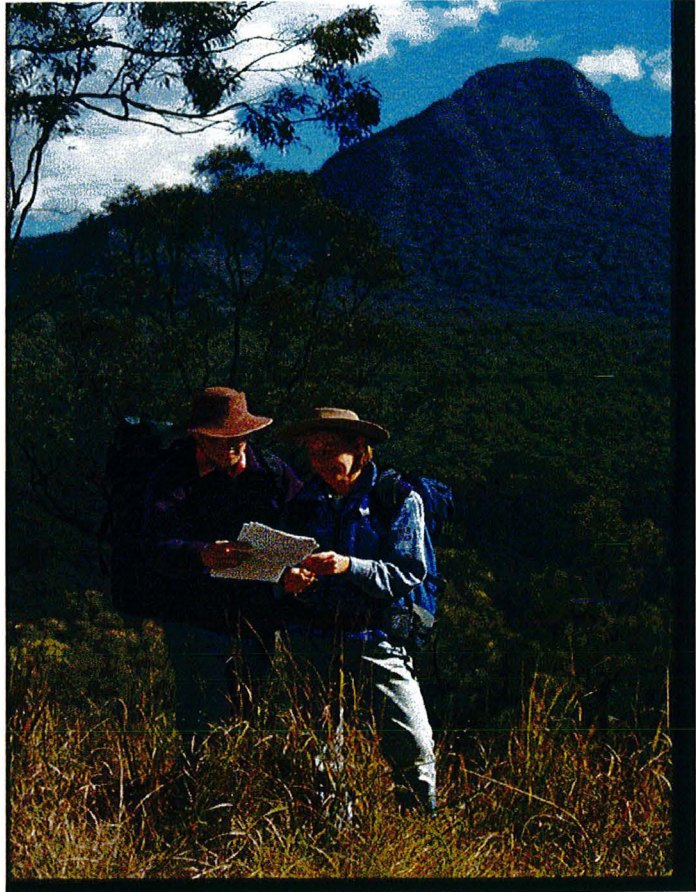


***Benchmarking  
and best  
practice  
program:  
user pays  
revenue***

(Updated from a Report  
Originally Published in  
September 1996)



**Prepared for Anzecc  
Working Group on  
National Parks and  
Protected Areas  
Management**

February 2000



QUEENSLAND  
PARKS AND  
WILDLIFE  
SERVICE



Environmental  
Protection  
Agency

**Report prepared for  
Australian and New Zealand Environment and Conservation  
Council (ANZECC)**

## **Benchmarking And Best Practice Program**

### **User-Pays Revenue**

**(Updated from a Report Originally Published in September 1996)**

**Lead Agency  
Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service  
February 2000**

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## 1. Executive summary

User-pays systems have been adopted, to varying degrees, by conservation agencies in all Australian states and territories. Fees are charged for entry to protected areas, camping, recreational facilities, interpretive services, leases and licences, commercial activities and other facilities and services.

Revenue objectives vary according to the type of facility or service. Conservation of natural and cultural resources is generally regarded as a community service obligation and a user-pays system is not applicable. For commercial activities with little or no relationship to the agency mandate, such as the establishment of communication facilities or grazing licences, the revenue objective is at least total cost recovery or full economic rent. Charges for visitor services reflect a balance between the community service obligation (supported by the agency) and user-pays revenue.

This benchmarking-best practice project has:

- researched systems of user pays revenue operating in states and territories of Australia;
- investigated other options for the operation of user pays systems;
- analysed the data collected; and
- developed recommendations for best practice in user-pays revenue systems.

### Outcomes of user-pays

Desired outcomes of a user-pays system were assumed to be cost-effectiveness, improved park management, better visitor facilities and services, and positive public attitudes towards the agency and protected area management. All agencies were positive about their achievement of these outcomes, though most felt their systems were still being improved and expanded.

*Cost effectiveness* was difficult to evaluate as most states had no accurate estimation of their costs. A suggested best practice is the adoption of accounting systems which make it easier to recognise the costs of revenue collection and user-pays system administration.

*Improved conservation management* was achieved largely through better visitor management and awareness, and through greater channelling of agency funds into resource management as visitor services become more self-supporting.

*Client services and facilities* were greatly improved where user-pays revenue was retained by parks services. Local retention of revenue was most commonly mentioned as the key factor in creating a positive cycle from revenue to better services and facilities to positive public attitude and back to increased revenue. The importance of funding projects appropriate to the desired management settings of protected areas was also identified.

### Processes

The processes evaluated were revenue raising (which consisted of a number of sub-processes), promoting public awareness and acceptance, staff training and support, distribution of funds, and the linking of commercial operations to conservation objectives.

*Revenue raising* The net revenue raised was influenced by the fee level and structure, the efficiency of collection and administration, and the effectiveness of compliance and monitoring.

Best practice recommendations included:

- Agencies should have the ability to adjust fees, at least to the level of the Consumer Price Index, and the public should be informed to expect these small rises at regular intervals;
- Fees should be set to reflect the level of service, the revenue objectives, estimated public willingness to pay, and comparative charges in the market-place. Necessary research should be undertaken before new fees are set;

- Relatively simple fee structures are easier to administer, but some concessions for families and low income earners are desirable. Multiple-use passes for park entry are cost-effective;
- New or increased fees for commercial operators should be advised 12-18 months in advance;
- A range of fee collection methods is available, and agencies should investigate best options depending on the circumstances. The use of contractors is an effective option in some places;
- A high level of compliance should be aimed for to boost cost efficiency and to establish a professional and serious image for the agency. However in low-visitation parks the expense of compliance checking may outweigh the benefits.

#### *Promoting public awareness and acceptance of user-pays*

Most agencies felt that there was a high level of public acceptance of user-pays systems, though some problems were mentioned. Key factors identified in encouraging public support were:

- Provision of clear information in advance and efficient delivery of service (especially relating to commercial operators);
- Funds are retained by the agencies - preferably in the local district - and result in improvements to facilities and park management;
- Public perceive they are getting value for money; and that the system is fair and equitable; and
- Discounts are available for children and pensioners.

#### *Staff training and support*

The enthusiastic support and participation of protected area staff in collecting revenue and administering the user-pays system are critical. Establishing a direct link between revenue collection and increased funding was mentioned by a number of states as a key factor in motivating staff to implement the system to the best of their ability. Best practices identified included:

- Selection and training of staff who are enthusiastic and competent in dealing with the public;
- Consideration of staff safety as a high priority and;
- Gaining staff support through increased funding back to the park/local district.

#### *Distribution of funds*

Best practices identified in relation to fund distribution included:

- One hundred percent revenue retention by the management agency;
- Retention of at least a proportion of funds within the local area; and
- Disbursement of funds to appropriate projects which are in keeping with the desired management setting of the protected area in question. Funding distribution should not create major inconsistencies in standards between protected areas

#### *Linking commercial operations to conservation objectives*

User-pays systems can contribute to conservation objectives through increased contact with and if necessary, regulation of day visitors, campers, tour operators, commercial photographers and other clients. Best practices identified included:

- Establishing good relationships with and controls over all types of commercial operators, and ensuring that all conditions of permits, leases and other agreements are adequate and fulfilled;
- The use of the user-pays system to collect good visitor data; and
- Ensuring that core business is not over-ridden by commercial interests.

In conclusion, revenue-raising on protected areas has been accepted throughout Australian nature conservation agencies as a necessary adjunct to central funding. Improved conservation outcomes and better visitor services and facilities can be achieved provided certain conditions are established and practices followed.

## 2. Introduction

### 2.1 Background to benchmarking program

ANZECC (Australian and New Zealand Environment and Conservation Council) decided in 1995 to conduct benchmarking and best practice investigations into a number of key operations common to all conservation agencies. Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service was given the lead role for determining best practice for user-pays operations in protected areas. The initial benchmarking and best practice report on this subject was published in September 1996. This is an update of that original report.

Leases, concessions and private interests in the operation of park facilities are not covered in detail in this report, and is the subject of a separate study ANZECC Benchmarking and Best Practice Report entitled "Commercial Management: Processes in the Delivery of Park Services" published in April 1999.

### 2.2 User-pays in Australian protected areas

The philosophy and practice of raising revenue through charging the users of government facilities and services has emerged as a strong trend in public sector management over the last twenty years in Australia. However, the introduction of user charges into public sector agencies requires staff to develop skills in marketing, client services and technical management. A lack of these skills has been identified as one of the factors limiting benefits gained from adoption of commercial practices.<sup>1</sup> Staff support is also essential for user-pays enterprises to be successful.

The desire to raise revenue has to be balanced with the need to meet community service obligations (CSOs) such as social justice and, in the case of conservation agencies, conservation of biodiversity and ecological processes. Figures 1 and 2 provide a conceptual framework for developing charging systems in conservation agencies.

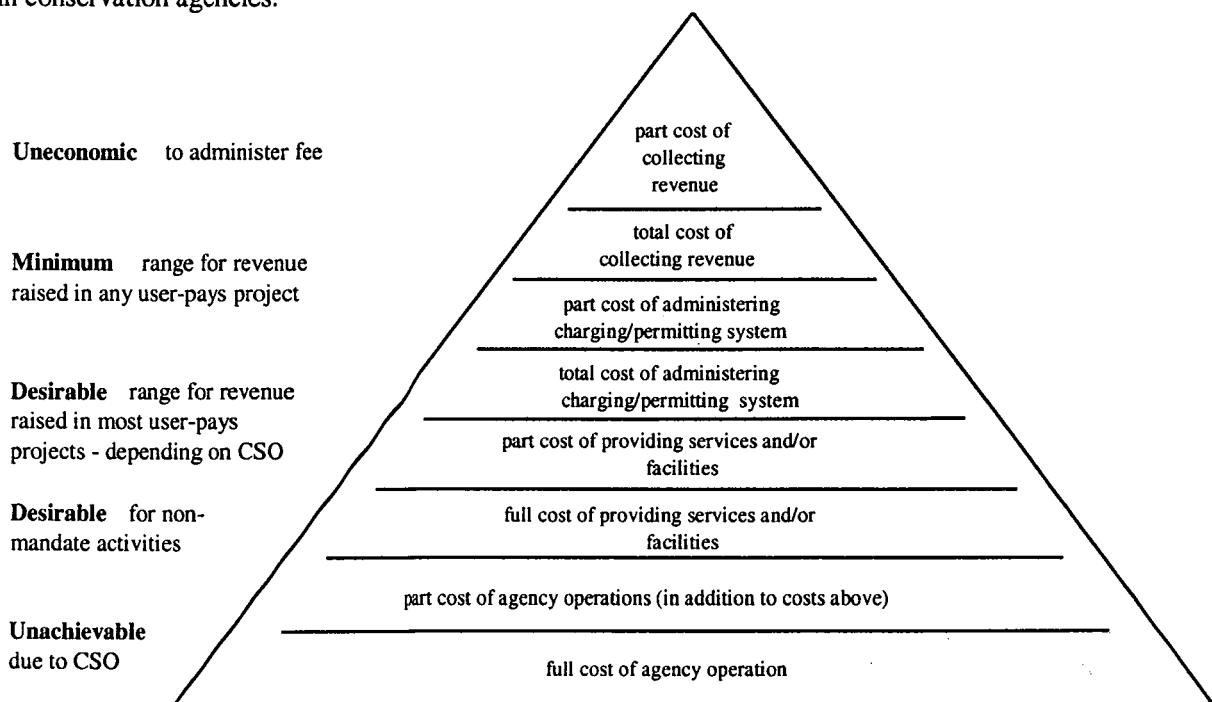


Figure 1: Range of cost recovery options

<sup>1</sup> Taskforce on Management Improvement, 1992, The Australian Public Service Reformed - An Evaluation of a Decade of Management Reform, Canberra.

Figure 2 General framework for cost recovery objectives. (Modified from Parks Canada/University of Queensland Gatton College)

Nature of Service	Central to mandate		Related to mandate						Unrelated to mandate
	Core services	User services	Special agency services			Concessions and commercial operations			External services
<b>Description</b>	Identification and protection of heritage resources	Access to and enjoyment of heritage resources	Facility based education and recreation		Other permits	Facility based recreation			Resource usage
<b>Examples</b>	Research and resource management	entry, basic facilities, interpretation, public information	camping	agency operated accommodation, equipment hire etc	Scientific and education permit system	tours	filming and photography	commercially operated accommodation, recreational facilities etc	Communication facilities, grazing, bee-keeping
<b>Conservation outcome</b>	high	some (increased awareness)	some (increased awareness)	some (may be positive or negative impacts)	high (non-beneficial not granted)	some (increased awareness, may also be impacts)	depends on type (may be positive or negative impacts)	some (may be positive or negative impacts)	none (may be negative)
<b>Beneficiaries</b>	public/heritage	park visitors	users	users	users	clients and business	business/ maybe public	business/clients	business/service user
<b>Revenue objective</b>	nil - tax-based	nil or partial admin/service cost recovery	admin plus partial service cost recovery	admin and service cost recovery	partial recovery of admin costs	admin plus partial service cost recovery	admin-service cost recovery except for educational films	recovery of costs, full recovery of economic rent if possible	full recovery of administrative and service costs/full economic rent

It is generally agreed that core activities of conservation and resource management remain a community service obligation. It is neither feasible nor desirable for them to be funded from user-pays charges, though special projects above the usual management activities could be funded from user-pays. Agencies may also decide to provide protected area visitors with free or heavily subsidised access, basic facilities and information services (see Section 3.3 “Competitive Neutrality”). However, most agencies strive towards at least partial recovery of the costs of providing special facilities and services for visitors or other protected area users.

For services outside the agency’s mandate, such as some commercial business operations, communication facilities and agricultural leases, charges may attempt to recoup all costs including interest on capital invested in land and facilities. In some cases a profit may be made from these operations. For example, Parks Victoria, managing Victoria’s National Parks on behalf of the Department of Natural Resources and Environment, considers that commercial operations should, in principle, make a positive net return for the State.

The WA Department of Conservation and Land Management does not consider “commercial business operations” to be outside of its mandate. Properly managed commercial operations (including leases for accommodation service, tours etc) help to achieve the Department’s recreation and tourism mandate, and are provided for under the CALM Act and associated regulations.

The burgeoning field of resource economics is currently exploring ways to estimate direct and indirect economic benefits of protected areas to the community (eg Dixon and Sherman 1990<sup>2</sup>). These estimations show that revenue derived from tourism and travel to protected areas, in addition to the ecosystem services performed by natural areas, contribute substantially to the economic value of protected areas. Agencies may take this into account when balancing their costs and incomes.

User-pays systems have been adopted to a greater or lesser extent by all government conservation agencies in Australia. Most states and territories charge for entry to at least some of their protected areas, and for a wide range of other services and facilities. Reasons given for adopting user-pays include:

- the need to generate alternative sources of funds for park management programs as economic policy becomes tighter;
- the need to generate revenue from existing activities (in some cases this is a requirement of the relevant Treasury Departments); and
- the belief that users of facilities and services should contribute to the costs of providing those services and facilities.

User-pays systems within the public sector operate under specific constraints. Unlike private businesses, government agencies conducting commercial operations must be able to prove to the community that:

- all charges and especially new charges are fair, necessary and equitable;
- any increases in charges are justifiable or in line with the consumer price index;
- collection of and accounting for money is undertaken under conditions of reliability and accountability; and
- money raised is acquitted in the best interests of the community.

In the agency’s interests, the user-pays system should be cost effective, enhance the agency’s public image and improve its ability to deliver the services defined in its operational charter.

### **2.3 Objectives of the project**

The objective of this project is to apply the benchmarking technique to determine best practice in user pays revenue in protected areas. Specifically the project has:

- researched systems of user pays revenue operating in states and territories of Australia;
- investigated other options for the operation of user pays systems;
- analysed the data collected; and
- developed recommendations for best practice in user-pays revenue systems.

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<sup>2</sup> Dixon and Sherman, 1990, Economics of protected areas: a look at benefits and costs, London, Earthscan Publications



## **2.4 Scope of the project**

### **Best practices to be established**

- Methods of establishing what facilities and services will be charged for, the level and structure of fees and the frequency of adjustment;
- Methods of revenue collection and system administration;
- Approaches to gaining the support and cooperation of staff and users; and
- Linking of service and facility quality standards to charges.

