

Making treetops safely accessible

SOUTHERN Forest Region recreation officers are giving considerable thought to the design of facilities which will make Gloucester Tree, Diamond Tree, and Bicentennial Tree safely accessible to members of the public fit enough to climb them.

Manjimup District recreation officer Tim Foley said that it was important that we advised visitors of the risks they were taking in climbing the tree lookouts, and for CALM to take every precaution to ensure the safety of visitors to these attractions.

"At Gloucester Tree CALM is charging a fee of \$5 per car for visitors to gain access to the picnic site and climb the lookout tree," Tim said.

"The revenue collected helps meet CALM's costs for maintaining the facility and providing interpretive information.

"We are looking at ways of implementing a similar entry fee for visitors to Diamond Tree."

Visitor Risk Management Taskforce members John Ireland and Dennis Hilder recently reviewed safety issues associated with visitor use of the lookout trees from the perspective of public risk liability.

Recreation sites such as these are examples of situations where, to fulfil its legal duty of care, CALM needs to take all reasonable measures to ensure that visitors are



Taking a break on the protective platform at the base of the Diamond Tree are, left to right, forest worker Peter Hope, Manjimup district manager John Lloyd, forest worker John Gore and forest ranger and recreation officer Tim Foley. Photo by Rodney Simmonds

aware of any potential hazard, and informed about how they can minimise the risk of incurring injury during their presence on CALM-managed land.

The increasing prevalence of litigation, and the high payout sums awarded by the courts for claims involving serious injuries, has alerted land management and recreation service providers Australia-wide, to the

need for careful consideration of their 'duty of care' and visitor risk management mandate.

In CALM, a *Draft Visitor Risk Management Policy* has been distributed for comment to branch, regional and district managers, rangers-in-charge and other key staff involved in the Recreation and Tourism Program.

The draft policy aims to help staff to better

manage visitor risk and public liability issues throughout the department, and to provide a framework within which CALM will manage risk assessment, risk control, and risk financing components of our overall Risk Management Program.

In preparing the draft, land management and conservation agencies in other States were contacted for information

about their policies and strategies.

The CALM Taskforce intends to continue liaison with this network and to contribute to development of nationally consistent policies, prescriptions and procedures regarding risk management

For further information, please contact John Ireland on (09) 334 0219 or Dennis Hilder on (098) 81 4055.

11/4/95

Proof sheet of these - sent to Tim Foley @ Manji Dist



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