



Best Practice Management Guidelines

for Committees of Management
Managing Caravan and Camping Parks on Crown Land

Every effort has been made to include in this handbook reference to the requirements of the legislation that applies to the operations of Crown land reserves. Legislation that applies to specific reserves or classes of reserves, e.g. cemeteries, has not been included. This handbook will be updated from time to time as changes to the law or to Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) policies occur. While substantial effort is made to ensure the information in the handbook is up to date and accurate, the law is complex and constantly changing. Before undertaking any significant steps or entering into significant contracts or obligations, users should obtain legal advice to confirm the applicable legal requirements and, if appropriate, should contact DSE to confirm current policy.

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Minister's foreword

Victoria has a proud tradition of Crown land caravan and camping holidays. Every year thousands of us choose to spend our holidays in one of the many caravan parks across the state located on Crown land reserves.

Crown land parks vary widely: some operate all year round while others operate only for a few months over summer. Whether they are camping for the first time, or have had many years enjoyment at the same park, campers value Crown land parks for their sense of community and opportunity to relax amid some of Victoria's most beautiful natural environments.

We owe the continued popularity of our Crown land caravan and camping parks to the committees of management who manage them on our behalf, many of whom are volunteers.

Managing a Crown land park is not always an easy task. Many parks are facing increasing demand as our population grows. Some of our parks are still recovering from major bushfires and others from devastating floods.

Committees of Management balance the demands of their park business with the overriding need to manage their reserves for the benefit of the entire Victorian community. It is the dedication of our park managers that will ensure future generations have the opportunity to continue our camping tradition.

These guidelines have been developed to assist committees in this task. They clarify the requirements of government policy, make recommendations that will help committees achieve best practice in the management of their parks and provide links to further information.

I hope that they are of assistance to committees of management as they fulfil their important role. And I congratulate all park managers on the work they do in managing Crown land reserves for the enjoyment of all Victorians, now and in the future.



Ryan Smith
Minister for Environment and Climate Change MLA



About these guidelines

These guidelines have been prepared to assist Committees of Management (CoM) who have been appointed to manage caravan and camping parks located on Crown land. They provide CoM with support in managing their legal, environmental, social and financial responsibilities.

The guidelines will not apply to national parks, parks on freehold land, or parks on council-owned land.

	Application:	Most relevant to:
Section 1: Introduction		DSE staff CoM Park managers
Section 2: Managing responsibilities	CoM can manage their responsibilities in a number of ways. This section will look at the options available. It will also suggest some of the considerations CoM should keep in mind when deciding which option to take.	CoM Park managers Local councils
Section 3: Managing the reserve	This section will discuss the considerations CoM take into account when siting accommodation on the reserve. It will suggest ways CoM can manage their responsibilities to ensure visitor safety, cultural heritage and environmental protection.	DSE staff CoM Park managers Local councils
Section 4: Managing capacity & demand	This section will examine some of the ways a CoM can increase availability of sites at times of high demand and increase occupancy out of season.	CoM Park managers
Section 5: Managing marketing & promotion	This section will discuss some of the ways CoM can attract visitors and plan for the future use of their caravan and camping park.	CoM Park managers
Section 6: Management planning	This section will guide CoM in drawing up a park management plan.	CoM Park managers
Section 7: Glossary & appendices	Definitions and supporting material.	DSE staff CoM Park managers

Requirements, recommendations and more information

These guidelines provide three types of advice that have been colour coded throughout the document for ease of reference. They are:

Requirements

These are requirements, stemming from law or from government policy, with which all CoM must comply. They are listed here to help CoM ensure that they are fulfilling all their legal obligations.

For the most part, CoM will already be managing their parks according to these requirements.

Recommendations

Recommendations included in this document are intended to inform CoM of what represents best practice in the management of caravan and camping parks on Crown land. They are aimed at helping CoM to improve management planning, environmental management and marketing.

Many CoM will already have implemented the measures recommended in this document. Others may decide to implement them gradually, as time and funding allow. Because CoM across Victoria vary widely in both size and location, not all recommendations will apply to all CoM.

More information

These sections direct CoM to organisations, websites and government documents where they can find information to help them fulfil the requirements and recommendations contained in this document.

Definitions

“Committee of Management”, or CoM, refers to a committee which has been appointed by the responsible minister under the *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978* as delegated land manager for a Crown land reserve.

“Park manager” refers to the person responsible for the day to day operation of the caravan park. This could mean the CoM, its employees or contractors, or a lessee to whom the CoM has leased the management of the park.



Bellarine Bayside Foreshore Committee of Management

Section 1: Introduction

Context

In July 2011 the Minister for Environment and Climate Change released the policy statement *Improving Equity of Access for Crown Land Caravan and Camping Parks 2011*. The policy provides direction to CoM in their management of the sale of caravans on-site. It also addresses the increasing demand for Crown land caravan park sites by requiring CoM to provide DSE with evidence of the level of demand for sites in their park. The Department of Sustainability and Environment is currently developing processes which will assist CoM to collate and provide this information.

Further information regarding the policy is provided at Section 4: Managing Capacity and Demand.

Objective

These Best Practice Management Guidelines are intended to help CoM manage their reserves in an environmentally, socially and economically sustainable way by:

- Advising CoM of the laws and policies that affect caravan and camping park management
- Explaining clearly what government expects of CoM who manage caravan and camping parks on Crown land reserves
- Providing advice that will help CoM to plan and make decisions regarding their park
- Providing contacts for further information.

They will be a resource for CoM as they plan for the future.

More information

These guidelines give guidance specific to caravan and camping parks. They should be read in conjunction with the DSE publication *Committee of Management Responsibilities and Good Practice Guidelines* – www.dse.vic.gov.au

Caravan and camping parks on Crown land in Victoria

Crown land is public land provided for the enjoyment and benefit of the people of Victoria. At the time of Victoria's settlement by Europeans, all land was claimed as Crown land. Today, around one-third of the state – approximately 8.8 million hectares – remains as Crown land.

Towards the end of the 19th century the Government began to reserve particular areas for 'public purposes' such as community halls, libraries, showgrounds, public gardens, bushland, zoos, foreshores, recreation reserves, conservation reserves and camping parks.

Today there are 175 Crown land caravan and camping parks across Victoria. These parks are often located in environmentally sensitive areas: on coastal foreshores, riverfronts, lakefronts or natural bushland. Their operation and management can vary greatly due to the local environment, management arrangements, visitor demand, visitation patterns and types of accommodation offered.

Section 1: Introduction

Committees of Management

Formal responsibility for Crown land reserves is held by the Minister for Environment and Climate Change. For many areas, the Minister delegates this responsibility to CoM which have been appointed to manage the reserves under Section 14 of the *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978 (the Act)*.

Under the Act, a CoM is established as the delegated manager of the land, with responsibility to 'manage, improve, maintain and control the land for the purposes for which it is reserved' (Section 15 (1) (a)). The Act enables the committee to:

- Manage and develop the reserve in line with its intended purpose
- Enter contracts and undertake financial transactions
- Borrow money, subject to the Treasurer's approval
- Enter tenure arrangements such as leasing and licensing, for part or all of the reserve, subject to Ministerial approval
- Employ people
- Make regulations.

All CoM manage their reserve on behalf of the Minister for Environment and Climate Change. They are responsible for ensuring the land is managed, maintained, improved and controlled to provide environmental, social and economic benefits for the Victorian community.

Types of CoM

In most cases, a CoM managing a reserve for caravanning and camping will be a local committee, a council or a skills-based committee.

Council CoM may choose to manage a park directly through employment of a park manager or they may lease the park to a private operator. Under Section 86 of the *Local Government Act 1989*, the Council may seek advice in the management of the reserve from another party, usually a community group. This arrangement is referred to as a Section 86 Committee. The Council, however, retains legal responsibility for the park.

Local CoM are generally made up of volunteers who are appointed or elected from the local community. Depending on the size of the reserve, CoM may employ staff such as an executive officer, general manager, park manager and field staff. They may also lease all or part of the caravan and camping park operation.