**Critical success factors:** To evaluate advantages and problems with different systems and to decide what represents best practice, the following factors were investigated for each agency used as a 'benchmarking partner':

#### *Outcomes:*

- cost effectiveness;
- improved park management and better visitor facilities; and
- positive public attitudes towards the agency and protected area management.

#### *Processes:*

The efficiency and effectiveness of the following processes were reviewed:

- revenue collection:
  - setting and adjusting fee levels;
  - collection of fees and administration of system;
  - extent of compliance;
- gaining public awareness and acceptance of user-pays operations;
- staff training and support in service delivery and client relationships;
- distribution of funds raised, in particular linking of revenue raising to improved services and facility provision; and
- linking of commercial controls to conservation objectives.

## **3. Establishing best practice in user-pays programs**

### **3.1 Methodology**

Questionnaires were distributed to all state and territory nature conservation agencies in Australia. More detailed discussions were held with key agencies on selected topics.

The benchmarking partners were limited to the ANZECC member agencies. Most agency staff freely admitted that their organisation had far to go in terms of establishing optimum systems. Even where optimum practices are recognised, establishing these within the context of public administration can be difficult and time-consuming.

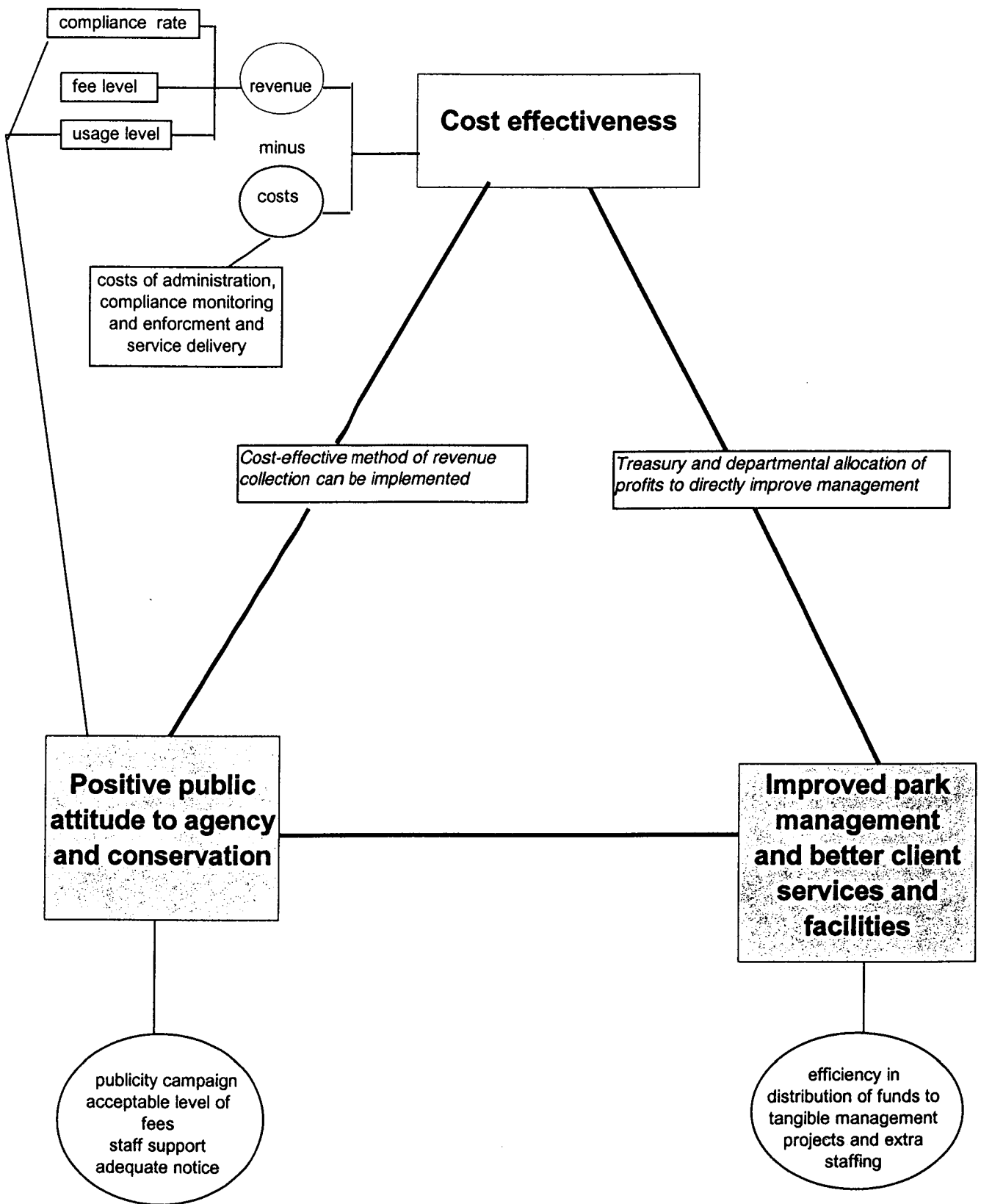
### **3.2 Best practice model for user-pays revenue**

A model for investigating best practice in user-pays systems is shown in figure 3.

This is based on the desired outcomes stated above:

- cost effectiveness;
- improved park management and better visitor services and facilities; and
- positive public attitudes towards the agency and protected area management.

**Figure 3: Model of investigating Best Practice in User-Pays**



The three desired outcomes form a triangle, with increased cost effectiveness leading to better park management, and thence to the increased public support which in turn enables greater profitability. The primary filters on this positive flow, as shown in the diagram, are:

- **Retention of revenue:** Increased cost effectiveness is assumed to lead to improved park management, but this will only be the case where revenue retention or allocation of profits directly benefits protected area management;
- **Public awareness:** Improved park management and better client services and facilities are assumed to lead to public support for the program, but this will be true only where the public is aware of and appreciative of this improvement. Better staffing and interpretive facilities will have a significant impact on public appreciation. Where funding is provided for resource management activities, these need to be given appropriate publicity;
- **Cost-effective collection and administrative systems:** A positive public attitude can lead to increased revenue and cost effectiveness through improved compliance and a reduction in the level of enforcement required but this will only be so if efficient systems of revenue raising have been implemented.

### **3.3 Competitive Neutrality**

National Competition Policy (NCP) reforms, including related legislative amendments which made the *Commonwealth Trade Practices Act 1974* (TPA) applicable to State Government agencies from 21 July 1996, have had an impact on user-pays systems across all jurisdictions.

These policy reforms, which have been felt at all levels of government in Australia from local to federal, had their genesis in the report of the Hilmer Committee in 1992. The Hilmer Committee made a number of recommendations to the Commonwealth, State and Territory governments, including that there should be:

- National application of a set of competitive conduct rules (now described as Part IV of the TPA);
- principles and processes to ensure greater scrutiny of government regulations or ownership policies that restrict competition (this has involved a review of legislation across jurisdictions); and
- a framework of principles for achieving “competitive neutrality” between government-owned businesses and private firms when they compete in the open market (now known as the Competition Principles Agreement).

Not all of the Hilmer Committee recommendations were adopted. However the competition reform package presented by the Committee and subsequently put into place by Commonwealth, State and Territory governments, has addressed many of the issues raised.

From a government agency perspective, competitive neutrality encourages the most efficient allocation of resources, whilst still recognising and allowing agencies to perform clearly identified and defined community service obligations. A requirement of the Agreement was for States to publish a Policy Statement on competitive neutrality.

In principle, competitive neutrality means that subject to an assessment of the costs and benefits involved, government agencies delivering a service or product should not gain from any artificial competitive advantage arising from their government ownership. Government agencies are free to engage in the delivery of services that carry a charge and that may compete with private operators, particularly where the services relate to it meeting its statutory responsibilities. Any limits on the business activities in which an agency may actively engage is basically determined by its governing legislation.

Typically, the services that government agencies deliver should be services related to their core business and may contain a component of community service obligation, which wherever possible should be clearly identified and costed. As a general rule, unless justified in terms of the “public interest” or “public benefit”, agencies should charge prices for the goods and services they provide, that fully recover all costs that would normally be incurred in their supply.

Provided agencies objectively, independently and conscientiously act to ensure that their pricing policies are consistent with the above principles, they should not be deemed to be acting in contravention of competitive neutrality policies. Agencies need to fully document the process used for deriving prices and/or charges. In turn, this should be independent of any competitor's prices and/or charges.

## 4. Results and analysis

### 4.1 Overview of user-pays

All agencies surveyed have strengths and weaknesses in their implementation of user-pays systems. A number of agencies are in the process of reviewing their commercial operations or have recently implemented new or altered systems. Staff in all agencies are actively seeking new ideas and improved levels of operation.

In few cases were agencies able to give accurate or even rough estimates of the cost effectiveness or profitability of their user-pays operations. Costs of revenue collection and system administration were generally not known.

All surveyed staff involved with user-pays were enthusiastic about its real or potential advantages. Perceived benefits of the user-pays system mentioned by one or more respondents included:

- Dramatic and visible improvements in park facilities and management;
- Increased staffing through user-pays funded positions;
- The establishment of contact between staff and users, including commercial operators, park visitors and leaseholders;
- An equitable situation where clients, especially interstate and international visitors and commercial users, pay for services they receive rather than the burden being carried totally by the tax-payer;
- Greater appreciation by users of services and facilities they pay for; and
- Stimulus for employment and small business operators particularly in rural communities.

Approximate revenue raised by each agency is shown in table 1, with the percentage contributed by various types of charges shown in table 2.

**Table 1 : Revenue raised by states through user-pays charges**

Agency	User-pays revenue	
	Entry fees	Other
QPWS (98/99)*	Nil	\$4,050,000*
NSW NPWS (94/95) #	\$6,227,292	\$6,657,172
WA CALM (98/99)	\$4,540,891	\$1,546,848
PARKS VICTORIA (98/99)	\$928,000	\$3,291,000
TAS PWS (98/99)	\$1,600,000	\$1,500,000
SA DEH (98/99)	\$1,498,000	\$5,073,000
PWCNT** (98/99)	\$1,689,000	\$489,000
PARKS AUSTRALIA (98/99)	\$7,594,650	\$1,099,950
ACT P&C (98/99)	\$122,875	\$104,029
NZ DOC (98/99)	Nil	\$10,937,000

\* Queensland figures include \$2,883,000 income from areas declared under the Recreation Areas Management Act. These areas include national park, state forest and other tenures. A different schedule of fees applies, including a vehicle charge. These charges are not discussed in this report.

\*\* PWCNT figures include entry fees for 2 wildlife parks. Most campgrounds are now managed by a commercial operator and the fees for these commercially managed campgrounds are not shown.

# Updated figures not available at time of printing.

**Table 2 : Income by percentage**

	Camping fees	Commercial activities and others	Entrance fees
QPWS	59.0	41.0	nil
NSW NPWS #	3.4	66.6	30.0
WA CALM	9.7	15.7	74.6
PARKS VICTORIA	30.1	47.9	22.0
TAS PWS	6.0	38.0	56.0
SA DEH	7.6	69.6	22.8
PWCNT*	5.0	17.0	78.0
PARKS AUSTRALIA	5.0	7.7	87.3
ACT P&C	10	36	54
NZ DOC	44	56	nil

# Based on 94/95 figures - update not available at time of printing.

\* PWCNT figures include entry fees for 2 wildlife parks. Most campgrounds are now managed by a commercial operator and the fees for these commercially managed campgrounds are not shown.

The range of charges applied by the different agencies and the structure and levels of fees are shown in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2. The charges include:

**Charges for public services and facilities provided by government agencies:** Fees apply for camping on protected areas in all states, though bush camping without facilities is free in some places. Most agencies charge for entry to at least some protected areas. In some states, charges are levied on parks only where it is clear that the revenue will exceed the costs of collection. Other services and facilities attracting charges include recreational facilities, hire of equipment, interpretation and rental of park-owned accommodation.

**Charges to private commercial operators and concessionaires on protected areas:** All agencies charge operators for commercial filming and tours. Most give some concessions or exemptions for operators implementing educational tours and for companies filming educational or current affairs programs. Some states also have well-developed commercial systems of leases for private accommodation, recreational facilities, restaurants and retail outlets on protected areas.

**Other types of licences, permits and authorities:** Permits allowing stock-grazing, bee-keeping, communication facilities and navigation aids also attract a charge from some agencies, though these are not major revenue-raising enterprises. Considerable costs are involved in the evaluation and processing of these permits.

## **4.2 Comparison of outcomes**

The primary desired outcome of user-pays systems should be enhancement of the agency's mission. This will relate to improved conservation management (including greater community awareness and appreciation) and better client services and facilities.

Secondary outcomes include achieving cost effectiveness in the operation of the user-pays system and increasing public support and appreciation.

These outcomes have been achieved to a certain extent by all agencies, but it is not possible to quantitatively compare their achievements. Rather, certain aspects of best practice have been obtained from each agency.

### **4.2.1 Improved conservation management and community appreciation of heritage**

Conservation agencies do not normally rely on user-pays funding for their core resource management operations. However, there are many ways in which this revenue can contribute to better conservation management, through funding projects otherwise outside the capacity or policy of the organisation.

Parks Victoria considers that conservation management can be improved by ensuring that only a basic level of service is funded from Consolidated Revenue, and that discretionary services are not subsidised by tax-payers. They believe that this approach will free up resources for conservation management. As discussed in section 2.2, the success of this approach relies on Treasury allowing the retention of all user-pays revenue (to fund 'discretionary' visitor services) and not reducing the base allocation to Parks Victoria, so extra funds can be diverted to resource management.

Department of Environment and Heritage, South Australia states that 'the entry fee mechanism was adopted to generate resources to address management problems created by high visitation levels'. High visitor numbers can be absorbed with less impact on protected areas which are well planned and have appropriate facilities: for example walking track improvements reduce erosion and trampling; and new waste disposal systems may solve serious pollution problems experienced in some protected area picnic and camping areas.

Improved facilities and services for park users also create a better image and public appreciation and therefore lessen management problems - thus achieving conservation objectives as a by-product.

One option is for agencies to give priority to projects which provide for visitor enjoyment and also have conservation or educational benefits. In Tasmania, user-pays revenue has funded interpretive facilities including boardwalks, viewing platforms, interpretive information and visitor centres.

Extra staff employed to collect user charges have provided an important management presence, and the contact necessary to collect fees and arrange permits has been used to inform and educate the public. On the other hand, PWC Northern Territory observes that by employing commercial campground managers (funded by user-pays), Rangers are freed up for wildlife, visitor and other park management duties.

Training of commercial tour operators as part of the user-pays system has resulted in increasing conservation awareness amongst operators and consequently their clients.

Best practice outcomes. Leaders have achieved...	Best avoided. Leaders have not...
Improved conservation management of their protected areas.	
Increased interpretive/ public contact facilities and services aimed at improving public awareness and appreciation of the protected areas and at encouraging desirable behaviour by park visitors.	
Increased staff and public support through promotion of management improvements funded through user-pays.	
Improved visitor facilities and services compatible with management plans for protected areas (ie they have not resulted in unacceptable impacts on the protected area).	Placed excessive emphasis on the need to cater for more users and build more facilities, resulting in degradation of the natural environment.
An acceptance, where necessary, of a decline in revenue in the interests of environmental protection.	Sacrificed environmental need for economic gains (eg avoided seasonal or periodic closures or restrictions on numbers where these were needed).

#### 4.2.2 Improved client services and facilities

Improved client facilities and services are mentioned by all agencies as being crucial incentives for the operation of successful user-pays systems. Most agencies were enthusiastic about the improvements in this area after the introduction of fees.

In South Australia, it was noted that user-pays charges are resulting in 'transformation of certain parks from tired degraded reserves to steadily improving credits to the system: upgraded buildings, reticulated water, sewerage, rehabilitated recreational facilities...Also, a management presence has been established over a wide area of the state, making more efficient use of existing resources and by using user-pays funded staff to provide services in new areas - there are significant decreases in vandalism and repair costs where administrative charges are imposed.'

