



OPEN SPACE SESSION – REGIONAL ISSUES AND IDEAS

- (1) Capital Works Issues
- (2) Provision/Modes of Information Delivery
- (3) Extended Use of Parks – Climate Change
- (4) Joint Management and Indigenous Approvals
- (5) Managing Camping on Nature Reserves
- (6) Attracting and Retaining Staff
- (7) Revenue
- (8) PVS Integration – Pastoral Leases Acquired by DEC

1. CAPITAL WORKS ISSUES

(a) *Sourcing Contractors*

- lack of availability
- skills and equipment not available or not there – not tooled up properly
- capacity to do the job not there
- remoteness
- supply rules issues – no flexibility unless planned up front
- too much unnecessary paperwork
- lack of skill by DEC staff for supply and training for support
- seasonality
- meeting timelines

Action

- ❖ improve skills access with indigenous communities
- ❖ design project to suit skills available
- ❖ panels
- ❖ own DEC crew – SW – improve skills
- ❖ regions sharing
- ❖ more cooperation with shires
- ❖ partnerships
- ❖ own heavy fleet or co-ownership fleet (shire)
- ❖ hire machinery

(b) *Dealing with DHW*

- informing staff re MOU DEC and DHW
- supervision of works by various players
- improved performance by DHW over last two years
- timeframes DHW – protocols to be met
- DEC and DHW have different 'ways of doing business' – budget and timeframes
- DHW manage risk (do contract documentation and administration – consultants)
- costs \$\$ - not always budgeted – not always seems to be fair
- manages level of service – risk – lose control? or hand over risk

Action

- ❖ have good working relationships/communications with regional DHW staff
- ❖ consider private PM and know implications
- ❖ know what to ask first
- ❖ investigate other state department panels
- ❖ corporate support needed (supply)
- ❖ do it yourself
- ❖ be better at planning
- ❖ use exemptions to quote as necessary (state supply)
- ❖ focus on 'value for money'

(c) Completing Projects in 12 Months

- Changing Departmental priorities and funding
- increasing level of approvals ie indigenous vegetation clearing, heritage planning, communities, consultation, local government, design documentation
- seasonality – wet/dry: logistic, availability of machinery, planning works to suit
- competition between programs (NC and PVS)
- community involvement – decision making
- managing visitors during construction
- contractor availability – impacts on works program
- capital funding – under estimating works – timeframes increase costs
- over-design: roads, engineering specifications
- design standards and works required need to be more considered in determining brief
- no design until \$ allocated
- using consultant experts 'when is it necessary? and when do we carry risk

Action

- ❖ better planning
- ❖ rolling workings program over years
- ❖ fund seed money planning first year – works next year
- ❖ better strategic planning over region
- ❖ staff skills, training, support to undertake works
- ❖ only ask for \$ if have capacity
- ❖ better briefs and be **involved** in design process and be clear about objectives
- ❖ start as early as possible
- ❖ cut scope of works to meet time/budget

(d) Contract Documentation – Complexity

- too much
- takes too long
- knowing what to do and what is appropriate
- knowing what can be removed
- approvals and shuffling
- no corporate support or technical/professional expertise

Action

- ❖ corporate support
- ❖ engage experts to prepare documentation if needed
- ❖ be clear about scope
- ❖ keep simple and cooperative
- ❖ supply officers to be retrained and make priority
- ❖ have better direction on requirements
- ❖ update supply manual and contract documents
- ❖ skills – knowledge in district/region

2. PROVISION/MODE OF INFORMATION DELIVERY

Print v electronic: Which do we use? When? How much? Information delivery, products.

- Different types of media within print (magazine, paper, brochures, park notes etc) and electronic (mp3, downloadable maps, website etc).
- Needs to vary depending on location (remoteness, marine, accessing with guide/boat etc), message and audience.
- Needs a mix: produce PDFs downloadable from NatureBase but also have bulk prints for DEC front offices, tourist bureaus etc.
- NatureBase should communicate parks/groups of parks in the same way we are managing then to provide the best visitor services eg parks of the Leeuwin, Ningaloo coast, Shark Bay WHA, WWA. Visitors to click on spatial area of recreational activity rather than individual parks.