Skills-based CoM may be formed through an expression of interest process in order to establish a committee with specific skills to manage a reserve with significant environmental and cultural values. Like local CoM, skillsbased CoM may employ staff to help them manage their responsibilities.

Statutory bodies or government agencies may also serve as committees for some Crown land reserves. These agencies generally lease the park to a private operator



Mark Watson, Tourism Victoria

Caravan and camping parks and public land values

CoM, and their thousands of volunteer members, have been protecting the environmental, social and economic values of Crown land in Victoria for over 150 years.

Environmental values

Crown land encompasses some of Victoria's most beautiful, and most fragile, environments. It provides us with the opportunity to learn about our natural environment through tourism and recreation and supplies us with 'ecosystem services' like clean air and water.

CoM are responsible for the protection of the environmental values of the reserves they manage. They balance the needs of permit holders and visitors to caravan and camping parks against the pressure that tourism puts on the reserves. In Crown land parks this often means ensuring that siting, and design in the parks is appropriate, by protecting the sensitive flora and fauna to which the Crown land reserve provides a home, and by preparing susceptible areas for the impact of climate change.

Social values

CoM are charged with ensuring that the benefits of Crown land reserves are available for the enjoyment of all Victorians. In practical terms, they do this by implementing access policies that balance respect for regular campers with the rights of newer campers to enjoy Crown land parks.

They protect the rights of both new and regular campers by informing them that, it is Victorian government policy that Crown land caravan and camping parks should not acquire permanent residents. This ensures that neither group pays for or invests too much in caravans that may have to be moved at the expiry of their 12-month permit.

Economic values

In addition to its environmental and social benefits, Crown land provides Victorians with the economic benefits associated with tourism. These include private investment, jobs and income that can be used for the improvement of the reserve. CoM protect the economic

values of their reserve by ensuring that their park is financially self-sufficient.

As the managers of Crown land reserves, CoM are responsible for ensuring that these values are protected for the enjoyment of present and future generations. This is an increasingly difficult task as many reserves are located in areas, such as coastal foreshore or alpine regions, that are affected by climate change. With planning, appropriate management and monitoring, CoM can ensure that caravan and camping park operations on Crown land enhance the public land values of their reserve.

More information

More information about tourism and public land values is available in the DSE policy *Sustainable Recreation and Tourism on Victoria's Public Land*.

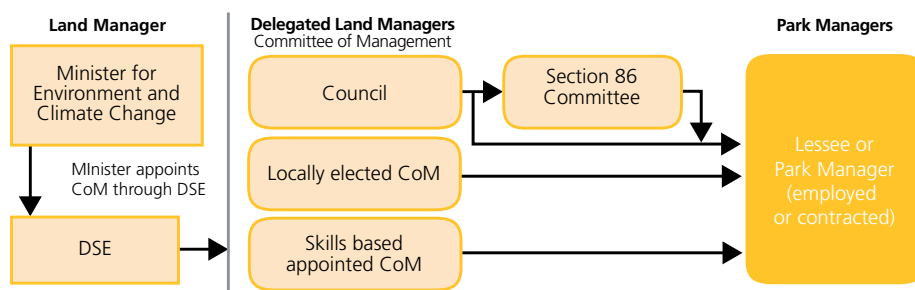


Section 2: Managing responsibilities

Management Models

CoM can choose from two models when deciding how to manage their responsibilities.

Figure 1 – The range of management models possible for managing parks



More information

The powers and responsibilities of CoM are further articulated in the DSE publication *Committee of Management Responsibilities and Good Practice Guidelines* at www.dse.vic.gov.au

- How to deal with difficulties that may arise when important operational decisions need to be made about the park. As employees do not have the authority to make all decisions, issues can take longer to resolve.

Under the employee management model, CoM require regulations to set fees and establish park rules.

Direct management

There are two forms of direct management; employee management and contracted park management.

1. Employee management

A CoM can directly employ staff to manage or service its caravan and camping park. In some cases, these employees live on-site at the caravan park.

This system is simple to implement, with no need for a tender process or lengthy contract documents. If a committee manages more than one caravan and camping park, staff can easily move between each park.

Things to consider when choosing an employee or model of management include:

- Whether the committee is familiar with the skills it takes to run a caravan and camping park and are able to attract appropriate employees
- Ability to ensure compliance with tourism industry award conditions or to meet the large overtime costs often incurred when running a successful caravan and camping park

Requirement

CoM are required to:

- Comply with all Australian and Victorian workplace relations laws
- Contact their local DSE office for assistance when drafting regulations.

More information

- The Australian Government Workplace Authority can provide advice on employment conditions and rates of pay – www.workplaceauthority.gov.au
- Business Victoria can provide assistance with workplace relations issues – www.business.vic.gov.au

Section 2: Managing responsibilities

2. Contracted park management

A CoM may enter into a service contract with a person or with a company to provide management services for the park. The CoM retains the responsibility for managing their reserve.

This management model has several benefits for the CoM. The appointment process provides an opportunity for the CoM to find qualified personnel with the right skills to manage the park. The manager handles all operational matters including reservations and marketing. Minimum standards and procedures can be set into contract documents to ensure high standards in facilities, infrastructure and services delivered. Well written contracts, which clearly articulate roles and responsibilities for all involved, enable decisions to be made more easily.

The park manager model can also generate substantial savings for the committee. The cost of the service is determined through the tender process, and where staff would require award and penalty rates, an entrepreneurial contractor may be more prepared to work the long hours required to ensure a park's success.

Because this management model reduces a committee's day-to-day control over the business, the CoM should ensure that the management contract sets out clearly, and in detail, its expectations for management of the caravan and camping park.

Park managers can range from small, family teams to larger management companies that oversee multiple parks. The experience and expertise of managers varies just as much. A CoM should consider the size and scope of its park operation when deciding which type of management team to engage.

Under the contracted park management model, CoM require regulations to set fees and establish park rules.

Requirement

- Appointments of contracted park managers must be made via a tender process
- CoM must contact their local DSE office for assistance when drafting regulations.

Recommendations

A manager should have:

- Prior experience in a management role
- Knowledge of the caravan park industry
- High quality communication skills
- Knowledge and/or experience in marketing a small business
- Knowledge of the building and maintenance requirements of a caravan park
- Computer skills.

Leased caravan park management

The Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978 provides for CoM to lease their reserves to tenants. All lease proposals require the approval of the Minister before a CoM agrees or commits to lease Crown land. The leasing proposal needs to be developed by the CoM in the form of a detailed submission and submitted to the Minister for approval in principle at the beginning of the process. In some cases the proposal to grant the lease must be submitted to Parliament for parliamentary scrutiny. When the lease preparation process has been completed, the Minister must also approve the terms and conditions of any lease to be entered into by a CoM. Lease proposals must demonstrate public and economic benefit to the community. They should demonstrate that the granting of the lease would not compromise public land values.

It is DSE policy that a competitive process will apply to the leasing of commercial premises on Crown land, such as caravan parks. This may be conducted through a formal lease tender process, expression of interest process or other means approved the Minister. DSE policy recognizes that in some circumstances direct negotiation with a proponent for a lease is acceptable and will achieve an outcome which serves the community interest. Regardless of whether the lease is allocated competitively or through a direct negotiation, the process must be fair, open and impartial.



Southern Grampians Shire



DSE policy provides that a proposal to grant a new lease to an incumbent tenant may be considered when 50% of the term of the lease has expired. A variation of the existing lease cannot be used to extend the term of a lease to an incumbent tenant. The final decision to allocate a lease through a direct negotiation process instead of a competitive process rests with the Minister at the time of the approval in principle to the lease. The Minister may require as a condition of the approval in principle that the CoM undertake a public notification process of the intention to negotiate directly.

Leasing can provide a range of benefits to a CoM and the parks they control. For a CoM, it removes the day-to-day burden of responsibility for managing the park, such as undertaking ongoing maintenance and repairs, while still providing an income stream in the form of rental payments. A lease protects a CoM from the risk of losing money in operating the caravan and camping park.