Staff may present a more client-oriented focus where visitors are linked with income. For example, it was observed that the Territory Wildlife Park, where most of the operating costs are obtained through entry fees and food and beverage sales is 'results and presentation oriented'.

Extra staff positions may be funded through user-pays. In some cases these people may be employed primarily to collect revenue (for example at an entry gate), but will at the same time provide an information service. In Queensland a number of permanent staff positions in facility design, visitor services and permit processing are funded from user-pays revenue.

Not all fee-payers receive obvious services for their payment. For example, in Queensland bush campers pay the same rate as people camping in developed campgrounds with facilities. Appropriate interpretation is required for them to realise that their money helps to fund remote patrols, search and rescue and rubbish collection.

A number of points of caution need to be considered in relation to improved services and facilities:

- Charging may create a higher public expectation of a good standard of facilities and services - which may include demand for more facilities and services from some sectors of the community. Once people have paid to enter a protected area, they will at least expect that existing facilities are clean and well maintained;
- When visitors pay a service fee, it is believed that the duty of care and liability of the management agency is increased, as contract law as well as common law will then apply;
- Though increased standard of service and facilities will often be a desired outcome of revenue generation, such services and facilities should not be out of keeping with the desired management setting of the protected area, or incompatible with the area's management or client needs. Especially where revenue is retained locally, the agency managers need to carefully oversee spending to ensure compatible standards and approaches are maintained throughout their jurisdiction. The public perception of wasted funds in any park needs to be avoided.

Best practice outcomes. Leaders have achieved...	Best avoided. Leaders have not...
Improved facilities and services as a result of user-pays charges.	Absorbed user-pays revenue into consolidated/central funding without returning funds to park management.
Visitor facilities and services which meet the needs of clients as well as being compatible with management plans.	Spent funds on inappropriate facilities or services.

### 4.2.3 Cost effectiveness

Cost effectiveness of a user-pays operation is equated to the revenue raised minus the agency's costs of collection (including associated administration and compliance monitoring and enforcement) and service delivery. As was shown in Figure 3, there are many factors to be considered if the agency seeks to minimise the costs of collection and maximise revenue within the limits of the organisational conservation mission.

Key factors and processes are:

- reasonable and well publicised fee levels,
- maintenance of appropriately high use levels,
- efficient collection and accounting methods,
- public acceptance,
- high compliance, and
- staff support.

As discussed previously, few agencies know the cost effectiveness of their user-pays operations. Though revenue is accurately recorded, agencies may not know the administrative costs of implementing the systems. Some accounting systems do not allow for this information to be easily obtained. CALM now has a system for regularly updating the costs of collecting visitor fees and the user pays system administration.

As shown in figures 1 and 2, the revenue objectives of different user-pays charges vary. In the case of entry fees and camping fees, the revenue objectives are usually considered to be recovery of the costs of administering the fee collection and permit system, and partial recovery of service costs. In many cases, charging to recover all service delivery costs for camping or picnicking on protected areas would increase fees beyond the level of the community's willingness to pay. The provision of these services at less than true cost price is generally considered to be part of the agency's community service/ public goods obligations (see Section 3.3). Parks Victoria does not agree with this approach, considering that the provision of discretionary services should not be subsidised by the tax-payer. This raises the question of what is, or is not, a discretionary service.

In South Australia, commercial activities are undertaken in accord with the general management principles applying to the management of the parks system. That is a system with maximum delegation to field managers with central oversight confined to coordination, advice, policy setting and audit. Field managers prepare plans which must be commercially viable having regard to responsibilities for conservation management, promotion and education.

Parks Victoria's position on economic efficiency is that without compromising protection or preservation of natural or cultural features, returns by the application of visitor use fees and charges in appropriate situations will be maximised. Visitor use fees and charges need to be considered within the general context of all revenue sources (eg tenancies, permits, sale of images, interpretation and education activities, royalties). Visitor use fees and charges are an important component of a wider revenue generation strategy.

In the few cases where agencies were able to provide figures, a quite high degree of cost effectiveness has been achieved. Entry fees exceed costs of collection by a ratio of more than 10:1 at Kakadu, and at Uluru by more than 20:1 (Parks Australia estimations). These parks have high visitation and operate entry stations on roads into the parks, resulting in very high compliance rates. Tasmania's entry fees are estimated to have a revenue to cost of collection ratio of 3.5:1.

Implementation of accrual accounting within Parks Australia will have a significant impact on the ability of parks to determine the cost effectiveness of user pays operations, particularly as they concern camping fees.



Best practice outcome: Leaders have achieved...	Best avoided: Leaders don't...
Clear definition of revenue-raising objectives for different types of charges.	
Accounting procedures to enable estimation of cost effectiveness/ profitability of user-pays enterprises.	Hide and ignore administrative costs and evaluate an enterprise only on revenue raised.
Progress towards desired objectives of cost effectiveness, according to the types of service offered.	

### **4.3 Comparison of processes**

#### **4.3.1 Revenue raising**

##### **Setting and adjusting fees**

As discussed above, it is desirable to clearly establish revenue-raising objectives for different types of services and facilities. The agency can then work towards establishing fee levels and structures which are politically acceptable, palatable to the public and at comparable levels to alternative providers.

Park entry and camping fees are generally recommended by agencies and their Ministers and then approved by Governor in Council. Commercial operations/concession charges are determined with more flexibility within some states. For example, CALM (WA) negotiates fees paid by kiosks, accommodation houses, tourists resorts, communication towers and commercial film-makers on an individual basis, though within a given structure. In Victoria, recreation/leisure permits are set at the Minister's discretion. Parks Victoria also negotiates certain fees, under delegation, for example, camping and accommodation, recreation/education operators permits although under a strict policy and procedural structure. In South Australia, commercial operation fees are approved by the General Reserves Trust in consultation with the Minister, after negotiations between the Regional Directors and the operators. According to survey respondents, too much flexibility in setting charges can cause problems of inconsistency and creates more administrative work at a number of levels in the organisations.

In New Zealand, user fees are set by the Department without the need for Ministerial or higher involvement. User fees for huts and camping areas are set by approval of the Director-General. Commercial activity (concession) fees are set at market levels, with delegations to set fees down to local levels.

In contrast, most user fees in Queensland, including commercial operation fees, are set by regulation. There are no exemptions allowed by these regulations, and there is very little legal flexibility in their application. Though some clients regard the system as being too rigid, it simplifies administration and reduces the number of controversial decisions to be made by regional staff. CALM is also proposing to set fees by Regulation. This will mean that notice of any adjustments in fees must be given through a Regulation tabled in Parliament by the Minister for the Environment (which can be disallowed by Parliament).

Market research allows agencies to evaluate their charges against charges for similar services and facilities. The last time NSW NPWS implemented a revised fee structure, market research was undertaken to compare park entry and camping fees with other attractions (museums, cinemas and theme parks) and direct competitors. Surveys were also undertaken in the general community and with park visitors on their willingness to pay an increased fee. The outcomes of the surveys confirmed a willingness to pay a fee increase of about 20% for the existing range of facilities and services. This formed a key component of the Service's decision to raise fees by about that amount.

Most agencies regularly adjust their fees in line with the consumer price index. Some states feel an annual review is important to establish this expectation in the minds of the public. Where this is not practised, external factors such as elections, economic difficulties or lobby group pressures may delay consideration of fee increases. The Northern Territory reviews its fees every three years.

The need for increments in workable amounts (eg 50c or dollars) was also stressed. For small amounts (eg daily per person camping fees) an annual adjustment may result in changes of only a few cents. A workable compromise appears to be an annual review followed by a public announcement of the fee increase, or the fact that an increase will be held over until next year.

Various techniques are used to downplay the effect of fee increases. In Tasmania, camping fees and entry fees are adjusted in alternate years. In Kakadu, increases are usually made at the same time as a new facility is opened.

In some states, fee increases require cabinet approval or new regulations. While this system assures accountability, it also entails considerable administration and may result in less regular, and therefore larger and less palatable, fee adjustments. Systems where increases up to the level of the CPI can be approved by the Chief Executive or Minister, or where they are regarded as a straightforward administrative matter, appear to be better practice. For example, the *Territory Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act* by-laws allow the Territory Parks and Wildlife Commission to set and review fees at any time.

Charges which affect tour operators must be incorporated into the amount they charge their clients. As publicity regarding these tours is printed and distributed well before-hand, the travel industry strongly advocates advance notice of twelve to eighteen months for any planned fee increase. CALM has given a formal undertaking to industry that tour operators will receive at least twelve months notice of fee increases.

In the case of jointly managed parks, there can be pressure for revenue to be managed to capture the best return for traditional owners, as payments under the lease agreement are often a percentage of revenue. This has implications for promotion of the user pays concept.

### **Fee levels and structures**

Fee structures vary from state to state. These are shown in Appendix 2.

Opinions vary widely as to desirable fee structures. A number of agencies stressed the value of keeping fee structures as simple as possible, while other stress the importance of relating fees to the level of service and facility provided. All agree there are advantages in having some concessions and in producing different types of passes or permits.

#### Entry and camping:

As shown in table 3 below, most agencies offer some concessions for low income earners, children and families, either directly or through a fee structure which charges per vehicle or camping site rather than per person. For entry and camping fees, several agencies reported considerable public dissatisfaction when pensioner or family discounts are not offered.

Concession rates involve a number of issues. Where family rates are offered, the definition of 'family' needs to be clear and equitable, providing a discount but not undercutting the cost effectiveness of an operation. Definitions of 'family' and of 'child' vary widely from state to state, and family discounts may be open to abuse.

The Commonwealth benefits/ health care card is widely used as a way of identifying people eligible for concession rates. Staff need to be kept up to date with any changes in the way these cards are issued and need to be aware of which are still valid. New South Wales points out that the increasing average age of the Australian population will result in potential decline in revenue. This should be recognised and compensated for by Treasury.

All agencies charging entry fees offer multi-visit passes. The marketing of these passes appears to be an efficient method of raising revenue and encouraging compliance.

Some agencies have variable rates for entry and camping at different sites, depending on the level of service or facilities offered. This appears to be well accepted by the public, and may assist in their perception of paying for a product rather than for the right to be on the land (an important philosophical difference). There is a clear relationship between standard of service and the fee level. Differential charges also enable a more accurate reflection of the local or regional market.

However, other agencies have opted for a flat rate regardless of the level of service or the provision of facilities. This has the advantage of being easier to administer and publicise and avoids public arguments about which category certain parks should fall into. 'Discount' fees which are unprofitable to collect are also eliminated.

**Table 3: Fee structure for entry and camping**

	Entry fees			Camping fees		
	Concessions	Family pass	Multi-visit pass	Concessions	Site/person	variable rate
QPWS	n/a			free <5; family	per person	no
NSW NPWS	adult/child	per vehicle	yes	no	per site	no
WA CALM	yes	per vehicle	yes	yes	per site/ combination	yes
PARKS VICTORIA	yes	yes	yes	yes	per site/ combination	yes
TAS PWS	no	per vehicle	yes	yes	per person	yes
SA DEH	yes	yes	yes	yes	per site/ combination	yes
NZ DOC				yes	Per person or per site	yes
NT PWC	yes	yes	yes	free child, family	per person	yes
PA	Some	no	yes	Some	per person (Kakadu) per site (Booderee)	yes
ACT P&C	yes	Per vehicle	yes	Yes - community groups	per site/ combination	yes

Camping fees are charged either per person or per site, or per site up to a certain number of occupants and per person beyond this number. Most agencies have variable charges depending on the site character and facilities offered. Queensland has opted for a simple across-the-board charge for camping, arguing that less developed campsites - including bush camps - also involve servicing costs.

Commercial operations:

Fee levels and structures for commercial operations such as filming and tours vary widely (see Appendix 2 parts 3 and 4), and it is reported that some film-makers are choosing their locations based on the level of fee and the efficiency of the permit issuing system.

Some states have fixed fees for tour operators, while others charge on a sliding scale, depending on numbers involved and the need for special facilities or services such as ranger supervision. Both systems have advantages and problems. Sliding scales may be more equitable. It is considered that larger operators make greater profits, have a higher capacity to pay, and also cause more damage than small operators, although this is not always the case. The experience at Kakadu is that larger operators do not cause as much damage as smaller operators (for example they generally stay on hardened surfaces and do not get stranded in remote areas). However systems where tour operators must keep a log book and pay a per-client fee, are reliant on the honesty of operators. Compliance checks are necessary.

Filming charges may vary according to the scale of the enterprise, the nature of the film, or both. Most states have some discount or waivers for companies producing films perceived as educational or current affairs. This encourages productions with messages sympathetic to the agency, while obtaining profits from commercial enterprises such as the filming of advertisements. However, the definition of educational films can be problematical, especially with 'infotainment' programs and travel shows. Some programs may represent excellent publicity and convey conservation messages, but others result in negative impacts on protected areas and do not contribute to public education or conservation management. Particular difficulties can arise with productions which actively promote tourism in areas where visitor numbers are already a problem, or where inappropriate practices are publicised.

As with commercial tours, larger filming enterprises are more likely to be operating on a big budget, and also cause more environmental impact, and it seems reasonable that they should pay more than a one or two-person crew which can move around with little damage. Queensland also differentiates between filming with and without structures, and charges restoration costs where environmental damage is caused.

A number of agencies add a further charge if Ranger supervision or assistance is required. Tasmanian PWS also requires that staff used on-camera are paid at Actors' Equity rates for their time.

Process	Best practice. Leaders...	To be avoided. Leaders don't
Revenue objectives	First decide what revenue objectives apply to a particular type of service/charge (with community service obligations/ conservation benefits considered), then investigate whether this objective is achievable	Charge as much as possible without a clear framework for evaluation.
Market research	Conduct market research to ensure fees are set at an acceptable level, considering the level of service provided, comparability with alternative providers and public willingness to pay. Comply with national competition policy.	Set fees which are too low (causing unfair competition with private providers) or too high (making services unavailable to certain community groups or resulting in declining use and revenue).
Fee level	Recommend fees based on stated revenue objectives and research. If not practical to meet revenue objectives, seek alternative strategies for revenue raising or consider removing service.	Set fees without logical basis or with inadequate research. Establish fees which are initially too low to achieve desired revenue objectives, as it may be difficult to increase beyond CPI once initial fee levels are established.
Approval process	Have authority to increase fees through simple mechanisms at regular intervals up to the CPI.	Have fees set by regulation which cannot be altered even to CPI increases without special Cabinet approval.
Whole figures	Set and increase fees in whole figures.	Set and increase fees in small uneven amounts making cash handling difficult.

Process	Best practice. Leaders...	To be avoided. Leaders don't
Consultation	Set fees for commercial operations in consultation with operators, with adequate notice (12 to 18 months)	Introduce or alter commercial operator fees at short notice.
Fee structure	Develop a relatively simple fee structure, with concessions as appropriate for family groups and/or pensioners. Offer multiple-visit passes. Charge commercial operators according to the scale of their enterprise, the level of environmental impact caused by their operation, and the extent to which they contribute positively to the agency's goals.	Develop overly complex fee structure with too many concessions and exclusions; or flat structure with no consideration of disadvantaged groups.
Affordability/equity	Maintain fees at affordable levels, and consider the impact of fees on user groups.	Allow fees which are prohibitive to sections of the community.

CALM - National Competition Policy (NCP) reforms including legislative amendments which made the Commonwealth *Trade Practices Act 1974* (TPA) application from 21 July 1996 to State Government agencies have had an impact on the user-pays system in Western Australia. In accordance with a WA Treasury instruction, CALM's fees and charges are required to be set at a level that reflects full cost recovery unless the Minister for the Environment has approved less than full cost recovery. This is consistent with government agencies meeting the requirements of NCP. Application of this principle means that government agencies delivering a service or product should not gain from any artificial competitive advantage arising from their government ownership, except where it is in the public benefit to do so.

Examples of how this has affected CALM are:

- in some cases (such as caravan parks and camping grounds on the CALM-managed estate), the tourism industry has criticised CALM for 'undercutting' them in prices. The last review of CALM visitor fees in 1997/98 took this (and other issues) into account, and camping fees were subsequently increased.
- the process of setting fees has to take into account the full cost of providing the service. Any public benefit in providing less than full cost recovery needs to be clearly identified and quantified.