Action: Lorna and Gil to organise a meeting with David Gough to discuss.

- Access to the Department's photo images: very difficult and time consuming plus fuel costs to Perth. Photos currently held in NC, SDCA, regions etc so should be catalogued in the Department's library system.
- Good job for a project officer – RATIS, consent forms, people photos.

Action: Lorna to remind Gil to write submission to Ron K to discuss allocation of photos to librarian with Corporate Exec.

Interpretive products delivery and deadlines

- Do as much as possible in the regions using Interp officer – empowering other regional staff to take photos, collate information and research and get Interp unit in Perth to piece it together.
- Bottleneck in sign design studio, need more designers to handle the load of sign jobs submitted.
- More colour, more 'fancy designs' take more time so need longer deadlines or consider outsourcing (with a very good brief and in consultation with Karen in SDS so design principles and DEC styles upheld).
- Interp planning needs to commence earlier so does not come in as the last stage 'icing on a cake'.

- Budget appropriately for the interpretation not just supporting structure (costs: illustration/photos research and incidentals, consultation fees, courier fees, scanning of large illustration pieces etc). If it is a large job build in for outsourcing to designers.
- Earlier the job with its words and images is into SDS in the financial year, more change of being produced quicker. (First in first served: after Christmas? Good luck!). If it is later, don't expect such fancy designs.
- Each project: 10% of project value goes to Interp unit to supply a graphic designer (alternative to outsourcing).

Action: Peter Fishwick capital funding application form to include Interp requirements and costs (please call unit to find out realistic costs of interp).

Action: Create corporate brief for external graphic designs (Gil to discuss with Karen S).

3. EXTENDED USE OF PARKS – CLIMATE CHANGE

Extended Hours (24 hours)

Issues

- antisocial
- additional resources – longer hours for staff (weekends)
- park closure times
- increased usage/pressure – changes in travel usage time
- VRM – increase incidents

Solutions

- increase interpretation/education
- increase surveillance both physical and electronic
- improved infrastructure (types)
- volunteers HPHP
- resident rangers
- recruiting camp hosts
- ranger shifts – shared/split
- project planning – data collection, additional shade facilities, lighting
- restrict access (numbers max)
- Interp – maps
- disclaimers – AP
- education/signs
- emergency response plans

Overall: Networking – sharing experience

4. JOINT MANAGEMENT AND INDIGENOUS APPROVALS

(1) J/M implemented good guidelines to work to:

- management
- protection
- development of sites

(2) Cultural recreation and practices:

- ceremonies – tourism/business
- hunting
- access
- fire management

(3) Employment:

- fire
- nature conservation
- SRM
- PVS

(4) Indigenous Approvals:

- speed of approvals – DEC staff to be educated in cultural awareness
- funding constraints – government (state)
- claim boundaries overlap
- recognising traditional custodians

RECOMMENDATIONS

- SWALASC to look at constructing network for contracts/works
- Recognise priority maintenance and development
- Maintain better relationships between the two parties
- More community involvement in decision making and labour – CDEP

5. MANAGING CAMPING ON NATURE RESERVES

Not generally permitted on NR's and normally accommodated through a management plan. Provision of 'developed' camping facilities by DEC only to allow appreciation/study of flora and fauna/nature'—eg bird watching, wildflowers

Mitigate damage by:

- Restricting vehicle access to certain areas (bollards, fencing), provision of toilets.
- Map of area (simple – road, walk trail, day use).
- Problem with people camping anyway (fire, rubbish, introduction of weeds, dune degradation) eg 1 million hectare NR in the Goldfields where people have to camp within the reserve to get through the area ('wild camping').

Solutions

- Change of land tenure? NR → CPark/NP. However mining interests (DOIR's response) are mostly opposed to these CALM Act land categories. These tenure changes require resourcing.
- Amend section 56 of the CALM Act to allow 'low level' recreation in nature reserves which may include camping.
- Increase resources to the area (where we may not want to change tenure and diminish NC values). Will need people, money, alternative camping provided on DEC or publish other sites eg shire camping areas.
- Attempt to restrict access and provide more signage to direct people elsewhere (eg to nearby shire camping sites etc) – need to be very vigilant.