It can also provide much-needed capital investment into park infrastructure, and promote professional management skills and experience, thereby improving amenity to park visitors.

However, unless the lease comprehensively addresses the CoM's long-term management and development objectives for the park, the leasing model can reduce a CoM's control over the caravan park, and lead to poorer results for the CoM, the tenant and park users. The CoM can overcome this issue at the initial planning stage by developing a detailed park management plan and/or business plan. The management plan provides a foundation upon which to develop the terms and conditions of the lease, or if the lease is to be allocated through a competitive process, the terms of the tender documentation. The plan should set out a long-term strategy to guide the ongoing improvement and development of the park. Strategies to implement improvements in facilities for guests, mechanisms to meet changing demands, or the procedures for protecting environmentally sensitive areas can all be included in a lease.

The lease of a Crown land caravan and camping park can also transfer to the tenant a range of legal responsibilities and liabilities associated with managing the park. If this is not done, or if the CoM does not ensure the lessee manages the park appropriately, the CoM may find itself responsible if anything in the park goes wrong. DSE's standard lease includes provisions to help manage these matters however, for specific issues, it may be necessary to seek legal advice or consult with DSE.

Finally, the lease should include any directions the CoM has for the management of the park. It is highly recommended, for example, that CoM require lessees to adopt the standard site holder agreement (provided at Appendix 4 and available at www.dse.vic.gov.au). Using the standard site holder agreement not only helps to ensure that the park is managed in accordance with

government policy, it provides continuity if a new lessee assumes management of the park. It also ensures that lessees do not mistakenly issue any long term rights to site holders which may effect the management of the park beyond the term of the lease.

Because most leases for caravan parks require tenants to pay for and carry out capital upgrades, they are issued for long terms to provide tenants with an adequate period to recoup their investment. Accordingly, leases should contain provision to review the rental every three years to ensure that the rent paid is fair and equitable to both parties. Unless special circumstances arise, the rental review must be conducted by independent valuation.

Requirements

The lease must:

- Be consistent with the *Leasing Policy for Crown Land in Victoria* – www.dse.vic.gov.au
- Be submitted for ministerial approval
- Be consistent with public land values and the policies of DSE
- Incorporate the provisions of *Improving Equity of Access to Crown Land Caravan and Camping Parks* and associated parks rules regarding access and on-site sales. The policy is included at Appendix 10
- Comply with relevant legislation (for example, *Retail Leases Act 2003* and its associated regulations).

CoM must contact their local DSE office for assistance when considering leasing the management of their park.

Recommendations

The lease should:

- Specify any management directions. These can be taken from the park management plan
- Require lessees to adopt the standard site holder agreement
- Include a commitment to a minimum standard of asset maintenance
- Include provision for rental reviews if the lease is to run longer than three years
- Stipulate standards for maintenance and development
- Include a requirement that the lessee continue to maintain and upgrade the assets of the park for the life of the lease

A detailed park management plan should be in place before the lease is signed (see *Management planning*).

Section 2: Managing responsibilities

More information

DSE's Committee of Management Responsibilities and Good Practice Guidelines – www.dse.vic.gov.au

Management Models: Powers and Responsibility

	Management Model 1: Direct Management		Management Model 2: Leased Caravan Parks
	Employee Management	Contracted Park Management	
Powers			
Ability to issue site permits	CoM by virtue of Crown Land (Reserves) Act (CL(R) Act) regulations.	CoM by virtue of CL(R) Act regulations. Contractor may issue on CoM's behalf.	Lessee. The right to issue permits and the desired terms and conditions should be included within the lease.
Ability to collect site fees	CoM by virtue of CL(R) Act regulations.	CoM by virtue of CL(R) Act regulations. Contractor may collect fees on CoM's behalf.	Lessee. Unless a CoM puts a condition in the lease that requires it to approve fees, the Lessee has the right to set fees at any level.
Capital improvement / development	CoM, subject to the approval of Minister.	CoM, subject to the approval of Minister.	Lessee subject to the approval of CoM and Minister. It is advisable to have proposed capital improvements agreed to prior to the commencement of a lease term and reflected within the lease.
Control of facility / building / land	CoM	CoM	Lessee (exclusive occupancy consistent with the permitted use of reserve).
Rents / contract payments	Wages paid by CoM to employees to undertake tasks.	Periodic payments paid by CoM to contractor in line with agreed contract for the delivery of services to an agreed standard.	Rent paid by lessee to CoM in line with terms agreed to under lease.
Retention of operating revenue (e.g. site fees, fees from sale of goods and services etc)	CoM	CoM	Lessee
Responsibility/liability			
Maintenance of assets	CoM	CoM, however, this would be likely to be a service requirement for the contractor.	As determined under the lease. Maintenance of assets would normally be a requirement under the lease.
OH&S	CoM	CoM / Contractor depending on the issue.	Lessee
Provision of services (gas, electricity, water).	CoM	CoM	Lessee
Public risk liability	CoM	CoM	Lessee (CoM must ensure that the appropriate provisions are contained in the lease and adhered to by the Lessee).



Legal responsibilities

Caravan and camping parks on Crown land are governed by a number of pieces of legislation. A list of relevant rules, policies and regulations is available at www.dse.vic.gov.au

CoM report on these responsibilities for managing caravan and camping parks to a number of different bodies, including local councils and DSE.

Requirement

CoM must comply with all relevant legislation.

More information

All Victorian legislation can be found online – www.legislation.vic.gov.au

Managing a Crown land caravan park

All CoM need to be aware of the range of safety, financial, environmental, planning and cultural heritage requirements affecting their Crown land caravan and camping park. Even where it has appointed a park manager or leased the operation of the park to another party, a CoM has a responsibility to ensure the lessee is managing the park appropriately.

Requirements

CoM must comply with:

- The *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978*
- The *Land Act 1958*
- The *Local Government Act 1989* (in relation to Section 86 Committees and planning requirements)
- The *Country Fire Authority Act 1958* (in relation to the development of Fire Management Plans)
- The *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*
- The *Environment Protection Act 1970*.

Safety

It is particularly important that CoM continue to monitor building maintenance standards and tree safety. If a CoM plans to lease its park, it should ensure that the lease document stipulates standards of maintenance. It then becomes possible to end the lease should the lessee fail to maintain the reserve.

CoM may also have occupational health and safety responsibilities relating to the standards of infrastructure, including caravans and cabins, on their reserve.

Emergencies

Caravan and camping parks on Crown land reserves can be affected by fire, flood, and other emergencies. The risk of an emergency occurring can be managed by the development of an emergency management plan and through appropriate park design.

To ensure adequate open space for recreation and setbacks, no more than 75% of the total area of the caravan and camping park site should be covered by structures, defined as caravans, movable dwellings, unmovable dwellings, tents or an ancillary or service building. Park managers must ensure that adequate space and access is available between caravans for customers and for emergency personnel and equipment.



Section 2: Managing responsibilities

Requirements

It is government policy that Crown land caravan parks should meet the relevant standards provided in the regulations under the Residential Tenancies Act.

More information

- Country Fire Authority (CFA), *Caravan Park Fire Safety Guidelines and Caravan Parks, Fire Danger Periods, and Total Fire Bans* – www.cfa.vic.gov.au
- For information on code red days, refer to the CFA website – <http://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/restrictions/tfbdrforecast.htm>
- State Emergency Services, *Victoria Caravan Parks Flood Emergency Management Plan Guidelines* – www.ses.vic.gov.au
- DSE, *Committee of Management Responsibilities and Good Practice Guidelines* – www.dse.vic.gov.au

Warnings

CoM have a duty to provide appropriate safety information to visitors to their reserves. All CoM should consider community education initiatives to advise visitors of safety issues they may encounter not only in the park but while enjoying activities at local attractions. CoM, particularly those located near water-based recreation sites, must erect warning signs to alert visitors to risks. Where visitors are prohibited from undertaking activities (for example, swimming across a river with strong currents), the red-cross prohibition symbol should be used. The symbols used on the sign should be based on the Australian Standards. To ensure that visitors notice and understand the signs, CoM should provide information – in person, on the noticeboard and/ or in the park newsletter – explaining the importance of signs and the meaning of symbols used.

