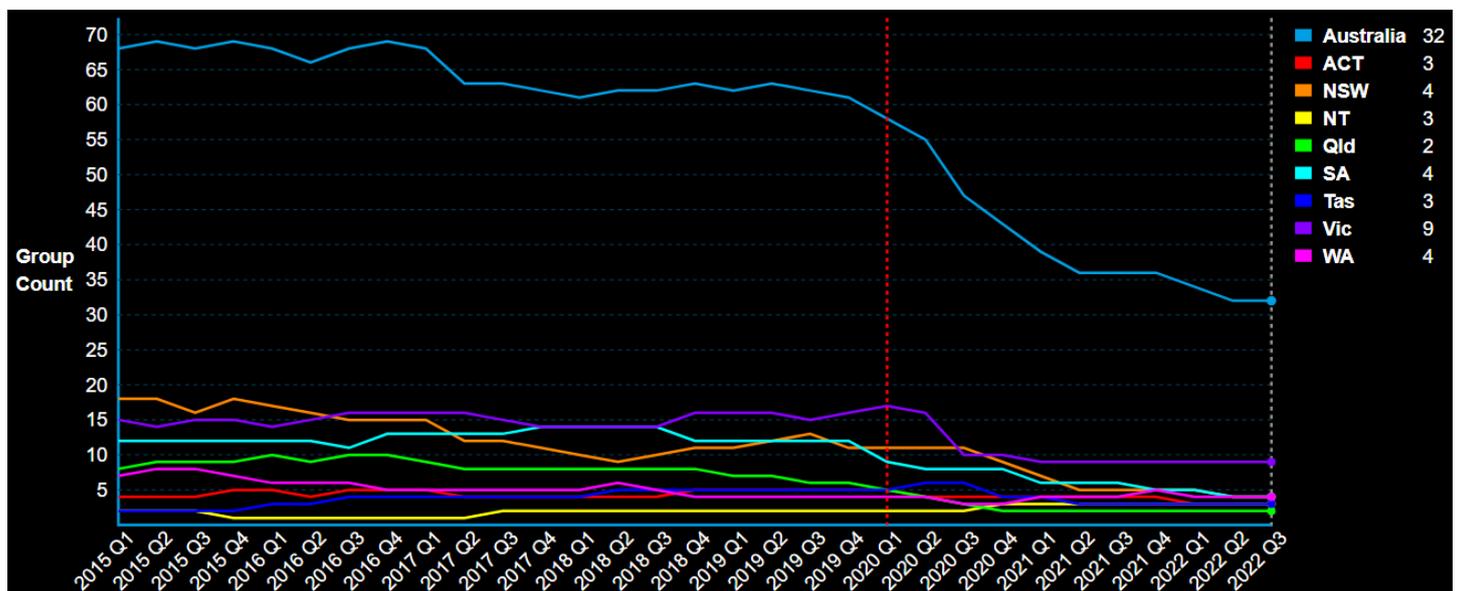
**9. Is there anything you would like to tell us about how your group has responded to the Coronavirus?**

This question was optional. It was not answered by the group.

Groups were also given the opportunity to provide feedback about the questionnaire itself. The group that responded did not provide any feedback in this regard.

Given that there was only 1 respondent, a holistic analysis about the impact that the Coronavirus pandemic had on games groups in Australia, cannot be organised.

Thankfully, we do have more information that we can provide in the form of a graph. As LAN Link has been collecting information about games communities (or groups) for several years, including a comprehensive collection of events, we can use this information to get a better understanding of how many communities were potentially affected by the Coronavirus. The following graph shows the number of groups that were considered by LAN Link to be active over the last 7 years and 9 months, from 2015 onwards. Groups are considered active if they have held an event in the last 13 months.



The dashed red vertical line shows the approximate period when the Coronavirus began to spread in Australia. You will notice that the blue line along the top of the graph (Australia) drops down at the intersecting dashed red line from **58** active groups in the first quarter of 2020, to where it is now at **32** active groups. This represents a **45%** decrease in active groups in the country. It is quite clear from this graph that the virus has made a significant impact on groups, as many groups have since ceased operation.

If anyone is interested in viewing the interactive graph featured above, it is available for viewing on the LAN Link website. Visit <https://lanlink.network>, then click **Statistics** at the bottom of the screen.

Here is a table of total numbers of active groups from each state and territory since the first quarter of 2020, with the decrease (or increase) of each state as a percentage in the final column:

	20Q1	20Q2	20Q3	20Q4	21Q1	21Q2	21Q3	21Q4	22Q1	22Q2	22Q3	% +/-
<b>ACT</b>	5	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	-40%
<b>NSW</b>	11	11	11	9	7	5	5	5	5	4	4	-55%
<b>NT</b>	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	50%
<b>Qld</b>	5	4	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	-60%
<b>SA</b>	9	8	8	8	6	6	6	5	5	4	4	-56%
<b>Tas</b>	5	6	6	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	-40%
<b>Vic</b>	17	16	10	10	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	-47%
<b>WA</b>	4	4	3	3	4	4	4	5	4	4	4	Nil
<b>Aust.</b>	58	55	47	43	39	36	36	36	34	32	32	-45%

While most states saw a significant decrease in their active groups, the state of Western Australia did not change, and the Northern Territory actually increased by 50%.

It must be noted that as comprehensive as our data collection of events since the beginning of 2015 is, there may very well be community groups that we have missed in the period since, and are yet to be added to our database. Given our very limited human resources, the collection of such data is an ongoing process that may take several more years to finalise. Therefore, the data should be treated as an approximation of actual figures, and not as a complete picture.

To conclude, it would appear that the Coronavirus outbreak in Australia has made a significant impact to the existence of games communities / groups across the country. However, the true extent and nature of this impact remains to be seen.

LAN Link does not intend to revise this report in future, unless there is significant interest in a revision from the public. We would like to thank the games group that responded to our questionnaire for their contribution, and thank anyone who reads this report for their interest.

This report was finalised on the 4<sup>th</sup> of November, 2022.