Actions

- Inventory of unmanaged camping on NR and DEC land.
- Case by case basis (ideally within the management planning process).
- Designate camping areas by signage or the gazettal process.
- May actually trigger a review of management planning – priority list and allocation of resources – to write a new plan.
- Revisit CALM Act amendment to accommodate low level camping.

6. ATTRACTING AND RETAINING STAFF

- Younger people are leaving the organisation
- Turn-over rates in remote districts/regions can be high
- Loss of corporate knowledge/community knowledge
- Private sector offers more \$ for similar jobs

ISSUE	SOLUTIONS	ACTION
Housing ▪ GEHA availability ▪ Quality ▪ Power/water ▪ Rents are high ▪ Security ▪ risks	▪ Heavily subsidised rent or 'free' ▪ share	▪ Corporate commitment ▪ Regional support
Recruitment ▪ Criteria - too many ▪ Missing targets ▪ Relying on computer literacy	▪ Reduce criteria ▪ Simplify the process ▪ Practical demos	▪ Revise selection process
Wages ▪ High cost of living ▪ Competing with other agencies	▪ Subsidies for travel for medical care (include family)	▪ More generous district allowance ▪ Medical rebates
Isolation ▪ Families vs single ▪ Acceptance into community ▪ Political pressure (controversial issues) ▪ Children & schooling ▪ Social aspect ▪ Psycho ▪ Cost of living very high ▪ Logistics	▪ Regular visits ▪ Communications ▪ A good induction the first day/week must include safety induction ▪ Attend meetings ▪ Meet other staff ▪ Liaison with other agencies	▪ Management support ▪ Good will ▪ Attend local events, functions, bushfires ▪ Engaging in section workshops ▪ Talk with those with similar problems/issues ▪ Management to provide funding for travel
Awards ▪ Complexity of 3 awards - inequity	▪ Change attitudes ▪ Educate staff ▪ Identify benefits of each	▪ Management to support recommendations

7. REVENUE

FACTS

- (1) Plateau in overall revenue since 2001
- (2) Decline in visitation to Monkey Mia, Tree Top Walk and Geikie Gorge
- (3) Entrance/One Day Pass plateau/decline
- (4) Souvenirs \$\$\$ ↑
- (5) Camping \$\$\$ ↑
- (6) Holiday and Annual Local passes stable/decline since 2001
- (7) Annual All Parks and Goldstar \$\$\$ ↑
 - Renewal system ✓✓
- (8) Overall visitation ↑ ?
 - visitation to fee-paying parks needs validation
- (9) Commercial E-Class licence fees ↑ ? Revenue \$\$\$ ↑

ISSUES

- (1) Souvenirs
 - cost of sale
 - utilising staff
- (2) Local situations for models of best practice
 - social
 - cultural
 - economic
- (3) Business planning required
 - qualified and experienced staff
 - localised business manager not regional or state-wide business managers

SOLUTIONS

- (1) Reinforce DEC's CE expectation that PVS capital projects will generate \$\$.
- (2) Review and update fees more regularly.
- (3) Reconsider price disparity between park passes and daily entrance.
- (4) Build business talent
- (5) Creating events for value adding - ↑ pass sales
- (6) Developing destination strategies to link parks and maximise \$\$\$ ops

8. PVS INTEGRATION – PASTORAL LEASES ACQUIRED BY DEC

- Some within DEC see only conservation value in stations, and that infrastructure should be removed.
- Some stations may provide unique recreation opportunities eg:
 - ❖ long distance walk/bike trails
 - ❖ 4WD opportunities
 - ❖ camping and shed accommodation
 - ❖ guided feral hunting?
 - ❖ guided activities (bird watching)
- May be commercial opportunities related to accommodation and activities

ACTION

Cross-region inventory of recreational opportunities

- station infrastructure
-
- land suitability for activities
-
- compatibility with nature conservation values
-
- potential commercial opportunity

Analysis and recommendation for 5-10 stations with potential for PVS involvement/management.