Requirements

CoM and park managers must:

- Alert visitors to risks they may encounter on the reserve
- Alert visitors to risks they may encounter at local attractions
- Erect warning signs, using symbols based on the Australian Standards, that advise visitors of these risks.

Recommendations

CoM and park managers should:

- Conduct regular risk audits
- Educate visitors as to the meaning and importance of any warning signs near the park.

More information

- Australian Standards – www.standards.org.au



Occupational health and safety

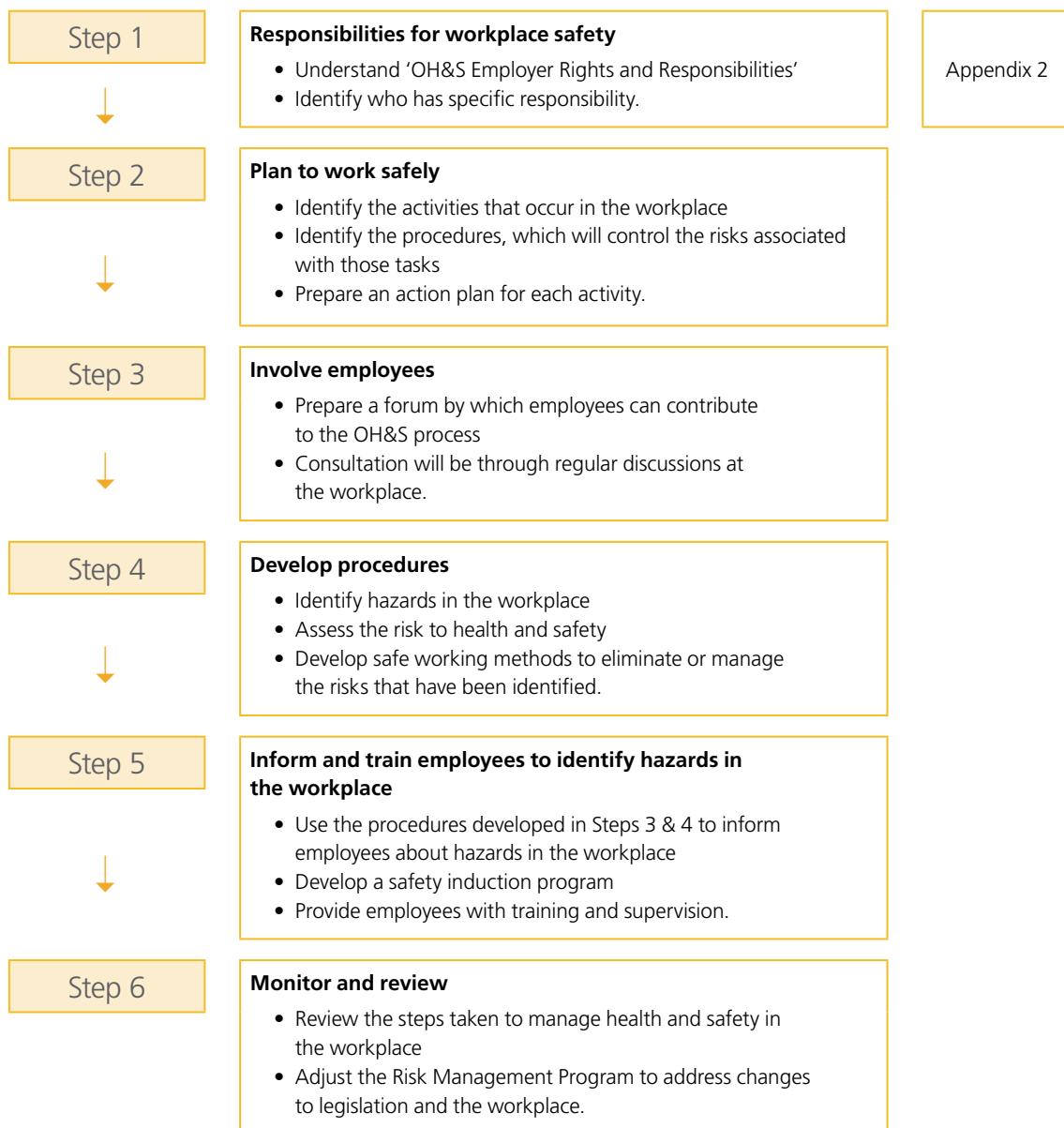
CoM are classified as 'employers' under Victorian legislation. CoM must therefore provide a safe and healthy workplace for workers, contractors and volunteers. The only exception to this rule arises when a CoM leases a Crown land park to a third party. If this lease gives responsibility of all capital works to the lessee, then the CoM also passes over the day-to-day responsibility for OH&S to the lessee.

More information

A full list of OH&S responsibilities applicable to employers is available at www.worksafe.vic.gov.au

OH&S planning

There are six overall steps in planning for health and safety in caravan parks. They are:





Section 2: Managing responsibilities

Asset management responsibilities

CoM and park managers have a responsibility to ensure that caravan and camping park assets are safe and have minimal impact on the natural and cultural values of the reserve. CoM should allocate funding to ensure that park assets are maintained for the length of their economic and environmental life. Appropriate asset management reduces the costs of maintenance and of complying with safety, insurance and legal obligations. This, in turn, reduces the manager's legal and financial risks.

Asset management also increases visitor satisfaction. Visitors notice any deterioration in amenities and facilities that have not been replaced, upgraded or improved for some time. They are less likely to want to book with the park, or to recommend it to family and friends, if its facilities and amenities are not, at a minimum, clean, neat and tidy. CoM need to ensure park assets and facilities are well maintained to attract new and return visitors. Maintenance management systems are available to enable easy control of assets.

When replacing assets, park managers should consider the market they wish to attract to their park. According to manufacturers, for example, 70% of caravans being manufactured in Australia currently have their own shower and toilet facilities. On the basis of this information, a park manager might make the decision to invest in individual site waste points rather than in building a new amenities block. Different seasons will attract different visitors, however. If the park upgrades its assets to only cater for one type of visitor and not the other, it runs the risk of missing out on the alternate trade.

Under a lease arrangement, there is the opportunity to transfer responsibility for the maintenance of assets and capital development to the lessee. Irrespective of whether the park is managed directly by the CoM or by a lessee, however, DSE's approval is required for any planning approvals or major capital works.

Requirements

CoM must:

- Comply with the *Building Code of Australia* (where applicable)
- Ensure assets do not run into disrepair
- Ensure facilities are safe
- Provide an adequate number of toilets, basins and laundry facilities for visitors
- Allocate part of the park income to asset management.

It is government policy that Crown land caravan parks should meet the relevant standards provided in regulations under the Residential Tenancies Act.

Recommendations

CoM should consider the possibility of using a maintenance management system to:

- Schedule routine and non-routine maintenance activities
- Monitor and forecast maintenance costs
- Calculate the economic life of assets
- Plan budgets, incorporate replacement and/or upgrade of assets
- Maintain an asset register required for financial reporting and insurance purposes.

CoM should consider the following when planning the replacement or maintenance of assets:

- OH&S: assets must never be allowed to become unsafe
- Visitor expectations
- The recurring costs of maintaining current or new assets
- Funding options available
- Industry trends.



Running a small business

The business activities of CoM are governed by a number of pieces of legislation.

Requirements

CoM and park managers must comply with:

- The *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978*
- The *Retail Leases Regulations 2003*
- The *Land Tax Act 2005*
- The *Equal Opportunity Act 1995*.

CoM must register with the Australian Business Register and obtain an Australian Business Number.

