



Australian Government

Great Barrier Reef
Marine Park Authority

Tourism and Recreation Group

NEWSLETTER NO 12

AUGUST 2004

The Tourism and Recreation Group's quarterly newsletters provide an update on some of the current issues and initiatives that may affect tourism and recreation stakeholders.

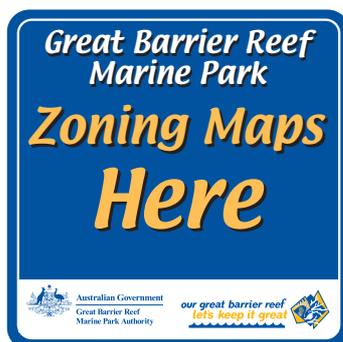
New Director for the Tourism and Recreation Group

We welcome Ms Lisha Mulqueeny as the new Director of Tourism and Recreation at the GBRMPA. Lisha joined us in mid-June 2004 bringing extensive experience in tourism policy, development and marketing. Her first priority was to join Andrew Skeat, Executive Director of the GBRMPA and Chris Briggs, our Liaison Officer, in a series of industry briefing and consultation sessions in Cairns, Port Douglas and the Whitsundays.

Thanks to all those operators who met with Lisha and provided information on a range of current topics.

New Zoning and Your Permit

New zoning for the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park commenced on 1 July 2004. This may affect your recreational and commercial use of the Marine Park particularly what you can do and, in some cases, where you can go. Arrangements have been made for current Marine Parks permits to remain valid under the new Zoning Plan until their stated expiry date, however, some tourism activities, for example fishing, may be affected. You can view the new Zoning Plan, maps and related products on the GBRMPA website, www.gbrmpa.gov.au. You can also obtain free zoning maps from local Community Access Points displaying this sticker.



For more information freecall 1800 990 177 or, if you have a permit-related query, call Andrew Costen (07) 4750 0808 or email a.costen@gbrmpa.gov.au

15-Year Permit Reward

As part of our commitment to encouraging best practice marine tourism, the GBRMPA has a policy that appropriately certified, high standard operators can be rewarded with longer term tourism permits.

Congratulations to **Ecotourism Australia** whose Eco Certification Program has been recognised as a certification scheme for the Marine Park, at the Ecotourism and Advanced Ecotourism levels of certification. If you would like more information on the Eco Certification Program you can visit Ecotourism Australia's website www.ecotourism.org.au or email info@ecotourism.org.au

If you are certified with this scheme and wish to apply for a 15-year permit for a certified tourism product, you will need to complete the usual

Marine Parks application form and provide us with evidence of your certification. The application will be assessed as normal and an assessment fee will apply. If you have any questions about longer term permits or the policy in general, please contact Carol Honchin on 4750 0715 or email c.honchin@gbrmpa.gov.au

Making the Most of Your Special Tourism Permission

In response to concerns raised by industry about the impact on bona fide operators, the GBRMPA has approved a change to the policy on 'Managing Tourism Permissions to Operate in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park (including Allocation, Latency and Tenure)'. The reasonable level of use for a special tourism permission has been reduced to an average of 50 days per year.

If more than one endorsed vessel/aircraft is listed on a permit, you will be able to spread the use of each endorsed vessel/aircraft across all the endorsed vessels/aircraft listed. For example, if one endorsed vessel on a permit averages 150 days per year and the other averages only 20 days per year, spreading the combined use across both vessels would allow both vessels to meet the reasonable use requirement of 50 days per year.

If you hold a special tourism permission, the GBRMPA will be writing to you individually about these arrangements. Further information can be obtained from Vicki Bonanno on (07) 4750 0868 or email v.bonanno@gbrmpa.gov.au

let's keep it great

Improved Opportunities for Tourism in Cairns

Following consultation on the proposed amendments to the Cairns Area Plan of Management, the GBRMPA has approved the changes to the amendments which will provide for an increase in flexibility and opportunities for tourism. The amendments will be implemented as soon as possible. Further information can be obtained from *Nick Wynn on (07) 4750 0857 or email n.wynn@gbmpa.gov.au*

Tourism, Recreation and Government Meet in Townsville

Early in July, 22 leading tourism, recreation and government representatives were in Townsville for a meeting of the Tourism and Recreation Reef Advisory Committee (TRRAC). They considered issues such as tourism partnerships, best practice and certification, and provided advice to the GBRMPA about the proposed Cairns Area Plan of Management amendments and the implementation of the policy on allocation, latency and tenure.