(See Section 3.3)

### **Coordination with other agencies**

As a range of government agencies adopt user-pays charges to achieve their goals, certain sections of the public may become subject to permit and fee requirements from a number of different federal, state, and local government agencies. Tour operators, especially those covering several tenure types such as national parks, state forests and marine protected areas, find this very difficult, especially if they travel through several states.

A 'whole-of-government' approach (at least within each state) with one point for the processing of permits, and one reasonable charge to cover several tenure types, seems to represent 'best practice' from the client viewpoint and for the sake of efficiency. For example, in Tasmania, commercial film applicants can have all necessary government approvals coordinated from the PWS office in Hobart. In some other states the administration of such systems and the division of revenue is considered too difficult for the agencies involved, or there are differences in philosophy and objectives between the different agencies. In Queensland, where fees are set by regulation, there is no discretion to waive fees (for example where tour operators visit both national parks and state forests), but efforts are made to provide a coordinated service between Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service and the Department of Natural Resources. The problem of duplication of charges and permits is much easier to tackle for agencies such as Western Australia CALM which control a wide variety of public lands.

There have been suggestions that an Australia-wide 'park pass' for international travellers would be well received. The ANZECC Working Group on National Parks and Protected Areas Management has examined the concept in detail and found that it would be of limited benefit, a view subsequently endorsed by ANZECC SCC. For overseas commercial operator clients, some consistency and cooperation among the states and the Commonwealth would be advantageous

Process	Best practice. Leaders...	To be avoided. Leaders don't....
Consistency	Coordinate with other relevant agencies to develop a consistent approach to user-pays.	Develop systems without reference to other relevant agencies.
Total charges	Review the total user-pays liability for clients when setting their charges.	Disregard other government charges and permit obligations faced by clients.
Administrative systems	Strive to develop 'one-stop-shopping' within the state for government charges and permits, at least for similar and related activities.	Consider their agency as the only one requiring permits and charges.

### **Efficiency of collection and administration**

A wide range of collection techniques are used by various agencies. Some of these are shown in Table 4. Different techniques will be most effective and efficient under different conditions.

For entry fees, a major point of difference between agencies is whether fees are charged per person or per vehicle. Some states use a combination of the two techniques, with most people being charged on a vehicle basis but also a per-person charge for walkers to ensure bushwalkers also pay.

An obvious advantage of a vehicular charge, where infrastructure is suitable and entry points are limited, is that permits can be fixed to windscreens and easily checked. It is also regarded by some agencies as having lower collection costs. However, a vehicular charge is difficult to apply where there are multiple entry points or through roads, where there are residential or tourist developments close by, or where convenient parking areas are located outside the protected area.

The use of contractors or concessionaires to collect camping fees is being increased in New South Wales and the Northern Territory. A higher compliance rate is being recorded in the Northern Territory (see next subsection). In New South Wales, contractors are collecting fees in a number of sites where it would not be economical or feasible for park officers to collect fees on a regular basis, and this practice is returning some additional useful funds to local areas to improve visitor services. The suitability of collectors is a key component in the success of these programs, and a good customer focus is essential. It is important that such contractors are aware of and supportive of agency goals and practices, and are willing to talk to park visitors as well as take money from them.

**Table 4: Fee collection methods**

<b>Fee collection method</b>	<b>Advantages</b>	<b>Disadvantages/constraints</b>
1. Money/credit card information sent through post; permits processed at office and posted back to clients: commonly used for camping permits, commercial operations permits, agricultural permits. In some cases fees paid as a result of an invoice raised.	Response to application is at agency convenience; eg staff can process in concentrated bursts. Appropriate information can be sent to clients (eg campers) before their visit. Makes it easy to operate a booking system for accommodation and camping areas.	Delay for clients between applying and sending money and receiving permit or approval.
2. Phone applications by credit card to office; permits posted back to clients.	Common and convenient method of purchase, well accepted by public. Reduces time taken in 1. Appropriate information can be sent to clients (eg campers) before their visit. Makes it easy to operate booking systems.	Security for credit card access must be ensured. Telephones need to be staffed reliably during office hours.
3. Permits and tickets sold over the counter at regional, district, park or central office or information centres: also used for camping permits, entry tickets, tickets for interpretive activities and tours	Face to face staff contact, enabling clients to be fully briefed where necessary. Potentially good compliance rates. No postage costs.	Need to have facilities staffed to provide comprehensive client service. Staff training and support necessary. Security problems of cash transactions
4. Tickets sold by roving rangers (with or without portable automatic ticket-issuing machines):	Staff contact Simpler for clients Increases compliance	Auditing problems Security Time-consuming
5. Tickets sold at special entry stations	Staff contact Simple for clients	Costs of construction and staffing Security
6. Self-registration stations: widely used in remote parks for camping fees and are sometimes also used for park entry fees. Sometimes used in combination with phone booking systems.	Very cheap to operate. Enable collection of fees at sites where it would not be economical for Rangers to collect fees every day. Costs are low: estimated at 5-10% of revenue raised (SA)	May be a low level of compliance- requires regular ranger checks. Less opportunities for personal contact and for monitoring and control of visitors. Vandalism potential.
7. Tickets issued by fixed-location automatic machines	Ability to keep computerised records, low labour costs, more secure than self-registration stands	As for self-registration stations, plus, costs of installation, need for power supply. Vandalism potential
8. Combinations: Combination of methods may be used for one permit or charge: eg people book and pay deposit for camping or accommodation via post and pay the balance on arrival at a park.	Secures deposits and ensures serious bookings	Means double-handling/ increased costs of administration
9. Concessions: Many agencies sell at least some entry tickets through concession outlets eg shops, petrol stations, visitor information centres. Camping fees may be collected by concessionaire campground managers	Availability for public; externalises labour costs and safety risks in money handling; can create involvement/ boost employment in local community. Public may be more prepared to pay private business than govt.	Share of revenue going to businesses; can mean people selling tickets/permits may have no interest in or knowledge of parks

Process	Best practice. Leaders...	To be avoided. Leaders don't....
Collection methods	Search for, trial and implement a variety of efficient systems to collect revenue.	Accept low cost effectiveness or abandon revenue-raising attempts without fully investigating options
Staff training and employment	Have a trained, motivated staff for collection and administration of funds	Expect staff to take on this duty with enthusiasm and effectiveness without training and assistance.
Contractors	Use contractors to collect fees where cost effectiveness is increased or where it is impractical for Rangers to collect fees. Ensure contractors are fully supportive of the agency and are willing to interact with clients.	Use contractors who are unsupportive or insensitive to park visitors.

### **Compliance monitoring and enforcement**

Factors affecting compliance levels include public and staff acceptance of the fee (discussed below), public opinion of the services and facilities, effectiveness of infrastructure for fee collection, fee level and structure, and the extent of monitoring and enforcement.

Careful design of collection systems may reduce the need for compliance checking and ensure high levels of public cooperation. Some collection systems (eg entry stations on the only entrance roads, fully staffed campgrounds) ensure 100% compliance, except where the facility is open but unstaffed after hours. Full compliance is also expected for leases, guided tours, camping in supervised camping areas, and rent of accommodation or equipment.

In other situations, compliance relies on park users' honesty and motivation. Here the extent of staff presence in the field and the amount of compliance checking will substantially affect the revenue received. It is possible for agencies to enter a negative cycle of lower budgets leading to lower staff numbers and lower revenue. Another negative outcome of such a spiral is resentment from paying clients - sometimes a serious problem with commercial operations.

'Honesty boxes' or self-registration stations for campers are cheap to operate but may also have a low compliance rate if campers are not checked regularly. The Northern Territory PWC estimates compliance at 50%, whereas their private concession campground managers are obtaining close to 100% compliance.

Monitoring and enforcing a reasonable degree of compliance is desirable for the following reasons:

- Agencies or staff can be open to corruption allegations and legal investigation if regulated charges are not enforced;
- Where people obviously do not pay required charges, other members of the public follow suit and/or build up resentment and a lack of respect for the agency . On the other hand if visitors see others paying, they are more likely to feel obliged to pay;
- High compliance rate will boost cost effectiveness; and
- High compliance rate helps the agency to better monitor user activities and react accordingly.

CALM is expanding its marketing program for extended park entry passes (ie. the annual and four week passes, etc). As more parks are added to the entry fee system (currently 25 out of 63 national parks have the entry fee applied, and these include many of the most popular parks), these passes become better value and are a cost-effective way of increasing compliance.



It is not possible to define a generally desirable or economically efficient level of compliance applicable in every situation. In remote areas, it may be possible for agency staff to check compliance only when it is convenient to combine this with other duties. Compliance checking by contractors or by volunteers such as 'campground hosts' may be practical options in some situations. Agencies need to investigate the costs and benefits of extra compliance enforcement and then decide their approach.

Process	Best practice. Leaders...	To be avoided. Leaders don't...
Compliance with entry and camping fees	Achieve very high compliance levels (90-100%) through workable infrastructure, regular compliance checks and good public support.	Allow low staff motivation or understaffing resulting in low compliance. Enter a negative cycle of low staffing and low revenue.
Enforcement and monitoring	Make informed decisions about monitoring and enforcement regimes, based on information about rates of compliance and likely effectiveness and efficiency of such regimes.	Make untested assumptions about the relationships between compliance and enforcement.
Commercial tour operator fees	Develop systems which make compliance easy.	Develop systems where it is easy for commercial operators to under-report client numbers and pay less than they should.

#### 4.3.2 Promoting public awareness and acceptance of user-pays operations

Ensuring the public have access to up-to-date information about user-pays charges is an obvious publicity need. Fees are publicised through a wide range of media, and most agencies produce a brochure outlining all charges. In some cases, such as for commercial tour operators, direct mailouts are also used to advise of future fee increases.

Most agencies with established fee systems recorded a high public acceptance of entry fees. The Tasmanian PWS commented, 'In Tasmania, a recent survey showed 87% public awareness of entry fees. There was 86% acceptance that entry fees are a good thing if income is returned directly to parks; but only 36% acceptance that fees are a good thing if income is retained by consolidated revenue. As can be seen from the above survey results, if the public perceive they are getting value for money and are not being used as an alternative tax base, then acceptance is strong. Also acceptance that the environment should be preserved is a supporting factor ie it is a good cause.'

Key factors identified in ensuring public acceptance are:

- Funds are retained by the agency - preferably in the local district - and result in improvements to facilities and park management;
- Public perceive they are getting value for money;
- People feel they are paying for a service rather than for entry to a park.

The major reasons for people objecting to the fees were:

- Philosophical objections, especially to paying for entry onto public land;
- Resentment when charges are seen as another government tax;
- Duplication and excessive totals (stated by tour operators);
- Lack of concessions for families and pensioners (identified by two agencies)

Many of these points can be taken into consideration by the agencies to develop effective publicity packages. For example, the presentation of park entry fees as service fees rather than as a charge for people to enter public land was seen as being an important point. Many dedicated national park users are happy to support the park financially, but do not like the concept of being forced to pay to go onto 'their park'.

Publicising positive aspects of the fees is also a good strategy. In Tasmania, residents respond positively to the fact that overseas and interstate visitors (70% of park users) are now contributing to the protected area estate upkeep. In Victoria, the broader community also appreciates the rationale that 'if they don't use it they don't pay for it'.

Signage identifying new facilities or services funded by user-pays is an effective means of publicising how the revenue is used. Where money has been spent on conservation management, this can also be publicised through displays, brochures, signage and local media releases. Target projects for user fees can also be advertised - for example, 'the money raised this month will be used to complete the boardwalk to...'.

Promotion of public awareness and acceptance should be incorporated as a major part of the planning and pre-implementation phases when new charges are introduced.

Process	Best practice. Leaders...	To be avoided. Leaders don't....
Consultation and publicity for new and increased charges	Plan and implement public relations campaigns to advise users of charges and to obtain public reaction before charges are introduced or increased.	
Use of money	Spend at least a portion of revenue raised in the local area.	'Siphon off the user fees into a central treasury'; 'Use charges as another tax'....
	Where appropriate, direct a proportion of the revenue to Aboriginal traditional owners.	
Publicity for projects funded through user-pays	Publicise projects, facilities or extra staff funded through user-pays revenue.	
	Advise public of fees and fee increases as appropriate through a range of media including brochures, paid and unpaid advertising, media releases.	Leave it to the clients to find out about fees on-site.
Presentation	Present charges as a fee for services provided. Provide 'extras' such as a guided tour or souvenir quality brochure.	Present charges as a fee for entry onto public land.
Commercial operator advice	Advise commercial operators at least 12 months in advance of fee increases.	Give short notice of fee increases.
Staff training and morale	Ensure field staff are enthusiastic and knowledgeable about the system.	Provide staff with minimum information and training on user-pays systems.

### 4.3.3 Staff training and support in service delivery and client relationships

Protected area staff, especially in regional and district offices and on protected areas, play a critical role in facilitating the success of any user-pays system. In some cases, compliance checking and enforcement is an unpleasant and potentially dangerous task. For example, approaching a group of campers who may not have purchased a permit can require considerable courage and communication skills, especially where alcohol has been consumed. Training and incentives are required for park rangers to put themselves at risk in this manner.

Improved funding, and a direct link between revenue collection and such funding, have been identified as motivating staff to implement user-pays systems to the best of their ability.

Staff training for user-pays systems will need to include:

- administrative procedures and the guidelines for approved accounting and money handling;
- security and safety guidelines, and emergency response;
- communication skills including dealing with difficult clients;
- criteria and methods for assessing permit applications (where relevant);
- computer skills and data-base management (where relevant).

Process	Best practice. Leaders...	To be avoided. Leaders don't....
Staff recruitment and training	Select and train staff who are enthusiastic and competent in dealing with the public. Ensure staff numbers are sufficient to perform the required tasks.	Expect staff to implement and monitor new user-pays systems in addition to existing duties. Neglect to provide adequate training.
Staff safety	Consider staff safety as a high priority when developing money-handling procedures.	Ignore the issue of staff safety.
Staff motivation	Through returning funds to the local area, gain the support of staff in raising more funds.	Take money from the collection point and give no tangible return.
Over zealous staff	Train staff in interpersonal skills.	Encourage staff to become so enthusiastic about raising money that they lose sight of their core business or become overzealous in enforcing compliance.

#### 4.3.4 Distribution of funds

Retention of funds by the managing agency and the spending of revenue on projects in the local area are mentioned by all agencies as being critical success factors in user-pays systems, leading to staff support and public acceptance. This does not necessarily imply that all funds must be spent on the park where they are raised. As discussed earlier, projects funded by user-pays should be compatible with management settings. Once all necessary facilities have been provided on a high-revenue park, money may be better directed to other projects in the district or region.

In practice, funding to the agency from central Treasury funds is often reduced as user-pays revenue increases. Thus user-pays funding may increasingly cover a declining resource base, rather than enabling improved achievement of agency goals.

Process	Best practice. Leaders....	To be avoided. Leaders don't...
Disbursement of revenue	Retain 100% of revenue raised within the agency.	Return user-pays revenue to central Treasury (generally a political decision beyond their control).
Retention in local area	Retain at least a proportion of funds within the local area where money is raised.	Distribute funds without any reference to their point of origin.
Allocation of funds	Allocate funds to appropriate projects (see section 3.2).	Spent money on inappropriate projects just to keep it in the park of origin.

### 4.3.5 Linking commercial operations to conservation objectives

A well-planned and executed user-pays system can be a valuable conservation management tool, as well as providing revenue. Numbers and activities of users, such as campers, lessees and commercial operators, can be regulated through permits and charges. Information gathered through user-pays records can be used in management planning.

Controls over commercial operators are particularly important. Non-refundable charges for permit applications (often in the order of \$50 - \$100 for commercial operators) ensure that proposals are serious and well-researched before they are submitted for evaluation. Substantial charges for some commercial operations also encourage the operators to investigate alternative sites for their activities. For example, it may be cheaper and more appropriate to film a commercial on private land, especially if its message conflicts with the agency goals. While this reduces the revenue, it also helps protect park resources from activities which are quite external to the agency mandate.