More information

- Business Victoria is an online resource developed by the Victorian Government to help small business people start, run and grow their businesses – www.business.vic.gov.au
- Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission – www.humanrightscommission.vic.gov.au
- The Office of the Victorian Small Business Commissioner can provide assistance with small business issues – www.sbc.vic.gov.au
- The Victorian Tourism Industry Council can provide useful advice and support for tourism businesses. – www.vecci.org.au/vtic
- DSE's *Committee of Management Responsibilities and Good Practice Guidelines* provide information on working with employees and contracting services – www.dse.vic.gov.au

Risk management

Risk is defined as something that can affect an organisation or business' ability to achieve its objectives or result in other negative consequences for an organisation.

Risk is rated in terms of its impact and likelihood. Risk management consists of tasks undertaken to ensure that risks are appropriately identified, assessed and treated at all levels of an organisation. This includes ensuring an appropriate response, known as contingency and business continuity, is available should risks eventuate.

A risk management program includes:

- Selection of appropriate staff, and a comprehensive and documented staff training program
- Creation and maintenance of an operations manual – ensuring comprehensive guidelines are available
- Establishment of maintenance procedures – regular inspections, risk and hazard identification
- Identification of necessary signage – identify the specific signage needs for each area
- Development of emergency procedures – what to do, where to go, fire extinguishers, disaster plan.

More information

The Australian Government publication *Good Security Good Business* provides information on risk management for small business – www.business.gov.au

The Victorian Tourism Industry Council can provide members with advice about risk management – <http://www.vecci.org.au/vtic>

Section 2: Managing responsibilities

Insurance

CoM who manage their caravan and camping park directly are covered by DSE's public liability insurance. CoM who have contracted out the operation of their park, however, must ensure that the operators have public liability insurance. The usual amount for which a caravan park operation is insured is \$10,000,000.

Undertaking regular risk assessments and ensuring their park is compliant with industry and legislative standards will make it both easier and less expensive for CoM and park managers to obtain insurance coverage.

Where a visitor has a 12-month or seasonal permit, it is their own responsibility to make sure they have public liability insurance and they should be reminded of this when they obtain or renew their permit. If they do not have adequate insurance, visitors should be reminded they might not be covered in all cases by the park's insurance policies.

Requirements

CoM or lessees must be insured for:

- Public liability
- Buildings
- Workers compensation
- Professional indemnity.

Financial Management Responsibilities

Federal laws regulate the financial responsibilities of committees and park managers (see *Management planning*).

Requirements

CoM and park managers must:

- Report annually to DSE on the park's operations, providing a statement of its receipts and expenditure
- Ensure the park has a banking procedure with appropriate on-site cash holding facilities
- Ensure the park has a receipting procedure that balances the day's takings to the receipting system total
- Ensure that a back-up of the park receipting system is taken on a nightly basis. A copy of month-end data should be stored off site
- Ensure all financial information required by the Australian Taxation Office is kept for the statutory time
- Audit the guest list and cash register balance regularly (if applicable)
- Ensure all refunds and adjustments to tariffs are auditable with appropriate notes (if applicable)
- Ensure only compliant tax invoices are issued
- Ensure all fees and charges have the correct GST charged.

Recommendation

CoM and park managers should refer to the Australian Taxation Office to ensure they are meeting all tax requirements.

More information

- The Australian Taxation Office (ATO) can provide additional resources and assistance – www.ato.gov.au
- DSE, *Committee of Management Responsibilities and Good Practice Guidelines* – www.dse.vic.gov.au



Robert Mason, Tourism Victoria



Planning and development

Building & design

CoM have many issues to consider when developing their reserve. They must ensure that they are aware of their obligations under local and state government law and policy and that all relevant permissions are in place before they commence any development work.

It is increasingly important for CoM, when planning, to consider the effect that climate change will have on their reserves. Many Crown land reserves are in areas that are vulnerable to climate change: some parks may be subject to inundation from future sea level rise, while others may find themselves threatened by more extreme weather events such as fires and floods. Appropriate planning can assist CoM to manage risks associated with climate change.

Recommendation

CoM and park managers should:

- Ensure structures are designed according to environmental best practice
- Ensure the use of concrete paving is minimised and promote the use of porous paving materials within the reserve
- Orient buildings to take advantage of the sun and minimise energy use
- Install solar power for lighting and water heating
- Use dune fencing and consolidated, structured, access walkways to beaches and rivers to minimise destabilisation of grass, trees and other vegetation.

Requirements

CoM and park managers must:

- Discuss any development plans with their local council
- Obtain DSE's approval for planning approvals or any major capital works.

CoM and park managers must comply with:

- The requirements of the appropriate planning scheme
- Other local government planning requirements
- *The Building Code of Australia* (where applicable)
- *The Planning and Environment Act 1987*
- *The Coastal Management Act 1995* and the *Victorian Coastal Strategy 2008*
- *Landscape Setting Types for the Victorian Coast*
- *Siting and Design Guidelines for Structures on the Victorian Coast*
- *Design Guidelines For Nature-Based Tourism* (currently in development).

More information

- Local council can provide assistance with planning and business permits. Council contacts can be found at www.mav.asn.au
- The Department of Planning and Community Development can provide information on planning – www.dpcd.vic.gov.au
- Heritage Victoria can provide assistance with heritage overlays – www.heritage.vic.gov.au
- The Sustainable Caravan Park Resource Efficiency Project Final Report can be found at <http://nevrwaste.vic.gov.au/projects/sustainable-caravan-parks-resource-efficiency-project-2007>
- Office of the Victorian Government Architect – www.dpc.vic.gov.au
- Sustainability Victoria – www.sustainability.vic.gov.au
- *Victoria's Nature-Based Tourism Strategy 2008–2012* – www.tourism.vic.gov.au
- *Our Environment Our Future* – www.dse.vic.gov.au
- *Victorian Coastal Strategy 2008* – www.vcc.vic.gov.au
- *Siting and Design Guidelines on the Victorian Coast* – www.vcc.vic.gov.au

Section 2: Managing responsibilities

Managing for the environment

Sensitive design and landscaping can reduce costs for park managers and the park's impact on its environment. The *Sustainable Caravan Park Resource Efficiency Project Final Report* notes that improvements in sustainability can create substantial savings for caravan and tourist park operators.

Requirements

CoM must comply with:

- The *Environment Protection Act 1970*
- The *Native Title Act 1993*
- The *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*
- *Victoria's Native Vegetation Management*
- The Environment Protection Authority's requirements for on-site waste water treatment: www.epa.vic.gov.au

Protecting biodiversity

CoM and park managers can protect biodiversity by planting suitable native vegetation, minimising the removal of existing vegetation, and protecting sensitive areas within the reserves from inappropriate use.

Recommendations

CoM and park managers should:

- Protect and ensure the use of indigenous native plant species
- Choose tree varieties that are less likely to drop branches
- Use water efficient landscaping to conserve water
- Promote the use of organic fertilisers by composting
- Use the landscape to provide climate protection for the park's accommodation, facilities and building
- Use natural alternative solutions to control pests
- Work with stakeholders, including Regional Waste Management groups, Catchment Management Authorities, Water Authorities, the Environment Protection Authority and the Department of Sustainability and Environment to enhance park sustainability.

More information

- Land for Wildlife Victoria is a program supporting landholders or managers who provide habitat for native wildlife on their land. More information on the program can be found at www.dse.vic.gov.au



Southern Grampians Shire



Saving energy

Electricity was the largest operating cost for parks participating in the Sustainable Caravan Parks project. It is also one of the major contributors to greenhouse gas emissions. Solar energy is an alternative, renewable electricity source that emits less greenhouse gas than traditional coal-powered electricity. Local, state and federal subsidies and rebates are available to help offset the financial burden of installing solar power.

Recommendations

CoM and park managers should:

- Install energy efficient light globes
- Use solar energy
- Install recyclable resources
- Replace incandescent light globes with energy efficient fluorescent globes
- Install motion sensors or timers on lighting in ablutions, camp kitchens, etc.
- Install key operated electricity switches in cabins so that visitors and customers cannot leave lights or heating on when they leave
- Use solar or gas hot water heaters
- Check that the temperature setting on the park's hot water system is not set higher than necessary
- Select appliances with higher energy conservation ratings
- Install gas cooking appliances.