Bulletin Board

- Funding to continue for Crown of Thorn Starfish control
- The GBRMPA's Representative Areas Program won the prestigious International Banksia Award for 'Government Leading by Example for a Sustainable Future' in April 2004
- Tourism Futures Conference hosted by the Queensland Government in Townsville, 4-7 August 2004

New Look for Permitted Moorings

The GBRMPA is working with industry to identify permitted moorings in the Marine Park with a unique reference number moulded onto standard mooring buoyage. The initial uptake has been strong and

we urge all other operators to support this initiative. If you have a mooring but have not yet received a letter about the standard buoys or its unique reference number, please contact *Carol Honchin on (07) 4750 0715 or email c.honchin@gbmpa.gov.au*

GBRMPA Cuts Red Tape for Vessel Operators

A trial of Vessel Identification Numbers (VINs) has commenced where operators display a VIN plaque on the vessel being used to operate under their permit. The system allows operators to change vessels without notifying the GBRMPA, providing that the VIN is displayed and the vessel fits within any permit requirements. The vessel name will continue to be recorded on EMC log books along with the VIN.

All operators are invited to become involved in the trial of VINs. The costs are \$40 for permit variations, \$18.50 to cover the cost of the VIN plaques, and a postage fee. For further information please call *Chris Briggs on 0407 579 838 or email c.briggs@gbmpa.gov.au*

Tracking the Health of the Reef

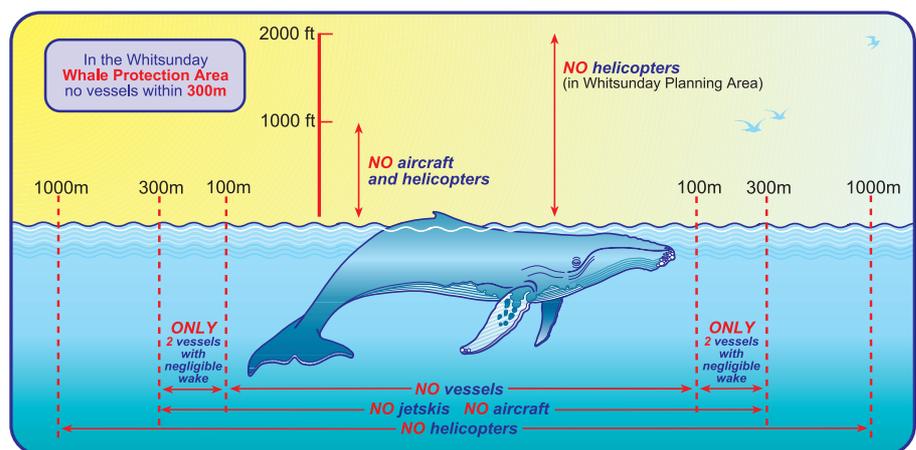
Tourism operators have been getting on board with tracking the health of the Reef as part of the GBRMPA's long term monitoring program for water quality. This monitoring program is designed to track the effectiveness of the Reef Water Quality Protection Plan in addressing declining water quality in the Great Barrier Reef lagoon.

It's easy to get involved to keep the Reef great by joining other operators in monthly sampling of chlorophyll or assisting with long term water quality sampling. Please contact *David Haynes on (07) 4750 0700 or email d.haynes@gbmpa.gov.au*

A Whale of a Time on the GBR

The whale season is underway; so be alert, watch for whales at all times and remember to 'keep your distance'. Please report sick, injured, stranded or dead whales to the new number for the Marine Animal Hotline.

Marine Animal Hotline on 1300 130 EPA (i.e. 1300 130 372).



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