Establishment and enforcement of conditions in leases and deeds of agreement are critical in managing commercial operations. Safety procedures, minimal impact behaviour, relationships to other park users, public liability insurance, and guarantees of restoration of any damage caused are among the aspects which are usually covered.

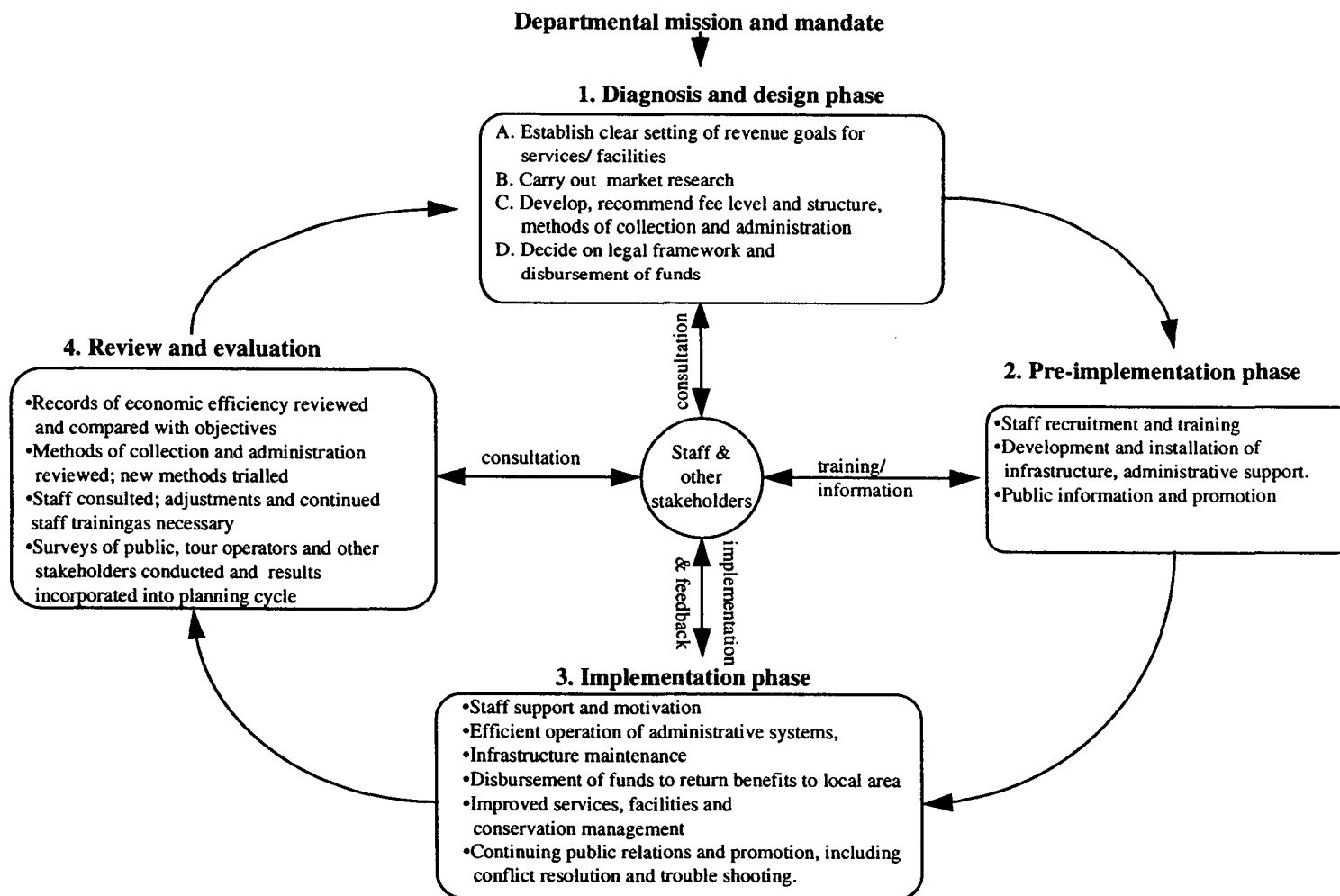
Process	Best Practice. Leaders...	To be avoided. Leaders don't...
Regulation of commercial operators	Use the permit system to establish good relationships and controls over commercial operators.	Allow revenue maximisation to dictate policy in regard to commercial operations.
	Ensure performance and standards clauses in leases and deeds of agreement are adequate and enforceable.	Allow substandard commercial operations, especially leases, within protected areas.
Data collection	Use the user-pays system to collect data, and apply this to management planning.	Waste opportunities to collect and collate valuable data.
Establishment of priorities	Ensure that core business is not over-ridden by commercial interests	Allow revenue-raising to become the primary concern of park management.

## 5. Conclusions

Revenue-raising on protected areas has been accepted throughout Australian nature conservation agencies as a necessary adjunct to central funding. The experience of these agencies has shown that user-pays schemes have many benefits if the systems can achieve cost effectiveness. When revenue is retained by the agency it can contribute to improved conservation management and better user facilities and services.

A proposed cycle for the planning and implementation of user-pays system is shown in figure 4.

**Figure 4 Planning and implementation cycle for user-pays systems**



## 6. Appendix 1: Overview of charges on protected areas

Legend      ✓      Charge for service      F      service provided free  
                   x      service not provided      blank      no information

### Part 1: Entry fees

	QLD NPWS	NSW NPWS	WA CALM	PARKS VIC	TAS PWS	SA DEH	NT PWC	NZ DOC	PA	ACT P&C
Park entry	F	✓ selected protected areas	✓ selected protected areas	✓ selected protected areas	✓ selected protected areas	✓ selected protected areas	✓ wildlife parks only	N/A	✓ selected protected areas	✓ selected protected areas
Entry into historic sites	✓	F	F	✓	✓	✓	✓ (one only)	N/A	X	F

### Part 2 : Charges for services provided by government agencies

	QLD NPWS	NSW NPWS	WA CALM	PARKS VIC	TAS PWS	SA DEH	NT PWC	NZ DOC	PA	ACT P&C
Wilderness/ bush camping	✓	✓	F/X	✓	✓	✓	✓	F	F	✓
Constructed campsites	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Use of amenities/ picnic facilities	F	✓	F	F	✓	✓	F	F	F	✓
Park-owned accommodation	X	✓	✓ very limited	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	X	✓ limited
Environmental education centre	X	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓ (some)	✓	X	X
Use of research facilities	X	X	F	X	X		✓ (some)	✓	F	X
Recreational facilities	F	✓	F	F	F	✓	F	✓	F	F
Recreational equipment hire	X	✓	✓	X	X	✓	X	n/a	X	F
Ranger-led tours and interpretive activities	✓	✓	✓ some walks, boats, caves	✓	✓	✓	✓ (some)	✓	F	✓
Entry to info centre/ display	F	F	F	F	F*	✓	F	F	F	F
Park information (general, sold to public)	F	✓	✓ publications	✓	✓	✓	✓ (some)	✓	✓ (some)	✓
Specific detailed park information	✓	F	F	F	F		✓	✓	✓	✓
Legislative information	X	✓	F	X	X		✓	✓	X	F
Photo with koala	X	X	✓	X	X	✓	X	n/a	X	X
Hire of ovals	X	X	✓	✓	X	✓	X	✓	X	X

### Part 3: Charges to private commercial operations and concessions on protected areas

	QLD NPWS	NSW NPWS	WA CALM	PARKS VIC	TAS PWS	SA DEH	NT PWC	NZ DOC	PA	ACT P&C
Commercial tours	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	F
Recreational activities or facilities	X	✓	✓	✓	F (covered in other fees)	✓	✓	✓	X	F
Filming and photography	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓ major companies only
Retail sales outlets	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X
Accommodation	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	X
Food licences	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Horse riding	X	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	X	F
Skiing	X	✓	X	✓	✓	X	X	✓	X	X
Leases	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X
Tourist resort	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X
Other							✓***	✓		✓ ***

\*\* Hunting, outdoor adventure activities \*\*\*Access permits to neighbours in urban areas

### Part 4: Charges for other types of licenses, permits and authorities

	QLD NPWS	NSW NPWS	WA CALM	PARKS VIC	TAS PWS	SA DEH	NT PWC	NZ DOC	PA	ACT P&C
Stock-grazing	✓		X	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	X	✓
Bee-keeping	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	X	X
Permit to traverse	X		X	X			X	?	X	X
Communication facilities	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	F	X
Navigation aids	✓	X	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	F	X
Scientific permits	F	✓	✓	F	F	✓	✓	✓	F	F
Educational use permits	F	F	F	F	F	✓	X	F	F	X
Group activities permits	✓	F	✓	✓ weddings	F**		✓some	n/a	X	F
Special activities	F	F	✓		✓some		✓some	✓	F	✓
Other		✓*	✓gravel and dams		✓game licences		✓hunting permits			

\* Water, gas, electricity. Community services charged in Kosciuszko (sewerage etc)

\*\* Covered by park entry fee

## 7. Appendix 2: Summary of agency charges (updated July 1999 unless otherwise noted)

The fee structures for the States and the federally-run Territory parks can be summarised as follows:

### Part 1 Entry fees

#### Queensland

No entry fees at July 1999.

#### New South Wales

Annual Passes	Unit Price \$
"Kosciuszko" Annual Pass	\$60
"Basic" Annual Pass	\$50
"Motorcycle" Annual Pass	\$40

*NB: Seniors Card holders concession - 20% discount off initial Annual Pass purchase.*

Day Passes	Unit Price \$
Fitzroy Fall (Morton National Park)	\$2
Boatharbour NR, Booti Booti National Park, Border Ranges National Park, Bungonia SRA, Cattai National Park, Crowdy Bay National Park, Garrigal National Park, Georges River National Park, Glenbrook (Blue Mountain National Park), Hat Head National Park, Kurnell (Botany Bay National Park), Lane Cove National Park, Munmorah SRA, North Head (Sydney Harbour National Park), Victoria Park NR, Warumbungle National Park.	\$5 - private motor vehicle \$3 - private motorcycle
Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park, Minnamurra Rainforest (Buderoo National Park), Royal National Park .	\$9 - private motor vehicle \$3 - private motorcycle
Kosciuszko National Park	\$14 - private motor vehicle \$6 - private motorcycle

#### Western Australia

	Per vehicle	Vehicle (concession)	Motor cycle	Bus passenger/ commercial tours
Visit any park - day of issue	\$8.00	\$3.00	\$3.00	\$3.00 per person (* see notes 1, 2 & 3)
4 weeks all parks	\$20.00			
Annual local park (entry to one park or a selected group of local parks)	\$15.00			
Annual all parks	\$45.00			
Annual Goldstar all parks plus subscription to Dept. magazine	\$64.00			

\* Note 1 - Any number of national parks can be visited on the same day for the \$3 fee except Yanchep and Nambung - if visiting these 2 national parks on the same day, the \$3 fee must be paid at both parks.

\* Note 2 - Children under 6 are fee.

\* Note 3 - Visitor fee for passengers on a commercial tour to Leeuwin Naturaliste National Park are not applicable until 1 November 1999.

Concession fee for Senior Card or aged pension card holders on organised private (not commercial tour) outing in buses to the above national parks. \$1

Waiver - visitor fees for the above national parks can be waived for organised bus groups or disabled, infirm or formal education groups (who are not part of a commercial tour) provided that written approval has been received from Park Policy and Tourism Branch prior to visit.



	Adult	Child U/16	Family	Long term pass: Adult	Long term pass: Child U/16	Long term pass: Family
Monkey Mia Reserve	\$5 per day	\$2 per day	\$10 per day	\$8	\$4	\$20
Valley of the Giants Tree Top Walk - no concessions	\$5	\$2	\$12			
Geikie Gorge National Park Boat Trip	\$17.50	\$2.				

	Adult	Child U/16	Family	Child U/10	Annual Pass (family)	Day Pass
Nyoongar Heritage Tour of Fremantle	\$10			\$6		
Leeuwin Naturaliste National Park - Calgardup & Giants Cave	\$8	\$4	\$20			
Horse Riding - John Forrest and Yalgorup National Parks					\$35 *	\$5

\*Discounted fee for horse riding associations - \$25 per family/annual pass)

Yanchep National Park	Adult	Child 5-15	Child U/5
Crystal Cave	\$2	\$0.50	Free

	Adult	Child/Pensioner	Family	Passenger
Balga Mia Village Tour	\$8	\$3	\$15	\$3

## Victoria

### Vehicle Entry Charges

TYPE OF VEHICLE	CURRENT VEHICLE ENTRY CHARGE (PER DAY UNLESS SPECIFIED)	PROPOSED ENTRY FEE
All parks annual (car)	\$56.00	
<b>1. DANDENONG RANGES NATIONAL PARK</b>		
Motorcycle	\$1.50	\$1.50
Car	\$5.00	
Small bus	\$15.00	
Large bus	\$23.00	
<b>2. KINGLAKE NATIONAL PARK</b>		
Motorcycle	\$1.50	\$1.50
Car	\$5.00	
Small bus	\$15.00	
Large bus	\$23.00	
<b>3. FRASER CAMPING/LAKE EILDON NATIONAL PARK</b>		
Motorcycle	\$1.50	Leased
Car	\$6.00	Leased
Small bus	\$26.00	Leased
Large bus	\$40.00	Leased
<b>4. WILSONS PROMOTORY NATIONAL PARK</b>		
Motorcycle	\$2.00	\$2.00
Car	\$8.00	
Car, five day pass	\$24.00	
Small bus	\$26.00	
Large bus	\$48.00	
<b>5. MT BUFFALO NATIONAL PARK (WHEN SKI LIFTS ARE NOT OPERATING)</b>		
Motorcycle	\$2.00	
Car	\$8.00	
Small bus	\$26.00	
Large bus	\$44.00	
<b>6. MT BUFFALO NATIONAL PARK WHEN SKI LIFTS ARE OPERATING</b>		
Motorcycle	\$2.00	
Car	\$11.00	
Small bus	\$42.00	
Large bus	\$63.00	

TYPE OF VEHICLE	CURRENT VEHICLE ENTRY CHARGE (PER DAY UNLESS SPECIFIED)	PROPOSED ENTRY FEE
<b>7. MT BUFFALO NATIONAL PARK</b>		
Off season bus pass (1 Oct - 30 June)		
Small bus	\$83.00	
Large bus	\$143.00	
<b>8. BAW BAW NATIONAL PARK (MT ST GWINEAR AREA)</b>		
Saturday/Sunday		
Car	\$7.00	\$8.00
Small bus	\$26.00	\$26.00
Large bus	\$36.00	\$36.00
<b>9. MORNINGTON PENINSULA NATIONAL PARK - CAPE SCHANCK SECTOR</b>		
Day Parking		
Vehicle under 4 metres	\$3.50	\$3.50
Vehicle over 4 metres	\$8.00	\$8.50
<b>10. ARTHURS SEAT STATE PARK (SEAWINDS)</b>		
Motorcycle	\$1.50	
Car	\$4.50	
Small bus	\$21.00	
Large bus	\$32.00	
<b>11. LYSTERFIELD LAKE PARK</b>		
Motorcycle	\$2.00	
Car (summer)	\$6.50	
Car (non-summer)	\$5.00	
Boat Trailer per day	\$5.00	
Boat Trailer annual pass	\$20.00	
Small bus (school)	\$19.00	
Small bus (other)	\$27.00	
Large bus (school)	\$27.00	
Large bus (other)	\$42.00	

#### Vehicle Entry Charges

TYPE OF VEHICLE	CURRENT VEHICLE ENTRY CHARGE (PER DAY UNLESS SPECIFIED)	PROPOSED ENTRY FEE
<b>12. ALL PARKS WITH DESIGNATED CAMPING AREAS</b>		
Non Camper parking in a designated camping area		
Car	\$5.50	

#### Entry Charges

TYPE OF VEHICLE	CURRENT VEHICLE ENTRY CHARGE (PER DAY UNLESS SPECIFIED)	PROPOSED ENTRY FEE
<b>1. MORNINGTON PENINSULA NATIONAL PARK - POINT NEPEAN SECTOR</b>		
Entry charge per person entering by vehicle (other than bicycle):		
Adult		Nil
Child 5-15 years	\$8.50	Nil
Pensioners	\$4.50	Nil
Holder of Senior Savings cards	\$4.50	Nil
Entry charge for family	\$4.50	Nil
Entry charge per person entering by bicycle:	\$19.00	Nil
Adult	\$6.50	To include walkers
Child 5-15 years	)	
Pensioners	) Concession - \$3.00	
Holder of Senior Savings cards	)	
Entry charge for family	\$15.00	
	Children under 5 Free	
<b>2. LYSTERFIELD LAKE PARK</b>		
Entry charge for pedestrian	\$2.00	\$2.00

