

A summary document is prepared after each meeting of the Reef Advisory Committee to inform other advisory committees serving the Authority, and persons generally (including the public), of business of the RAC. The document forms part of the records of the meeting and so its content is limited to matters raised in the meeting, and, where necessary, background details given to the meeting. Any inquiries should be referred to the Authority's Secretariat, or to the appropriate Member.

## **TOURISM AND RECREATION REEF ADVISORY COMMITTEE (TRRAC)**

### **11<sup>th</sup> Meeting**

### **12 and 13 December 2002 – Mackay**

### **SUMMARY DOCUMENT**

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#### **BEST PRACTICE INITIATIVES**

At TRRAC 10, it was agreed that there would be merit in inviting potential accreditation schemes to demonstrate to the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA) and to the TRRAC how their schemes could meet the GBRMPA's objectives for accreditation. At TRRAC 11, representatives from Green Globe Asia Pacific and Nature and Ecotourism Accreditation Program (NEAP) each gave a presentation to the Committee outlining their certification programs, and providing advice on their applicability to the GBRMPA's requirements.

In discussion, the following comments were noted:

- Benchmarking would be for the whole of the Reef.
- NEAP only accredits products. The "product" is the saleable, ticketable item, as purchased by a consumer (e.g., a ticket to go on a whale watching trip).
- The standards can be made available through training programs, providing people with good quality training and information to reach the standards required for accreditation.
- The Commonwealth is working with ATAA (Australian Tourism Accreditation Association) to ensure standards are equitable.
- The accreditation process should be voluntary.

#### **REPORT FROM THE TOURISM AND RECREATION (T&R) GROUP**

The following issues were discussed:

##### ***Proposed Cruise Ship Anchorages in and adjacent to the Far Northern Section***

- The formal public consultation period closed on Monday 9 December 2002.
- Four submissions were received.

- Some of the anchorages are adjacent to the coast; some to islands on the mid-shelf region; and some to off-shore reefs.

##### ***Tourism Operator's Handbook Update***

- The Handbook, first produced in 2001, was originally available at a cost of \$20 (later \$39.85); however, in the interests of fostering sustainable tourism in the GBRMP, operators will now be given a complimentary copy of the Handbook, as will management agencies like the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS). Replacement pages will be sent to Handbook owners who appear on the database.

#### **LATENCY, ALLOCATION AND TENURE**

Members were advised that the T&R Group had revised the draft policy statement, after taking into consideration comments and suggestions made at TRRAC 10. Some further modifications were made after discussions by the GBRMPA's Senior Management Team (SMT).

One of the changes was to make it clear that the GBRMPA's intention is to consult widely in the development and implementation of the policy. The SMT was supportive of the document's approach, and of moving it forward; and recommended that any further comments from the TRRAC be taken into consideration prior to the document being released for public comment.

Although there is to be a cap on "special permissions", if an operator puts forward a new idea that does not adversely impact on the GBRMP, then the GBRMPA will consider that proposal. Some clarifying wording could be included to make it clear that, although a limit is set, it may be possible to include some activities, if a new proposal comes

to hand. It was agreed to take a general approach, with the possibility of building on it further in the opportunity plan. Members considered that latency outside the “special permissions” continued to be a significant issue, and should be addressed in the policy for public release. Members considered that without such an approach, latency management provisions would be meaningless.

**PLANNING FOR TOURISM AND RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES**

Members were advised that the T&R Group revised the draft prototype, after taking into consideration comments and suggestions made at TRRAC 10. It was noted that the document was still very much a draft, and Members were again asked to provide comments and suggestions.

Staff from the T&R Group recently met with Whitsundays operators and QPWS staff to address some of the issues. It was suggested that a broad risk analysis may help to hone down the sorts and numbers of issues that are taken into account in the plan.

The T&R Group remains confident that a prototype can be created, while acknowledging that the document would need to be simplified. The revised document will be reviewed by the TRRAC.

**COMMITTEE’S EFFECTIVENESS OVER ITS THREE-YEAR TERM**

Membership of all four Reef Advisory Committees was due to expire on 23 February 2003. As this was to be the last meeting of the TRRAC, it was thought appropriate to determine what Members thought about the effectiveness of the Committee over the last three years.

In discussion, Members made the following comments:

- The Committee was an excellent forum, and its work thusfar was commended.
- It was commendable that the Committee was moving along on issues, seeking out solutions to both existing problems and those that may occur in the future.
- There was disappointment that there has not been a more immediate way forward for consideration of Indigenous issues.
- The Committee has been asked to consider quite a few issues, mostly relating to tourism issues. It is important to ensure that the consideration of how

to deal with recreational users remains as an agenda item for future meetings.

- It was acknowledged that the initiative taken to form the Reef Advisory Committees (RACs) was a big step for the GBRMPA and, although not all the recommendations and suggestions put forward have been agreed to by the GBRMPA, the Committee’s comments and concerns have been taken on board.
- Members welcomed the opportunity to continue their membership of the Committee.

In addition, staff from the T&R Group made the following comments:

- The Committee has made an enormous difference in allowing the T&R Group to make progress with latency and allocation work over the years.
- The Committee has been a great step forward for the GBRMPA, and the frankness and sincerity of Members’ comments was valued by the T&R Group.

In concluding discussion, the TRRAC Chairperson thanked the Committee for their participation over the three-year term.

**NEXT MEETING**

It is anticipated that the first meeting for 2003 will be scheduled for March. Dates will be confirmed once the Membership for the Committee’s second term has been determined.

CURRENT MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE	
Mr Mike Bartlett .....	Cruise Shipping
Mr Mike Burgess .....	Business Acumen Economic/ Marketing
Mr Robert Butterworth .....	Environment Australia
Mr John Doohan .....	Recreational Fishing
Dr Sally Driml .....	Scientific/Economic/EPA
Mr John Evetts .....	Ranging Operations/Game Fishing
Mr Peter Frawley (Chairperson) .....	Management
Mr Daniel Gschwind .....	Business Acumen Economic/ Marketing
Mr Bernard Heimann .....	Mooring, Anchoring
Mr David Hutchen .....	Association of Marine Park Tourism Operators
Mr Terry Kemp .....	Bareboat Charter
Mr Wayne Kirkpatrick .....	Resort Operations
Mr Glen Miller .....	Indigenous Community
Mr John Millward .....	Dive, Pontoon, Aircraft
Mr David Morgans .....	Tourism Queensland
Mr Denis O’Connell .....	Commercial Fishing
Ms Kerry Rooney .....	Dept Industry, Tourism and Resources
Mr John Rumney .....	Conservation, Dive, Anchoring, Mooring and Ranging
Mr Chris Thomas .....	Director, GBRMPA