



**TOURISM AND RECREATION REEF ADVISORY COMMITTEE (TRRAC)**  
**15<sup>th</sup> Meeting**  
**3 and 4 March 2004 – Townsville**  
**SUMMARY DOCUMENT**

The fifteenth meeting of the TRRAC was held in Townsville on 3 and 4 March 2004. A summary of the outcomes of the main items discussed is set out below.

**BEST PRACTICE AND CERTIFICATION**

The Committee noted the good progress that has been made in recruiting suitable certification schemes for the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park.

In discussion, the following comments were noted:

- The Committee was keen to see the certification scheme's assessment process finalised, and the availability of 15-year permits and other benefits coming into effect.
- The Federal Minister for Small Business and Tourism recently announced the establishment of a national tourism accreditation framework. It was suggested that the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA) program for identifying suitable certification schemes for tourism operators was valuable and linked in with the national accreditation framework initiative.

**ALLOCATION, LATENCY AND TENURE**

The Committee was brought up-to-date with progress in implementing the GBRMPA's policy on managing tourism permissions, and was asked to comment on a proposed set of generic criteria to rank expressions of interest for the future allocation of new and spare "special tourism permissions". The proposed criteria addressed operator competence and knowledge, protection and presentation of the Marine Park and contributions to Marine Park management.

The Committee endorsed the three criteria proposed, with the inclusion of both "direct" and

"indirect" contributions to Marine Park management. The Committee was reluctant to make a firm recommendation regarding the relative weighting of the criteria. In the same way that the generic criteria may change or be added to over time and for different tourism opportunities, it was considered important that flexibility be maintained in the weighting given to each of the criteria.

With regard to the process used to rank expressions of interest, the Committee recommended the establishment of a broadly-based, independent advisory panel, possibly including members with financial skills and knowledge of the tourism industry.

The Committee heard that all permittees had been advised of the reasonable use provisions which come into effect on 13 August 2004. However, there was concern that there may remain some confusion amongst operators who are unaware that they hold special tourism permissions. The Committee recommended that the GBRMPA advise affected operators individually.

**TRRAC WORK PRIORITIES**

**Tourism Site Quality**

*Marine Tourism Contingency Plan*

The GBRMPA is committed to a co-operative approach in responding to a severe environmental incident. A draft Marine Tourism Contingency Plan was provided to the Committee for advice.

The Committee endorsed the Marine Tourism Contingency Plan as a mechanism for facilitating temporary relocation of tourism operations affected by a contingency event. However, the Committee recommended that the Plan be reworded so that it is less prescriptive, and places greater emphasis on

co-operation between Commonwealth and State agencies, native title claimants and the tourism industry, both prior to a contingency event and in response to that event.

#### *Research for Site Quality*

The Committee noted the wide range of research activities being undertaken and considered that, in future, the driving force for all research projects should be sustainability of the Marine Park; without a sustainable and healthy Marine Park, there would not be a sustainable and healthy tourism industry. As a sub-set of sustainability, there needed to be exploration of appropriate techniques for the day-to-day maintenance of the quality of individual tourism sites.

Other subject matter considered appropriate for research included information needs for managing tourism and recreation use and monitoring visitation to the Marine Park.

#### **Tourism Visitor Numbers**

Visitation data up to September 2003 was presented to the Committee, indicating numbers flattening out to rising slightly. It is planned to present further analysis at TRRAC 16.

The Committee was advised that the study into travel trends, undertaken by the Queensland Tourism Industry Council and Tourism Queensland, should be completed by June 2004, and will be provided to TRRAC.

#### **Further Implementation of the TRRAC Framework**

The Committee continues to recognise the central importance of the Framework advice provided to the GBRMPA in February 2002, and considered it appropriate to analyse the achievements in implementing the Framework over the subsequent two years.

The Committee considered that a substantial amount of work had been undertaken and good progress made on most of the Framework components. The exceptions identified included performance monitoring and censure, cost recovery and resourcing, entry system, and environmental and social monitoring and research. It was recognised that a concentration of resources on the priority components such as allocation of access and best practice and accreditation had affected the progress of other components.

#### **Indigenous Issues**

The Committee was briefed on the Cape York Partnerships Program, a case study for fostering Indigenous involvement in tourism.

The Committee was pleased to learn of the initiatives that have been introduced to better prepare potential Indigenous enterprises prior to establishing and operating a tourism business.

The Committee reaffirmed its commitment to the development of an Indigenous Engagement Strategy.

#### **ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT CHARGE (EMC) CONCESSIONS REVIEW**

The Committee was briefed on the EMC Concessions Review, being undertaken by a consultant. Preliminary feedback was provided on the current concessions structure. Members considered that the charging arrangement should be based on the fundamental principle of one charge per person per day.

The Committee endorsed the industry consultation process that included the consultant meeting directly with individual industry sectors.

#### **NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting, TRRAC 16, is proposed for June 2004; with TRRAC 17 proposed for November 2004.

#### **CURRENT MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE**

Ms Bryony Barnett	Research, Extension, Best Practice
Mr Mike Bartlett	Cruise Shipping
Mr Mike Burgess	Business Acumen Economic/Marketing
Mr John Doohan	Recreational Fishing
Mr Barry Ehrke	Commercial Fishing
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 Ralph Henderson	Tourism and National Parks Management
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
Ms Kerry Rooney	Dept of Industry, Tourism and Resources
Mr John Rummey	Conservation, Dive, Anchoring, Mooring and Ranging
Dr Adam Smith	Acting Director, GBRMPA
Ms Meg Switzer	Dept of the Environment and Heritage