## South Australia

### Park entry fees and park passes fees.

DESCRIPTION OF FEE	Date of last increase	RATES					
		Parks included	Car	Motorcycle	Bus	Pensioner	Renewal
<b>DAY VEHICLE ENTRY FEES</b>		Existing day vehicle entry fees					
	Dec 96	Belair National Park, Para Wirra RP, Mount Remarkable National Park, Innes National Park, Lincoln National Park Coffin Bay National Park Bool Lagoon GR, Flinders Ranges National Park, Deep Creek CP	\$5.00	\$3.00	\$2.00 adult \$1.00 child \$1.00 pension	car \$4.00	N/A
	Mar 97						
	New Fee	Gawler Ranges National Park	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Apr 99	Flinders Chase National Park Notes Vehicle entry maximum 5 people, m/cycle max 2  Additional person in vehicle (per person)	\$8.00	\$3.50	\$3.50	N/A	
			\$2.50		School \$3.00		
<b>VEHICLE PARKS PASSES - REGIONAL PASSES</b>							
Metropolitan parks pass	Mar 97	Belair National Park, Para Wirra Recreation Park and Mt Laffy Summit	\$60.00	\$30.00	N/A	Car \$45.00 M/cycle \$23.00	N/A
Fleurieu parks pass	Mar 97	Deep Creek Conservation Park	\$60.00	\$30.00	N/A	Car \$45.00 M/cycle \$23.00	N/A
Yorke parks pass	Mar 97	Innes National Park	\$60.00	\$30.00	N/A	Car \$45.00 M/cycle \$23.00	N/A
Flinders parks pass	Mar 97	Mount Remarkable National Park and Flinders Ranges National Park	\$60.00	\$30.00	N/A	Car \$45.00 M/cycle \$23.00	N/A
Eyre parks pass	Dec 96	Lincoln National Park (includes Memory Cove Wilderness Area ) and Caflin Bay National Park	\$40.00	\$20.00	N/A	Car \$45.00 M/cycle \$23.00	N/A
Desert Parks Pass (DPP)	Dec 96	Innaminka Regional Reserve, Simpson Desert Conservation Park and Regional Reserve, Witjira National Park, Lake Eyre National Park and Strzelecki Regional Reserve	\$60.00	\$60.00	N/A	Car \$60.00 M/cycle \$60.00	All \$40.00
Gawler Ranges Parks Pass	New fee	Gawler Ranges NP	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>OTHER PASSES</b>							
4 week vehicle parks pass	Mar 97	All parks included in Regional Passes, as well as Flinders Chase National Park and Bool Lagoon GR. Excludes DPP. Camping fees are additional.	\$15.00	\$15.00	N/A	Car \$11.00 M/cycle \$11.00	N/A
Statewide parks pass (no DPP)	Mar 97	All parks included in Regional Passes, as well as Flinders Chase National Park and Bool Lagoon GR. Excludes DPP.	\$100.00	\$50.00	N/A	Car \$75.00 M/cycle \$38.00	N/A
Statewide parks pass (incl. DPP)	Mar 97	All Parks included in Regional Passes and DPP, as well as Flinders Chase National Park and Bool Lagoon GR.	\$140.00	\$70.00	N/A	Car \$105.00 M/cycle \$53.00	N/A

### Island Park passes

DESCRIPTION OF FEE	DATE OF LAST INCREASE	RATES		
		ADULT	CHILD	FAMILY
<b>Island Parks Pass</b> Guided tours at Seal Bay, Kelly Hill Caves, Cape Borda and Cape Willoughby Lightstations. Access to Flinders Chase National Park and Deal Bay Boardwalk.	Apr 99	\$24.00	\$17.00	\$65.00
<b>Island Caving Pass (educational institutions only)</b>  Guided tours at Seal Bay, Kelly Hill Caves, Cape Borda and Cape Willoughby Lightstations. Access to Flinders Chase National Park and Deal Bay Boardwalk. One adventure caving tour at Kelly Hill Conservation Park (OCE or K9)	Apr 99	\$25.00	\$25.00	

### Tasmania (all parks)

	Per person (bike, boat, bus or foot)	Per vehicle (includes occupants)	
Daily (24 hours)	\$5.00	\$9.00	
Holiday (up to 2 months)	\$12.00	\$30.00	
Annual		\$18.00 (one park)	\$42.00 (All parks)

### Northern Territory

Entry to all parks other than Wildlife Parks is free.

Entry to Alice Springs Telegraph Station Historic Precinct, fees proposed from 1 April 2000 and subject to gazettal.

Adult	\$6.00
Child (5-16)	\$3.00
Pensioner and group booking	\$4.50

Entry to Gurig National Park (numbers capped): \$10 per person.

### Parks Australia parks, Northern Territory (Kakadu and Uluru)

Kakadu National Park (all visitors 16 and over) for 14 days	\$15.00
Uluru National Park (all visitors 16 and over) for 5 days	\$10.00
Territorian Ticket - annual (unlimited access to both parks for vehicle and its occupants)	\$60.00

### PA - Booderee National Park, Jervis Bay Territory

Car pass (valid 7 days)	\$5.00
Bus passenger (over 16)	\$2.00
Motorcycle	\$2.50
Annual car pass	\$25.00

### ACT P&C

	Annual Pass	Day Pass
Private vehicle (up to 8 seats)	\$10.00	\$8.00
Private vehicle concession	\$ 7.00	\$5.00
Motorcycles, Bicycles, Pedestrian	\$ 5.00	\$3.00
Group entry (coaches)		\$2.00 (per person)
Group entry - student (coaches)		\$1.00 (per person)

### New Zealand DOC (Camping and Hut Charges)

Camping Sites	Standard Camps	\$4 - \$7 p.p.n
	Serviced Camps	\$15 - \$25 p.p.n

HUTS	Category 4	Free
	Category 3	\$5 p.p.n
	Category 2	\$10 p.p.n
	Category 1	\$15 p.p.n
	Great Walk e.g Milford Track	\$15 - \$35 p.p.n

## Part 2 Camping Fees

### Queensland

Per person per night	Family	Educational
\$3.50	\$12.00	\$2.00

### New South Wales

NSW NPWS administers a three tier camping fee structure across the state.

Tier	Camping Fee per site (first night)
1. Basic Fee	\$5 per couple, \$2 per extra person
2. Mid range fee	\$10 per couple, \$2 per extra person
3. Upper Level fee	\$15 per couple, \$2 per extra person

Definition: As a general guide, the following level of facilities are available:

Tier 1 (basic) - pit toilets, defined camping areas, fireplaces

Tier 2 (mid) - flush/pit toilets, defined camping areas, shared BBQs/tables, tap/tankwater

Tier 3 (upper) - flush toilets, hot showers, individual camp sites, fireplaces/BBQs/tables.

Bush camping no facilities provided. May be available in designated camping areas or off the beaten track.

*Note: Children under the age of 5 years are not charged for camping.*

*Note: Some camping sites operate a staggered fee structure depending on the time of year (Peak/Off Peak rates apply).*

### Western Australia

	Sites/night 1-2 people	each additional person	Child Under 16
Without facilities or basic facilities	\$8.00	\$4.00	\$1.00
With facilities, ablutions, showers, includes caravans with electricity	\$11.00	\$4.00	\$1.00
With facilities, ablutions, showers, includes caravans without electricity	\$10.00	\$4.00	\$1.00
Purnululu (Bungle Bungle) and Windjana Gorge NP	\$7.00 per person per night		\$1.00

The adult camping fee may be reduced to the child rate (\$1/night) where adults are participating in group programs to provide opportunities for rehabilitation, self-development, or raising self esteem for unemployed, young offender, people at risk of offending and socio-economically disadvantaged (approval required from Park Policy and Tourism Branch).

Camping in state forests and timber reserves	Sites/night 1-2 people	each additional person	Child Under 16
Without facilities or basic facilities	\$5.00	\$3.00	\$1.00
With facilities, ablutions, showers, includes caravans	\$8.00	\$3.00	\$1.00

## Parks Victoria

### Wilsons Promontory National Park

Peak periods for Wilsons Promontory camping are:

- (i) Melbourne Cup Weekend to the last Sunday in April inclusive.
- (ii) September School Holidays.

(a) Tidal River Camping and Park Entrance Transit Camp	Peak Period Rates Per night	Peak Period Rates 7 nights	Off Peak Rates Per night	Off Peak Rates 7 nights
Up to 3 persons	\$15.50	\$108.80	\$12.50	\$75.00
Each extra adult	\$3.40	\$23.80	\$3.40	\$20.40
Each extra child (5-15 years)	\$1.70	\$11.90	\$1.70	\$10.20
Additional vehicle per site	\$4.80	\$33.60	\$4.80	\$28.80

School Groups: Per person \$2.50

- (b) Outstation Camping Trip Permit: A charge of \$4.40 per person per night provided that:
- (a) An outstation camping trip permit shall be issued without charge if the permit seeker is paying a camping site fee at Tidal River or the Park Entrance Transit Camp for the persons and period covered by the permit.
  - (b) If a permit holder is not retaining a camp site at Tidal River or at the Park Entrance Transit camp the applicable vehicles entry charge must be paid.

Mt Buffalo and Mt Eccles National Parks	
Peak Rates	
Site per night (up to 4 persons) - Maximum number of persons per site - 6.	\$14.70
Each extra person	\$ 3.10
Additional vehicle per site per night	\$ 4.20
Off Peak Rates and School Groups	
Site per night (up to 6 person). Maximum number of persons per site - 6.	\$10.50
Additional vehicle per site	\$ 4.00

Peak periods are:

- (i) Third Friday in December to first Sunday in February inclusive
- (ii) Labour Day long weekend (3 nights)
- (iii) April School Holidays.
- (iv) Melbourne Cup Day weekend (4 nights)
- (v) Easter

Cape Conran Coastal Park					
Cape Conran Cabins Up to 4 person	Peak Period Rates per night	Peak Period Rates 7 nights	Off Peak Part Week	Off Peak Rates per night	Off peak Rates 7 nights.
Standard Cabin	\$88.00	\$528.00	\$280.00	\$62.00	\$372.00
Hideaway	\$77.00	\$462.00	\$245.00	\$54.00	\$324.00
Extra Adult	\$13.00	\$78.00	\$42.00	\$11.00	\$66.00
Extra Child (5-15 yrs)	\$7.50	\$45.00	\$22.00	\$6.00	\$36.00
Children under 5 years	No Charge	No Charge	No Charge	No Charge	No Charge

Cape Conran Lodge Maximum 17 people	Peak Period Rates per night	Peak Period Rates 7 nights	Off Peak Part Week	Off Peak Rates per night	Off peak Rates 7 nights.
Up to 10 people	\$170.00	\$1020.00	\$540.00	\$120.00	\$720.00
Extra Adult	\$13.00	\$78.00	\$42.00	\$11.00	\$66.00
Extra Child (5-15 yrs)	\$7.50	\$45.00	\$22.00	\$6.00	\$36.00
Children under 5 years	No Charge	No Charge	No Charge	No Charge	No Charge

Banksia Bluff Campsites	Peak Period Rates per night	Peak Period Rates 7 nights	Off Peak Rates per night	Off peak Rates 7 nights.
Up to 4 people	\$16.00	\$96.00	\$12.00	\$72.00
Extra Adult (max 8)	\$2.00	\$12.00	\$2.00	\$12.00
Extra Child (5-15 yrs)	\$1.00	\$6.00	\$1.00	\$6.00
Children under 5 years	No Charge	No Charge	No Charge	No Charge

Schools - Camping \$1.80 per person per night.

**Peak periods**

- (i) Third Friday in December to first Sunday in February inclusive
- (ii) Labour Day long weekend (3 nights)
- (iii) April School Holidays.
- (iv) Melbourne Cup Day weekend (4 nights)
- (v) Easter

<b>Croajingolong (Wingan Inlet, Thurra River and Shipwreck Creek), Lower Glenelg, Snowy River (McKillop Bridge) and the Lakes National Parks, Gippsland Lakes (Paradise Beach) and Discovery Bay (Swan Lake) Coastal Parks</b>		
	Normal Rates	Off Season Rates and School Groups
Sites per night (maximum number of persons per site - 6)	\$10.50	\$7.80
Additional Vehicle per site per night	\$4.20	

Peak periods are:

- (I) Third Friday in December to first Sunday in February inclusive
- (II) Labour Day long weekend (3 nights)
- (III) April School Holidays.
- (IV) Melbourne Cup weekend (4 nights)
- (V) Easter

<b>Motor Huts, Lower Glenelg National Park</b>	
4 Beds per night (all year)	\$34.60

<b>Little Desert, Wyperfeld, Kinglake, Brisbane Ranges, the Grampians, Lake Eildon (Jerusalem Creek and boat based camping area Mountaineer Inlet), and Hattah Kulkyn National Parks and Cathedral Range and Mt Arapiles-Tooan State Parks</b>	
Site per night (maximum number of persons per site is six).	\$9.00
Additional vehicle per site per night.	\$3.90

<b>Special Areas</b>		
Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park (Bunga Arm) and Otway National Park (Parker Hill and Point Franklin)	Site per night (land based visitors)	\$3.80
Lower Glenelg National Park (Canoe Camp)	Person per night including school groups	\$2.00

**GENERAL CONDITIONS**

**Children under 5 years of age.** In all parks no camping charge shall be levied on any child under 5 years of age.

**Concessions for School Groups.** Unless otherwise provided for, all members of authorised school groups shall be liable to pay only at the off-season rate provided that the group is under teacher control and advance notification and acceptance of the booking is made by the Booking Officer.

**Deposits and Cancellation Fees.**

**Cabins and Lodges. Deposits** - A non-refundable deposit of \$50.00 per cabin or lodge must be paid within 7 days of booking and the balance is payable one calendar month before occupancy. **Cancellation Fees** - If any cabin or lodge booking is cancelled before the due date of occupancy, in addition to the non-refundable deposit, the following cancellation fees will apply

Between 30 and 14 days notice	\$35.00
Less than 14 days notice	\$45.00

**Camp Sites. Deposits** - In all parks where there are schemes for advanced booking of campsites all fees must be paid in full in advance. **Ballot period:** In addition, in parks where ballots are held, a \$25.00 non-refundable deposit fee is payable on issue of the confirmed site. **Cancellation Fees** - If a camp site booking is cancelled before the due date for occupancy, the following cancellation fees will apply:

Between 30 and 7 days notice	Equivalent of two night's site fee
Less than 7 days notice	Equivalent of three night's site fee.

There fees are in addition to the non-refundable deposit paid for ballot period bookings.