More information

- Sustainability Victoria works with all industry sectors to promote and encourage environmental sustainability. – www.sustainability.vic.gov.au
- Sustainable Caravan Parks Resource Efficiency Project information sheets – <http://www.nevrwaste.vic.gov.au/projects/sustainable-caravan-parks-resource-efficiency-project-2007>



Section 2: Managing responsibilities

Saving water

The Sustainable Caravan Parks Project found that 94% of participating parks were capable of halving their water use. Installation of flow control devices and of more efficient toilets can generate substantial savings in wastewater discharge and in costs.

Requirements

CoM and park managers must:

- Comply with local water restrictions
- Comply with laws and regulations regarding safe use of grey and black water.

Recommendations

CoM and park managers should:

- Design new buildings to be able to recycle the grey water from the bathroom and laundry either through the toilet or garden
- Install water tanks to catch rainwater
- Install energy and water efficient showerheads
- Install aerators on kitchen and bathroom sinks
- Install timed taps in ablution areas to deliver reduced amounts of water
- Install dual or multi-flush cisterns for all toilets
- Install waterless urinals
- Install push button or coin operated shower timers
- Install front load washing machines in laundries
- Install a drip irrigation system
- Use water and energy saving measures, such as dual flush toilets
- Check amenities blocks and watering systems regularly for faulty equipment
- Buy efficient appliances
- Inform park users about water saving measures being taken by management
- Educate park users about how they can save water while staying in the park.

More information

- The Environment Protection Authority can provide information about environmental guidelines and management planning – www.epa.vic.gov.au
- Sustainability Victoria has a number of tools to assist businesses to operate more sustainably – www.sustainability.vic.gov.au
- Sustainable Caravan Parks Resource Efficiency Project information sheets – <http://www.nevrwaste.vic.gov.au/projects/sustainable-caravan-parks-resource-efficiency-project-2007>
- The Victorian Water Industry Association can provide information on water restrictions and links to water authorities – www.vicwater.org.au



Publius Mojo, Tourism Victoria



Waste management

Caravan parks generate a lot of waste, particularly during busy periods. The Sustainable Caravan Park Project identified that 60% of waste generated by the participating parks was capable of being recycled. Diverting this waste from landfill would create significant savings in greenhouse gases, in energy, in water and ultimately in costs.

CoM can reduce the amount of waste that ends in landfill by implementing initiatives such as 'reduce, reuse, recycle'.

Requirements

CoM and park managers must comply with any legal requirements relating to waste management.

Recommendations

CoM and park managers should:

- Set up recycling stations for plastics, paper and glass waste
- Reuse items such as cleaning dispensers, boxes, printing paper, etc.
- Use natural food and garden waste to create fertilising material for park gardens
- Dispose of other waste in a safe and environmentally conscious manner.

More information

- The Environment Protection Authority can provide information on waste management – www.epa.vic.gov.au
- Sustainability Victoria can provide advice on environmentally sensitive waste management – www.sustainability.vic.gov.au
- Clean Up Australia's website contains information on how to reduce waste – www.cleanup.org.au

Managing for cultural heritage

Crown land reserves can contain important evidence of European history: of historic mining and saw mill sites in state forests, cattlemen's huts in national parks and historic courthouses in our cities and towns. A Crown land reserve may also be a site of spiritual or ceremonial significance to Victoria's Indigenous peoples, a place where rites of passage were celebrated, where conflict occurred, or where traditional plant, animal or mineral resources occur. These sites are an important part of the heritage of all Victorians and of continuing importance to the Aboriginal community, given ongoing connection to country.

The *Victorian Heritage Act 1995* enables the identification and protection of heritage places and objects that are of significance to the State of Victoria. The Act establishes the Victorian Heritage Register, the Heritage Inventory and the Heritage Council of Victoria. It provides protection for a wide range of cultural heritage places and objects, including historic archaeological sites and artefacts, historic buildings, structures and precincts, gardens, trees and cemeteries, cultural landscapes, shipwrecks and relics and significant objects. The Act is administered by Heritage Victoria – the Victorian State Government's principal agency for historic cultural heritage issues.

Aboriginal cultural heritage in Victoria is protected by the Aboriginal Heritage Act and associated regulations. The Act established the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council and introduced a system of Registered Aboriginal Parties that allows for Aboriginal groups with connection to country to be involved in decision-making processes around cultural heritage. It also established Cultural Heritage Management Plans and Cultural Heritage Permit processes to manage activities that may harm Aboriginal cultural heritage, a system of cultural heritage agreements to support the development of partnerships around the protection and management of Aboriginal cultural heritage and strengthened provisions relating to enforcement of the Act – including Aboriginal Heritage Protection Declarations and stop orders. There are also clearer powers for inspectors and increased fees and penalties for breaches of the Act. Aboriginal Affairs Victoria provides an Aboriginal heritage planning tool and a *Guide to Preparing Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Management Plans*.



Section 2: Managing responsibilities

Places of cultural significance may be protected by a heritage overlay. Heritage overlays are contained within local council planning schemes and assist in protecting the heritage of a municipality. Heritage overlays include places of local significance as well as places included in the Victorian Heritage Register. Heritage in Victoria is also affected by the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* (amended in 2000), by the National and Commonwealth Heritage Lists and the Environment Protection Biodiversity and Conservation (EPBC) Act 1999 and by UNESCO world heritage legislation.

A CoM needs to consider the impact its park may have on items of cultural heritage including culturally significant buildings, Aboriginal heritage sites and artefacts. Committees who manage Crown land caravan and camping parks may have obligations under the *Native Title Act 1993*. Some activities on Crown land trigger a 'future act' process under that Act. Committees may also have obligations under the *Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010* where a Recognition and Settlement Agreement applies to the reserve. CoM with queries about the application of either of the Acts can contact their regional Native Title Coordinator on 136 186.

Requirements

CoM and park managers must:

- Comply with the *Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010*
- Comply with the *Native Title Act 1993*
- Comply with the *Victorian Heritage Act 1995* (amended in 2008)
- Comply with the Aboriginal Heritage Act and associated regulations
- Comply with the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, the Environment Protection Biodiversity and Conservation Act 1999 and UNESCO world heritage legislation
- Alert DSE if they discover evidence of cultural heritage.

Recommendations

CoM and park managers should:

- check whether their reserve is covered by a Traditional Owner settlement agreement. This information is provided on the DSE website – www.dse.vic.gov.au
- check the Aboriginal Heritage Register to see whether their park may contain a site of cultural heritage significance.

More information

- CoM with queries about the application of the Traditional Owner Settlement Act can contact their regional Native Title Coordinator on 136 186.
- Aboriginal Affairs Victoria – www.aboriginalaffairs.vic.gov.au
- Heritage Victoria – www.heritage.vic.gov.au
- DSE's *Committee of Management Responsibilities and Good Practice Guidelines*.



Section 3

Managing the reserve

Once the various safety, cultural heritage and environmental needs of the reserve have been met, the CoM or park manager can consider the mixture of accommodation types available within the caravan and camping park. The variety of accommodation types will differ between parks according to the park size, physical attributes, competitors in the local area and visitor demand and demographics.

Requirements

CoM must ensure that facilities in the park meet certain standards. They must:

- Comply with all relevant standards published in Standards Australia and Standards New Zealand. A full list is provided in the Residential Tenancies Act
- Ensure that people with disabilities can access any building, and use any goods, services or facilities, that the public is allowed to enter or use
- Ensure that caravan and camping sites are situated away from trees, particularly those likely to drop branches
- Ensure that power outlets include an earth leakage (safety) switch. (*Electricity Safety Act 1998* and associated regulations)
- Ensure that water outlets have back flow prevention valves installed (*Plumbing Code of Australia*)
- Ensure that water provided in a caravan park that is intended for drinking is fit for human consumption
- Provide a continuous and adequate supply of water to all sites with permanent connections, all toilet, bathing, kitchen, laundry and drinking water facilities in the caravan
- Ensure that all movable vehicles and communal facilities are in good working order, in good repair and in clean, sanitary and hygienic condition

Requirements (cont')

- Ensure that refuse at the caravan park is regularly removed and disposed of in a sanitary manner to the satisfaction of the council.
- It is government policy that Crown land caravan parks should comply with the relevant standards provided in the regulations under the Residential Tenancies Act.