Lower Glenelg National Park (Princess Margaret Rose Caves)	
Tours of Inspection:	
Adult	\$4.60
Child 5 to 15 years of age (inclusive)	\$1.80
Children under 5 years of age	No charge

### Tasmania

	Fee
Adult per head per night	\$4.00
Child/pensioner per-head	\$3..20
Family	\$10.00

### South Australia

DESCRIPTION OF FEE	PARKS INCLUDED	Date of last increase	Rates		
			Car	Motocycle	No vehicle
<b>CAMPING</b>					
<b>Category A</b> Sites with: water, showers, toilets. Barbecues, rubbish collection/disposal and one or more of: Power, kiosk, laundry or: restricted access/quality desert location.	Naracoorte Caves CP, Innes National Park - Casuarina, Lincoln National Park - Memory Cove, Witjira National Park - Dalhousie Springs, Lake Eyre National Park, Innamincka Zone, Coongie Lakes.	Mar 97	\$15.00	\$8.00	\$4.00
<b>Category B</b> Sites with: Water, toilets, barbecues, rubbish collection/disposal, some with showers.	Mount Remarkable National Park, Innes National Park - Pondalowie Bay, Deep Creek National Park - Rocky River, Bool Lagoon GR, Hacks Lagoon Conservation Park	Mar 97	\$12.00	\$6.00	\$3.00
<b>Category C</b> Bush camping with no or minimal facilities.	All other parks	Mar 97	\$5.00	\$3.00	\$3.00

### Northern Territory

Fees proposed from 1 April 2000 and subject to gazettal	Per person per night	Per child per night	Family (2 adults and up to 4 children aged 5-16)
Category A camping – moderate services	\$6.00	\$3.00	\$14.00
Category B camping – basic services	\$3.00	\$1.50	\$7.00
Category C camping – school or bush camping	\$3.00	\$1.50	\$7.00

### PA (Kakadu)

	Fee
Adult per head per night	\$5.00

### PA (Booderee)

	Peak	Off Peak
Bristol Point - 35 person site	\$80.00	\$64.00
Cave Beach - per tent	\$10.00	\$8.00
Green Patch - varying sized sites	\$16.00-\$48.00	\$13.00-\$36.00

### ACT

	Community Groups (all areas)	Cotter campground (Modern)	Orroral Valley & Honeysuckle (Semi-modern)	Mt Clear (Semi-primitive)
Per person	\$2.00			
Fee per site (2 people)		\$10.00	\$6.00	\$5.00
Each additional person per site		\$2.00	\$2.00	\$2.00
Solo campers		\$5.00	\$3.00	\$2.50



## Part 3 Fees for commercial filming

### Queensland

Commercial activity permit for filming or photography - no structures involved	
(a) 1 or 2 people involved - each day	\$21.00
(b) 3 to 5 people involved -	
(i) application fee	\$105.00
(ii) daily site fee	\$52.00
(c) 6 or more people involved -	
(i) application fee	\$201.00
(ii) daily site fee	\$105.00
Commercial activity permit for filming or photography - any kind of structure involved	
(a) 1 to 5 people involved -	
(i) application fee	\$105.00
(ii) daily site fee	\$105.00
(b) 6 to 25 people involved -	
(i) application fee	\$525.00
(ii) daily site fee	\$525.00
(c) 26 to 50 people involved -	
(i) application fee	\$1,050.00
(ii) daily site fee	\$1,050.00
(d) 51 or more people involved -	
(i) application fee	\$2,100.00
(ii) daily site fee	\$2,100.00

### New South Wales

Commercial Filming/Photography	Unit Price \$
Currently managed by NPWS Regions	New "state-wide" pricing to apply from 1 May 2000.

### Western Australia

Any fee may be negotiated, depending on the scale of the project. Fees may be waived altogether where there are significant benefits to CALM or tourism industry.

Standard fees are:

First day	\$500
subsequent days	\$200
per week	\$1000
site supervision (if required)	\$50.00/hour

No charge for educational, infotainment, news and current affairs.

### Victoria

Commercial filming and photography must be undertaken in a manner that ensures that the environment in general, and natural and cultural features in particular, are protected.

Commercial providers of material for news and current affairs programs will not be required to obtain a permit or pay a fee prior to any filming or photography, provided that such filming or photography is arranged in accordance with the guidelines.

Commercial filming and photography that substantially limits the experiences and enjoyment of park or reserve visitors or tenants, or the rights of park or reserve neighbours, will not be permitted.

A full commercial return will generally be sought. However, where benefits, such as free advertising, may be derived, fees and charges may be reduced or waived at the discretion of the Chief Executive.

NAME OF DISCRETIONARY SERVICE	DETAILS	NUMBER OR EXTENT	\$ FEE
<b>Commercial Filming and Photography</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Open space, grassed areas, historic buildings, gardens, rivers, bays, wetland, views etc.</li> </ul>	Minimum fee	\$200.00 for first hour, then: \$200.00 per hour <b>or</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Site specific exclusive features.</li> </ul>	Full day - 8 hours between 7.30 am - 4.00 pm	\$500.00 - \$1200.00
		Half day - 4 hours between 7.30 am - 12 noon or 12 noon - 4 pm	\$300.00-\$700.00
		Filming outside these times	\$200.00 per hour plus actual staff costs

### Tasmania

1-3 people	\$75 per day or \$150 per project
4-8 people	\$150 per day or \$300 per project
>8 people	\$500 per day or \$1000+ negotiable per project
Supervision/ guiding fees	\$250 per person per day/ \$50 per hour weekdays
	\$350 per person per day/ \$60 per hour weekends

- Extra fees negotiated where groups of 9 people or less cause major disruptions or inconvenience or other visitors
- Actors equity charges for on-camera appearances by staff in fee-paying productions
- No charge for educational or tourism productions deemed beneficial to NPWS, news or current affairs, or filming sponsored by the federal or state government tourism departments.

### South Australia

DESCRIPTION OF FEE	Date of last increase	Rates
<b>COMMERCIAL FILMING</b>		
<b>Video or Motion Picture</b>		
first day of filming or part of a day	Sep 90	\$350.00
each subsequent day of filming or part of a day		\$175.00
<b>Still photography, per day</b>		\$100.00
Staff assistance		
Full day	New fee	\$175.00
Half day	New fee	\$85.00
One hour	New fee	\$40.00

### Parks Australia

Filming: Kakadu and Uluru: \$350 per day plus \$100 for staff assistance if necessary

Booderee: \$50.00

Still photography: \$30.

### Northern Territory

For selected activities \$50 per hour or \$400 per day for Ranger supervision.

### ACT

If staff member required, \$60 per hour.

### New Zealand DOC

Type of Filming	Standard Daily Rental	Per Person per Day Rental
COMMERCIALS	\$500	\$25
Feature Films	\$500	\$25
Television Drama	\$500	\$25
Documentaries	\$300	\$25
Sport Events (Commercial)	\$300	\$25
Filming Schools and Students	\$100	nil
Conservation / Recreation Promotion	\$100	\$25
Television News / Current Affairs	nil	nil
Still Photography (Commercial)	\$300	\$15

#### Notes:

- All figures above are exclusive of GST
- All figures do not include application and processing fees and costs, or monitoring fees and costs
- Total daily concession rental is calculated by multiplying the per person charge by the number of persons in the film crew (including actors and talent), and then adding the standard daily rental.
- For crews larger than 30 persons in size, rentals are to be settled by negotiation above these levels, unless special waiver conditions apply. For crews larger than 50 persons, the Manager National Revenue should be contacted by the application processor.
- Film crews often shoot only in the evenings and mornings. To take account of this, the total daily charge can be halved for film crews who spend less than 5 hours filming on any one day.
- Preparation and Clean-Up days to be charged at 20% of full day rate.
- Members of the Screen Producers and Directors Association (SPADA) will qualify, on proof of membership, for a discount of 10% of the total location rentals. This discount does not apply to recovery of Departmental staff time and costs.

## Part 4 Commercial Tour Operators

### Queensland

Application fee	\$200.00	
Renewal fee	\$100.00	
Permit fees:		
3 months or less	\$40.00	
more than 3 months but not more than 1 year	\$160.00	
more than 1 year but not more than 2 year	\$320.00	
more than 2 years but not more than 3 year	\$456.00	
Per head fee	<3hrs \$1.15	>3Hrs \$2.30

### New South Wales

Commercial Tour Operators	Unit Price \$
Currently managed by NPWS Regions	Applicants should speak directly with the local NPWS Region Office.

### Western Australia

#### General Licence

Application	\$50.00
Renewal application	\$50.00
Annual licence fees	\$250.00

Plus, commercial tour bus passengers pay \$3.00 per head entry fee to specific parks.

#### Restricted Licence

Application	\$50.00
Renewal application	\$50.00
Annual licence fee	Minimum \$250.00 Restricted on environmental and safety *

\* This fee varies. Can be a "per passenger" fee or a percentage of gross turnover or a flat fee.

### Victoria

Permit fee for one year permit	\$200.00
Permit fee for three year permit	\$300.00
Renewal fee for one year permit	\$50.00
Per Head fee	\$1.00 (\$5000.00 ceiling)

### Tasmania

Application fee	\$60
Permit fees	\$1.50 per person per day <i>or</i> %of gross <i>or</i> flat seasonal fee

## South Australia

DESCRIPTION OF FEE	Date of last increase	Rates
<b>Commercial Tour Operator Licences</b>		
Annual licence fee (for up to 5 vehicles)	Nov 96	\$100.00
Additional vehicles over 5	Nov 96	\$20.00
for park entry fees refer to "Bus" column on Attachment 1		

## Parks Australia

Annual commercial tour operator permits at Kakadu are now \$500 (four or more visits per annum) and \$100 (under four visits per annum). Permits for other parks are \$50 per annum.

## Northern Territory

Variable fees for 'park-based' tours. At present no permit requirement for commercial tours but this is under review.

## ACT

No charges at March 2000.

## New Zealand DOC

All concessionaires are required by law to pay a concession fee. Fees are set at market levels for the activity involved. Fees are generally set as a percentage of Gross Income, (GI) or as a per person fee. The following are some general indications of some fee levels (all exclusive to GST):

Concession Activity	Fee
Guided tours incl rafting, fishing walking etc	7.5% GI or \$6 p.p per day
Tourist Hotel	3% GI
Helicopter Landings	5% GI

## Part 5. Interpretive activities

### New South Wales:

No information

### Queensland

Protected area fees for service charges - not set by regulation

	Adult	Pensioner	Child	Family	School student
Chillagoe Caves Guided tours	\$2.00 - \$4.00	\$1.50 - \$3.00	\$0.50 - \$2.00		\$0.50 - \$1.00
Mon Repos Conservation Park Turtle Rookery Tours (single visit)	\$4.00	\$2.00	\$2.00	\$10.00	\$1.00
Mon Repos Conservation Park Turtle Rookery Tours (season ticket)	\$10.00	\$5.00	\$5.00	\$25.00	
Fort Lytton National Park. Admission	\$4.00	\$2.00	\$2.00		
Mt Etna Caves National Park Bat Cleft tours (Dec-Mid Feb)	\$6.00	\$3.00	\$3.00	\$18.00	
St Helena National Park Admission and Guided Tours	\$4.00	\$2.00	\$2.00		

### Western Australia

Boat tours

Adult	\$17.50
Child (under 16)	\$2.00

Guided cave tours

Adult	\$2.00
Child (under 16)	\$0.50

Adventure caving (group booking) \$5 per head

### Victoria

Cave tours (Lower Glenelg National Park) - Caves tours are now externally managed.

Ranger led activities not undertaken in 1998 and 1999 due to budget constraints. Fee schedule to be set for year 2000.

### Tasmania

Guided cave tours

Adult	\$8.00
Pensioner	\$6.40
Child (6-17)	\$4.00
Family (2A, 2C)	\$20.00

## South Australia

DESCRIPTION OF FEE	Rates							
	Date of last increase	Adult	Child	Pensioner / Concession	Family	Bus / Coach	School Group	Other
<b>LOWER SOUTH EAST</b>								
Summer program tours	Jul 96	\$4.00	\$3.00	N/A	\$10.00	N/A	N/A	
Dinley Dell Conservation Park Cottage	Jul 98	\$5.00	\$2.00	\$4.00	N/A	\$2.00	\$2.00	
Tantanoola Cave	Aug 96	\$6.00	\$3.50	\$4.50	\$16.00	\$4.00	\$3.00	
<b>NARACOORTE CAVES CONSERVATION PARK</b>								
Single Unit	Dec 98	\$8.00	\$5.00	\$6.00	\$21.00			
Double Unit	Dec 98	\$14.00	\$8.00	\$10.00	\$36.00			
Triple Unit	Dec 98	\$20.00	\$12.00	\$14.00	\$52.00			
Four Unit	Dec 98	\$25.00	\$15.00	\$20.00	\$65.00			
Wet Cave	Dec 98	\$4.00	\$2.00	\$3.00	\$10.00			
Learn by Activity - Child	Dec 98		\$3.00					
Coach Tours - Wonambi	Dec 98					\$6.00		
Fossil Bed	Dec 98					\$5.00		
Alex Cave	Dec 98					\$5.00		
Wet Cave	Dec 98					\$4.00		
Double Unit	Dec 98					\$10.00		
Novice Adventure Tour - Adult	Dec 98	\$20.00	\$12.00	\$16.00				
Advanced Tour	Dec 98							Group \$180.00
Wild Caving	Dec 98		\$2.00					
<b>INNES NATIONAL PARK</b>								
Guided Bus Tours	Jul 95							per hour \$35.00
Seasonal Ranger program	Jul 96		\$1.00		\$3.00			
<b>SEAL BAY CONSERVATION PARK</b>								
Beach Tour	Apr 99	\$8.50	\$6.00	\$6.00	\$20.00	cash \$7.50	\$5.00	
	Apr 99					voucher \$7.00		
	Apr 99					school \$5.50		
Board Walk	Apr 99	\$6.00	\$4.50	\$4.50	\$16.50	cash \$5.50	\$3.50	
	Apr 99					voucher \$5.00		
	Apr 99					school \$4.00		
<b>KELLY HILL CONSERVATION PARK</b>								
	Apr 99	\$6.00	\$4.50	\$4.50	\$16.50	cash \$5.50	\$3.50	
	Apr 99					voucher \$5.00		
	Apr 99					school \$4.00		
<b>ADVENTURE CAVING</b>								
OCE & K10	Apr 99	\$20.00	\$12.00		\$52.00			
Mt Taylor	Apr 99	\$30.00	\$17.00		\$77.00			
<b>CAPE BORDA LIGHTSTATION</b>								
	Apr 99	\$6.00	\$4.50	\$4.50	\$16.50	cash \$5.50	\$3.50	
	Apr 99					voucher \$5.00		
	Apr 99					school \$4.00		
<b>CAPE WILLOUGHBY LIGHTSTATION</b>								
	Apr 99	\$6.00	\$4.50	\$4.50	\$16.50	cash \$5.50	\$3.50	
	Apr 99					voucher \$5.00		
	Apr 99					school \$4.00		
<b>DISCOVERING PENGUINS (KINGSCOTE)</b>								
	Apr 99	\$6.00	\$4.50	\$4.50	\$16.50	cash \$5.50	\$3.50	
	Apr 99					voucher \$5.00		
	Apr 99					school \$4.00		
<b>CLELAND</b>								
	Jul 95	\$7.50	\$4.50	\$6.00	\$18.50	Adult \$6.00		
	Jul 95					Child \$4.50		
Cleland Nightwalk Adult	July 95	\$11.50	\$7.00			Adult Group \$9.50		
						Child Group \$5.50		
Yurridla Guided Walk	Apr 98	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$7.00			

## Northern Territory:

All scheduled guided walks and talks are free except for Alice Springs Telegraph Station and Cutta Cutta Caves which is commercially operated.

Cutta Cutta Caves	Adult	\$8.50
	Child	\$4.50

### **Parks Australia:**

No charges are levied for interpretative activities provided by Parks Australia.

### **ACT**

Most advertised Ranger-guided activities	Adult	\$4
	Family	\$10
	Child	\$2
Spotlight tours	Per person	\$10
Other activities	Free or gold coin	
Specially requested activities	\$60 per hour	

## **8. Appendix 3: Case studies**

Three case studies are presented below. These do not necessarily represent 'best practice': rather the positive points and areas for improvement of each are discussed.

### **8.1 Case study 1: Commercial photography in Queensland**

Queensland has become popular as a venue for drama films and advertisements, with many producers seeking natural locations with rainforest, waterfalls, lakes and beaches. Many of the best sites are on national parks or other protected areas. Under the *Nature Conservation Act 1992*, all commercial activities in protected areas, including photographic activities undertaken for gain, require a permit unless the activity is conducted under a special agreement. This permit and charging system for commercial photography and filming has a number of positive outcomes for conservation. Potential impacts of filming (especially from large film crews) can be managed. Revenue can be raised, with a sliding scale so that small operators, who are less likely to damage the environment or require staff supervision, pay low fees, while large-scale productions make a more substantial contribution.

#### **Fee structure**

Permits are required regardless of the nature of the photography, and fees are fixed by regulation. There is no waiving of fees or concession for educational or documentary productions. The only exceptions are photography for news and unexpected events, and photography for joint productions with the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service under a Deed of Agreement. It may be seen as inequitable for a film about heathland conservation to be subject to the same fee scale as a car advertisement. However, the firm fee guidelines result in much less negotiation and decision-making for permit staff, who are not required to make judgments about whether films are educational or otherwise.

As can be seen from the fee scale below, charges for permits vary depending on the number of people involved and whether there is a 'structure' required. Fees for film and still photography are the same. A single photographer requiring no special structures (except a tripod) pays only \$20 per day, while a large film crew with a structure and over 50 people involved pays a \$2000 application fee and a \$2000 daily site fee.

A permit can be issued for one or more protected areas, and for a period ranging from one day to three years. All permit holders must pay a site fee for each day of photography, which varies according to the number of people and the use of structures. Where more than two people are involved, or where any kind of structure is used, an application fee is also charged to offset the cost of assessing the application. The application fee is paid when the application is lodged and cannot be refunded, even if a permit is refused. Daily site fees are paid in full at the time the permit is issued for the whole period of the permit, except for permits involving intermittent photography (see below).



The Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service may deem it necessary for staff to supervise photographic activities, particularly large-scale filming, to minimise environmental impacts and conflicts between the photography and public use of the area. The extent of supervision required will depend on the nature of the location and the activity proposed. The photographer may be required to pay in advance all costs to Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service which will result from supervision, such as staff time, accommodation, transport and equipment. The Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service may also require the photographer to agree to pay the cost of any necessary restoration or rehabilitation if a site is damaged during filming.

### **Commercial photography fees in Queensland**

Commercial activity permit for filming or photography - no structures involved		
(a)	1 or 2 people involved - each day	\$21.00
(b)	3 to 5 people involved -	
	(i) application fee	\$105.00
	(ii) daily site fee	\$52.00
(c)	6 or more people involved -	
	(i) application fee	\$210.00
	(ii) daily site fee	\$105.00
Commercial activity permit for filming or photography - any kind of structure involved		
(a)	1 to 5 people involved -	
	(i) application fee	\$105.00
	(ii) daily site fee	\$105.00
(b)	6 to 25 people involved -	
	(i) application fee	\$525.00
	(ii) daily site fee	\$525.00
(c)	26 to 50 people involved -	
	(i) application fee	\$1,050.00
	(ii) daily site fee	\$1,050.00
(d)	51 or more people involved -	
	(i) application fee	\$2,100.00
	(ii) daily site fee	\$2,100.00

### **Photography for news purposes**

Photography in a protected area for news purposes does not require a commercial activity permit, in recognition of the practical difficulties. Photography for news purposes is defined as filming or photography that has as its subject an unexpected current event, is undertaken during or soon after the event as an urgent response to the event, and is for the express purpose of inclusion in a television news bulletin, newspaper, news magazine or similar topical publication.

### **Permits involving intermittent photography**

A permit can be issued for up to three years for photography which will occur intermittently and cannot be planned in advance, such as that undertaken by landscape photographers or by filming teams who may visit protected areas sporadically in response to particular local conditions or emerging events. Such a permit may be issued to cover the whole state. Daily site fees are paid within 30 days of the end of the month in which they are incurred, accompanied by a statutory declaration listing dates, places, number of people and structures involved.

### **Joint productions**

Where a joint production has been organised between Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service and a company (for example, a television network), this can be authorised under a Deed of Agreement.

Conditions include:

- equal editing rights for the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service;
- all persons involved to abide by the instructions of Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service staff in relation to behaviour on the protected area;
- conditions in relation to insurance will be the same as for any commercial activity.

### **Assessment of applications**

Photography must be in keeping with the management principles of the protected area, and activities which cause substantial damage to the natural or cultural resources of the area, or which convey messages contrary to the stated goals of the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service, will not be permitted. Factors to be considered in deciding whether a permit will be issued are required to be listed in an assessment pro-forma for commercial activities. They include:

- compliance with the management principles specified for the particular class of protected area; and the provisions of any statement of management intent or management plan for the area;
- compatibility with management objectives for particular areas or locations;
- any benefit to conservation which may result from the photography;
- the potential impact on cultural and natural resources;
- the potential impact on other protected area visitors or activities;
- the safety of persons within the area;
- the need to supervise or monitor the activities and their impacts; and
- any demands on protected area facilities.

Applications must be made on the approved form, accompanied by the prescribed fee and must be made at least 30 days before the applicant wishes to begin work. Applications submitted less than 30 days in advance may still be considered at the discretion of the chief executive (or delegate). Applications are submitted to the appropriate regional office. Where photography involves more than one region, the person applies to the one where most of the photography will take place, and the processing of the application is coordinated by that region.

Applicants are encouraged to discuss their plans with regional permit staff or, in the case of major film productions, with the Manager, Education and Information, before submitting a formal application. However, it is made clear to the applicant that any such discussions are 'without prejudice', and do not constitute approval or disapproval of the permit. Where a production is considered inappropriate for a protected area, some assistance may be given to locate a more suitable venue.

### **Liability insurance**

Where photography involves a structure or more than five people, the permit holder is required to obtain public liability insurance for a minimum of \$5 million, naming the chief executive of the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service as 'co-insured'. This insurance does not cover Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service for its own negligence.

## Room for improvement

Detailed policies need to be further developed and explained to regional staff dealing with permitting issues. In a highly decentralised system, it can be difficult to ensure adequate communication with and support for regional staff, and there is a risk of clients receiving different messages in different parts of the state. This problem has been highlighted in the recent report of commercial tour operators prepared for NSW NPWS<sup>3</sup>, which considers decentralisation of tour operator management to have many negative repercussions. On the other hand, judgments about the suitability and risks of proposed operations are best made by staff with local knowledge and contacts.

Compliance monitoring in some regions is clearly inadequate, and there are reports that many tour operators substantially under-report their client numbers on their returns. This has probably resulted in considerable lost revenue for the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service and also creates negative feelings among the tour operators who report honestly.

## 8.2 Case study 2: Entry fees - Tasmania

*Andrew Roberts*

*Commercial activities coordinator, Parks and Wildlife Service, Tasmania*

Tasmania has twelve national parks, five of which are in the World Heritage Area. Park entry fees apply to all these parks. Entry fees are charged principally on a vehicle basis. The original 'per person' entry fee was replaced with the current vehicle based system in 1994 following the findings of an independent review panel, which undertook extensive community and industry consultation.

A cornerstone to the success of the present system is its perceived equity and consistency. Fee exemptions are very tightly limited to school education groups and major community or sporting events. There are no exemptions for P&WS staff when not undertaking work activities. Even the Minister and the Director have purchased annual passes.

A comprehensive and regularly updated policy and procedures manual enables districts to manage fee collection and compliance with little support from head office. This centralised support is limited to policy development, invoicing and revenue administration, sign, brochure and ticket production, tourism industry education, and marketing coordination.

### Tasmanian park entry fee structure (updated 1999)

	Per person (bike, boat, bus or foot)	Per vehicle (includes occupants)	
Daily (24 hours)	\$5.00	\$9.00	
Holiday (all parks for up to 2 months)	\$12.00	\$30.00	
Annual		\$18.00 (one park)	\$42.00 (All parks)

The daily vehicle pass includes up to eight occupants. The annual vehicle passes give access for up to three cars and a boat registered at the same address. The bus passenger charges are capped. Bus companies that can provide an itinerary of over twenty trips per annum qualify for an allpark pass for each passenger capped at \$8.

<sup>3</sup> Meet the People, 1996, A review of current systems for licensing organised group activities in protected areas in Australia, Initial draft report to NSW NPWS.

The annual all-park pass and especially the annual one-park pass are targeted at the regular Tasmanian user. The one-park pass was designed specifically to satisfy holiday shack owners and local communities that hold a great deal of local 'ownership' of particular parks. The holiday pass is targeted at interstate visitors who represent 70% of total park visitors, many of whom constitute the growing pre-planned 'holiday package' market segment.

### **Collection**

Entry booths are staffed at five major national park entrances, while payment is made by self-registration at several other locations. Otherwise passes may be purchased from District Offices, Tourist Information Centres and Travel Agents (using the voucher system).

### **Enforcement**

Any vehicle within a national park must display a valid park pass. An infringement notice may be issued by a Ranger to the vehicle for non-display. Penalty is \$25. Rangers check compliance randomly while going about their normal activities.

### **Compliance**

In the heavily visited areas and those with limited access points, compliance is high. On more remote areas, especially those with non-vehicular access, enforcement is less stringent and consequently compliance is average. A model is presently being developed to combine visitor statistical analysis from vehicle counters with entry booth information to give a better picture of compliance, especially out of hours.

### **Access passes**

Work access passes are available to people required to access a park to undertake work for the P&WS or a concession/lease holder to reach their place of business (eg professional fisherman). Access for all other business activities, including access by other government departments, requires an entry pass.

### **Ticketing system**

At the entry booths, barcode scanners are used in conjunction with matrix printers to produce 24-hour and holiday passes which may be adhered to the inside of vehicle windscreens. Pre-glued 'peel-back' stickers have been recently replaced with paper tickets, due to printer problems caused by glue squeeze in hot weather and ticket roll stiffness in cold weather. Annual passes are sold via a temporary (tear-off) pass which is replaced with a registration-style vehicle sticker posted from head office within four weeks. Bus companies are invoiced for passenger entry fees via a voucher presented to visitor reception staff stating the number of passengers.

'Scratch' style passes can also be pre-purchased from tourist information centres. The day and time of arrival are scratched out when entering the park, with the scratchy pass then displayed on the dashboard. These passes allow flexibility in trip planning, as a pass to be kept in a glove box until needed.

### **Non-national park ticket sales distribution**

Approximately 30% of park pass sales are made by non-national park outlets. The four main regional tourist associations are park pass wholesalers (20% discount) who coordinate their 'sub-sellers' (10% discount). Wholesale 'package holiday' groups (voucher sales) that market their product interstate are provided with an industry standard 25% discount. 'Holiday pass vouchers' are converted to park pass stickers and 'park passports' at the first major park visited.

### **Room for improvement**

The major area of possible improvement lies in an extended self-registration facilities, increased and consistent issuing of infringement notices, and better promotion of the benefits to the user of entry fee funded projects and services.

There is also a long-term aim to increase the pre-purchase of holiday passes via the voucher holiday package sales.

### **8.3 Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Approach.**

#### **8.3.1 Environmental Management Charge**

The Commonwealth Government has reasoned that it is only fair that those companies and individuals making a living from the Great Barrier Reef should help pay for increasingly urgent research and improved management techniques.

An Environmental Management Charge (EMC) came into effect on 1 July 1993. Most commercial operations in the Marine Park are subject to the charge and include: tourist operations; mariculture; commonwealth-island resorts; and land-based marine sewage outfalls.

#### **The Consultation Process**

Following the June 1992 announcement of the introduction of the new charge, two series of meetings (in August/September 1992 and in May 1993) were held in centres along the Queensland coast from Brisbane to Port Douglas. A large number of follow-up meetings with specific industry sectors and individual operators were also held.

#### **How the System Works**

The system is based on Part 5A of the *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Regulations*. The following is a summary of the EMC.

- The charge is for commercial operators.
- Charges for tourist operators are \$4 per passenger per day (or part thereof).
- The fees are levied according to the size and nature of an operation.

It was originally proposed to introduce the charge on a formula basis. This was not supported by tourist operators as many tourist operators believed that the actual numbers of visitors undertaking a tourist program was a more accurate measure of an operator's use of the Marine Park.

This system has been adopted and involves the addition of new logbooks in which data on use of the Marine Park will be recorded. All charges will be indexed annually to the Consumer Price Index. Payment will be on a quarterly basis, in arrears.

#### **Detailed Data an Invaluable Side Benefit**

Logbooks that have been developed in close consultation with industry are issued to operators in June each year. The Environmental Management Charge logbooks provide information necessary for the purposes of charging but they also provide valuable data to the Authority relating to operators' commercial use of the Marine Park. Aggregate data relating to trends in Marine Park use provide the most accurate information yet available on Marine Park usage. This data is invaluable in helping to highlight trends and possible problems emerging with increased human activity.

## Exemptions

The main types of commercial operations exempt from the charge are private navigational aids, commercial fishing operations, and direct transfer operations from one part of Queensland to another. Commercial fishing does not attract a charge because one is already levied by Queensland fish management organisations. Transfer trips between islands, or islands and the mainland, are exempt on the basis that such passengers are transiting the Marine Park, not taking part in tourist excursions. Consideration has also been given to exempting operators from paying for certain classes of Free of Charge (FOC) passengers.

## Tourism Industry Benefits

Benefits offered to the industry include improved research, management and information programs within the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park. An immediate and tangible benefit for operators is that their permits are now issued over a more substantial period of time (up from the previous three years to six years for existing operators), and they are transferable. A one-year permit will be issued to first-time applicants, but following a successful review after a year, these operators will also be entitled to apply for a six year transferable permit.

### 8.3.2 Summary of Environmental Management Charges (applicable for 1 January 2000).

(The charges are listed under four headings, Standard tourist programs, Non-standard tourist programs, Installation and operation of tourist facilities and Non-tourist related commercial operations.)

#### A. Standard tourist programs (subject to exemptions & concessions)

Full day standard charge	\$4 per visitor per day.
Part-day standard charge	\$2 per visitor per day.

#### B. Non- standard tourist programs

##### Non-motorised beach equipment charges:

5 or less pieces of equipment	\$12 per quarter
more than 5 pieces of equipment	\$25 per quarter

##### Dinghy charges:

no more than 5 dinghies	\$50 per quarter
more than 5 dinghies	\$12 per dinghy per quarter

##### Motorised water sports charges:

2 persons jet boats	\$25 per quarter
equipment excluding jet boats	\$62 per quarter
equipment including jet boats	\$87 per quarter

##### Semi-submersible and glass-bottomed boats charges:

Charge calculated under formula:  
Number of visitors x 0.2 x \$2.00

##### Sight-seeing aircraft charges:

Charge calculated under formula:  
Number of visitors x 0.2 x \$2.00

C. **Installation & operation of tourist facilities**

Pontoon charges:	
40 square metres or less	\$90 per quarter
more than 40 square metres	\$180 per quarter
Floating hotels charges:	\$280 per quarter
Marina charges:	
Construction or operation of a marina	\$380 per quarter
Underwater observatory charges (not attached to a pontoon):	
Pay the greater of	\$130 per quarter
or the amount calculated under the formula:	
Number of visitors x 0.1 x \$2.00	
Lady Elliott Island charges:	\$2 per visitor per day
Discharge of sewage charges:	
1. tertiary treated sewage	\$400 per quarter
2. primary & secondary treated sewage	\$400 per quarter <b>plus</b>
an amount calculated under the formula:	
	\$4 x V x (N+P)
where:	
N is the concentration of nitrogen expressed as milligrams per litre;	
P is the concentration of phosphorous expressed as milligrams per litre;	
V is the total volume expressed in megalitres.	

D. **Non-tourist related commercial operations**

Vessel chartering charges:	\$2 per person per charter
Vending operations charges:	\$30 per metre of the length of the vessel per quarter.
Mariculture:	
10 hectares or less	\$500 per quarter
<b>plus</b> for each parcel of 10 hectares	\$200 per parcel per quarter

## 9. Appendix 4: Current Agency Contact Persons

- Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service, Mike Harris, <mike.harris@env.qld.gov.au>
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- Environment Australia (Parks Australia), Doug Brown, <Doug.Brown@ea.gov.au>
- Parks and Wildlife Service Tasmania, Peter Bosworth <Peterbo@dpiwe.tas.gov.au>
- Department of Environment and Heritage, South Australia, Martina Egeler, <Megeler@dehaa.sa.gov.au>
- Department of Conservation and Land Management, Western Australia, Colin Ingram <colini@calm.wa.gov.au>
- Parks and Wildlife Commission, Northern Territory, Peter Egan, <Peter.Egan@PWCNT.nt.gov.au>
- NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, Simon Ashwin, <simon.ashwin@npws.nsw.gov.au>
- Environment ACT - ACT Parks & Conservation Service, Karen Civil, <Karen.Civil@act.gov.au>
- Department of Conservation, New Zealand, Harry Maher, <hmaher@doc.govt.nz>