More information

- Standards Australia – www.standards.com.au
- The Essential Services Commission Victoria can provide additional information on energy and water installation safety requirements – www.esc.vic.gov.au
- The Office for Disability can provide advice on meeting access requirements – www.officefordisability.vic.gov.au
- DSE officers can provide advice on assessing tree risk – www.dse.vic.gov.au



Section 3: Managing the reserve

Accommodation mix

An appropriate mix of accommodation ensures that the park can provide a high standard of service to a maximum number of visitors. The nature of the accommodation mix will depend on a number of factors. There may be physical constraints that limit the types of accommodation offered or significant views that will increase the potential yield of certain sites. Visitors to some parks may prefer to stay in an expensive five star cabin while others may prefer more modest accommodation. Parks that are close to a major state or national highway are more likely to need a large number of drive-through or short-stay sites, while seasonal or 12-month permits may be more profitable for parks in a coastal location or near a major tourist site.

Many CoM will be able to draw on customer feedback or analysis of historic site yield and occupancy data when trying to determine what mix of accommodation is appropriate for their parks. Site numbers and configurations will change over time to take advantage of new products and to cater to a changing marketplace.

Recommendations

The accommodation mix should:

- Ensure access to the park for the maximum number of visitors, especially throughout peak seasons and in areas of frequent tourist turnover, such as coastal foreshores
- Ensure adequate site numbers of the various types of accommodation to minimise waiting lists
- Ensure long-term sustainability by minimising environmental degradation or damage to the park caused by visitors
- Ensure adequate revenue, so that appropriate facilities and amenities can be provided and maintained in the park.
- CoM should consider completing a SWOT analysis of their park (see *Management planning*).

Accommodation types

Each accommodation type has different siting requirements.

Caravans

A caravan site should cater for the size of modern caravans, and provide space for an annexe and a car parking space – approximately 80 to 100 square metres. They need to be located on flatter ground with access to underground services such as power and water. The site may provide a concrete slab for the annexe.

Some caravan parks, particularly those located on major highways, may provide drive-through sites that allow customers to remain hooked up to their caravan overnight. They do not generally need to be as wide as a regular caravan site as they do not require room for an annexe.

Recommendations

CoM and park managers should:

- Consider providing a sewer dump point at a convenient location to service modern, self contained caravans
- Design and site drive-through sites so that they do not interfere with traffic flows and are long enough to accommodate a vehicle and caravan.

En suited caravan sites

En suited caravan sites should be slightly larger than regular caravan sites to allow space for the en suite block in the centre of two or four sites. They provide connection to water, sullage, sewerage and electricity.

Recommendation

- CoM and park managers may decide to locate ensuited caravan sites furthest away from central amenities due to their self contained nature.



Cabins

A modern cabin is 40 to 60 square metres and is usually no more than five metres wide. It generally includes a car space and outdoor area. Cabins may occupy a total area of 120 to 150 square metres.

The number of sites set aside for cabins in a park will be determined by demand. However, as a general guideline, no more than 15 per cent of total sites should be allocated to cabins. This ensures that cabin accommodation is available without encroaching on site areas traditionally set aside for caravanning and camping.

When owned by a committee of management, cabins can provide important income to Crown land caravan parks. When owned by individual permit holders, however, they can reduce the availability of, and cause users to develop an inappropriate sense of ownership over, Crown land caravan park sites. For this reason, unregistrable movable dwellings, such as cabins, are not allowed in Crown land caravan and camping parks, unless owned by the management body or by the lessee with the consent of the management body. Where a permit holder currently owns a cabin located in a Crown land caravan park, the cabin **must not** be sold with the implication of an ongoing right to use of a Crown land site.

Committees may wish to obtain DSE's help in resolving issues associated with privately owned cabins in Crown land caravan parks. Before contacting DSE staff for assistance, CoM should collect the following information:

- Permit documentation from the time of purchase or installation of the cabin and at current date
- Advertisements and purchase documents
- Relevant correspondence between the park user and manager

Requirements

CoM and park managers must ensure that:

- No more than 15 per cent of total sites are allocated to cabins
- There are no cabins which are privately owned by permit holders in their parks.

Recommendations

CoM and park managers may:

- Locate cabins along a foreshore, to take advantage of views and attract visitors all year round
- Locate cabins away from the amenity block due to their self-contained nature
- Build cabins in areas that would be unsuitable for other site types, for example, on uneven ground or areas where grass is difficult to grow.

Camping tents

Tent campers will not generally require power to their sites but should be located close to amenities such as toilets, showers, laundry and cooking facilities as they may not carry their own cooking equipment. Campers that do require power can be directed to a powered grass caravan site.

A popular way to offer the camping experience without taking up space that could be used for higher yielding sites is to set aside open recreation areas as 'overflow' camping during peak periods.

Requirements

CoM and park managers must locate tents away from large trees that are known to drop branches.

Recommendation

CoM and park managers may:

- Encourage campers requiring power to request a powered grass caravan site
- Set aside less than 10 per cent of the park sites for unpowered tent sites.



Section 3: Managing the reserve

Safari tents/standing tents

Safari or standing tents are constructed on raised timber platforms and can be sited on uneven ground that would otherwise be unsuitable for tent camping. Some standing tents provide a basic standard of accommodation; others provide a more upmarket 'camping' experience.

Recommendation

CoM and park managers may decide to locate safari tents near the general camping area as they may need the same facilities.

Camper trailers

Visitors using camper trailers can be directed to a powered grass caravan site.

Recommendation

CoM and park managers may:

- Locate camper trailers that do not require power in the unpowered camping area provided there is vehicle access onto the camping sites
- Locate camper trailers in areas with heavier vegetation coverage as their footprint is relatively small.

Recreational Vehicles (RVs)

Larger RVs can range in height from three to four metres and therefore require high clearance from trees or overhead power lines. They also need considerable space to turn around or to manoeuvre into position. For these reasons, RVs sites need to be relatively large. They also require power and water connections and a sewer dump point to release waste collected between stops.

Recommendation

CoM and park managers may:

- Locate RVs away from amenity blocks
- Locate RVs on available drive-through sites as they do not require sites wide enough for an annexe and the parking of a vehicle.

Campervans

Most campervan sites require power and water connections though some will request an unpowered camping site, particularly for shorter stays. Campervans are not as likely to be self-contained as larger RVs and may need to be close to amenities.

Campervan sites can be used by caravans or tents in periods of high occupancy.

Recommendation

CoM and park managers may decide to allocate a section of the powered caravan site area to locate campervans.



Shire of Murrindindi



Section 4

Managing capacity and demand

CoM and park managers have a number of obligations to manage when dealing with issues of capacity and demand in their parks. They must balance the needs of regular visitors against the rights of all Victorians to have fair and reasonable access to Crown land. They must also protect their reserves from any sense of long-term occupancy.

Ensuring fair access to caravan parks means balancing capacity and demand. CoM can achieve equitable access through:

- Establishment of a permit system
- Allocation of permits in a fair and transparent manner
- Establishment of clear seasons
- A clear fee and charge structure
- Consistent booking procedures.

CoM can issue permits and fees for park entry under regulations in Section 13 of the *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978*. If a caravan and camping park is leased, regulations are not required for the operation of the park, but any management objective the lessee needs to follow must be included as a condition of the lease.

Improving equity of access to Crown land caravan parks – Policy Direction One

The *Policy for Improving Equity of Access to Crown Land Caravan and Camping Parks 2011* has been developed to enable parks to respond to increasing demand for sites and facilities and to ensure affordable holidays at Crown land caravan and camping parks in Victoria.

The policy requires committees of management to provide the Department of Sustainability and Environment with evidence of the level of demand in their parks. It also sets out a process which must be followed when a van is sold on site. For a variety of safety and environmental reasons, sale on-site has been limited to vans which meet the standards for registrations under the *Road Safety Act 1986*.

Parks which had not banned sales of registrable movable dwellings as of 14 July 2011, will be required to allow for on-site sale of registrable caravans.

The policy will apply to all Crown land caravan and camping parks in Victoria to provide for consistency in management of demand in caravan parks across the State.

The full policy is provided at Appendix 10 or at www.dse.vic.gov.au/caravanparks.

Requirements

CoM must provide DSE with evidence of the level of demand in their parks. DSE is currently developing a process which will assist to CoM obtain and provide this evidence.

Permits and agreements

Permits and agreements are essential tools for CoM when managing capacity and demand. They protect the rights of both the site holder and the park manager by clarifying expectations, demonstrating visitor agreement with fees, and set out the circumstances in which the permit can be rescinded. Permits also indicate to the camper or caravanner that there are limits to their rights over their site. They also prevent visitors developing a sense of long-term occupancy over the site they use.

Sandy Beach Holiday Park* is a Crown land park under the management of Sandy Beach Council. The management of the park is leased to a private company. This park has a large number of sites allocated to 12-month permit holders. Park management has developed a detailed site occupancy agreement that spells out the rights and responsibilities of permit holders choosing to leave their vans in the park. This agreement ensures that permit holders are fully aware of the rules governing a 12-month permit. All permit holders are required to sign one of these agreements before being allowed to occupy a site.

**The name of this caravan park has been changed*



Section 4: Managing capacity & demand

Permanent residency

No person should become a permanent resident in a Crown land caravan and camping park. To prevent permit holders developing a sense of long-term ownership over the site on which they stay, CoM should limit the length of visitor stay to 59 consecutive nights or a total of 180 days a year.

Types of permits and site agreements

There are several types of permits and agreements offered by parks: 12-month, Seasonal and Casual site agreements

12-month permits allow visitors to leave their caravan on site for a 12-month period and to use the site at their convenience throughout that period, usually for no more than 180 days per year in total. A 12-month permit is not a guarantee for access to that site in subsequent years. At the end of the 12-month period, the caravan and any attachments must be able to be moved or taken off site if another permit is not granted.

Seasonal permits are available in some Crown land caravan and camping parks. Seasonal permits allow visitors to leave their caravan on-site for a defined period – usually between specified dates. Some parks offer a summer season, while others will offer various seasons over the season, for example, November to the end of January, then January to Easter. This option allows access for more visitors and helps to manage waiting lists. In some parks these permits are offered because when the season is finished the park reverts to public open space.

Seasonal permits can, in some cases, limit a park's revenue in peak season when demand is highest. CoM and park managers can mitigate this risk by reducing the length of permits and adjusting prices, thereby providing opportunities for a greater number of visitors over the season and increasing income.

Casual (Short Stay) agreements are popular with visitors, particularly in the holiday periods and in caravan and camping parks situated on the coast.

On-site sales

Selling a caravan on-site allows the vendor to avoid the inconvenience of packing up and removing their caravan, annexe and other attachments.

Unfortunately, it may also give the purchaser the inaccurate perception that they have gained ownership of the site, rather than solely the caravan and accessories that they have actually bought.

The practice of on-site sale of caravans can create a variety of issues:

- Caravan vendors and buyers may falsely assume a sense of ownership of caravan sites on public land
- The purchase price of a caravan on-site may not reflect the true market value of the item/s being sold
- On-site sales may artificially slow turnover of permit holders as caravan vendors hold out for their desired sale price
- A person who wishes to obtain a 12-month permit but does not wish to purchase a caravan on-site may be disadvantaged
- There is potential for profiteering from public land.

Requirements

CoM must:

- Contact their local DSE office for assistance when drafting regulations
- Ensure access to each type of permit is fair, equitable and managed in a transparent manner

The Policy for Improving Equity of Access to Crown Land Caravan and Camping Parks 2011 – Policy Direction 2

The policy allows the sale of vans on-site where:

- Committees allow the sale.
- A transparent process occurs, where an independent valuation of the van has been done before the sale and the van is sold within the permit year that it is first offered for sale. If the van is not sold within the term of the permit or six months, whichever is greater, the van must be removed from site.

Requirements

Where a CoM allow the sale of a van on-site, it must:

- develop and maintain a waiting list of people wishing to access a site. The committee/park manager may choose to charge a fee to cover administration costs.
- restrict sale of vans on-site to the prospective buyers on the waiting list.
- must obtain prospective buyers' written permission to pass on their contact details to caravan vendors upon notification of intention to sell.
- distribute a notice to prospective buyers as they join the waiting list, to ensure they fully understand the purpose of Crown land caravan and camping parks and the process of purchasing a caravan on-site. The notice must also be displayed on any van which is for sale on-site. A template Notice to Prospective Buyers is included at Appendix 6.

The full policy is provided at Appendix 10 or at www.dse.vic.gov.au/caravanparks.

Implementation of the Policy for Improving Equity of Access to Crown Land Caravan and Camping Parks

Improving Equity of Access to Crown Land Caravan and Camping Parks should be reflected in the conditions and covenants of any lease of a Crown land caravan or camping park. The best way of doing this is to make sure that a current and comprehensive park management plan is developed in consultation with DSE before a lease is entered into.

CoM whose parks are currently operating under a lease may agree with the lessee to vary the lease to incorporate this policy. In these cases the two-year implementation phase will apply immediately. Where the CoM and lessee do not agree to vary the lease to incorporate this policy, the two-year implementation phase will commence when the next lease is granted.

For assistance

For assistance please contact:

Policy Officer, Caravan and Camping Parks

2/8 Nicholson Street, East Melbourne VIC 3002

Website: www.dse.vic.gov.au/caravanparks

Email: caravan.parksproject@dse.vic.gov.au

Phone: DSE Customer Service Centre on 136 186

Requirements

CoM must:

- Ensure that the policy direction is stipulated in new lease arrangements where the CoM and lessee do not agree to incorporate the *Policy for Improving Equity of Access to Crown Land Caravan and Camping Parks* into existing leases
- Consult with stakeholders when preparing park management plans
- Ensure park management plans are endorsed by DSE before implementation.

More information

CoM can seek assistance from their local DSE office when implementing the policy. They may also contact the Caravan Park Policy Officer at caravan.project@dse.vic.gov.au.



Section 4: Managing capacity & demand

Seasons

The establishment of seasons allows the park manager to spread demand for access to park sites throughout the year. Providing a number of seasons, each charged at a different rate, encourages 100% occupancy of the park over a longer period. It is common practice for caravan and camping parks to have up to three seasons – offpeak, shoulder and peak.

The **off-peak season** is the quietest period of the year. It is usually set between April and December. It will attract the lowest fees.

In the off-peak season minimum booking periods are generally not applied.

The **shoulder season** is usually set for periods immediately before and after the peak season. A shoulder price, for example, may be offered for the last two weeks of school holidays to encourage families to stay at a later period.

Peak season is set when demand is at its greatest: traditionally at Christmas, Easter, school holidays and over some long weekends. It will attract the highest fees.

A minimum booking length can be enforced during peak season to help maximise occupancy and increase the number of visitor nights for the park. A one- or two-week minimum booking for advance bookings would usually apply over the Christmas period. A four-day minimum booking period would usually apply over Easter. As the start of these holiday periods draws nearer, any vacant sites would be let out for shorter periods.

Recommendations

CoM should consider adopting the following seasons:

Shoulder season

- Apply a minimum booking period.
- Offer vacant sites for shorter periods as the holidays approach.

Peak season

- Consider adopting shoulder or peak rates during school holiday periods, public holidays and long weekends.
- Consider setting a shoulder or peak rate during large regional or local events.
- Analyse occupancy data for price sensitivity.

Settings of fees

The ability to set fees for entry into a caravan park is outlined in regulations under Section 13 of the *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978*. DSE can help CoM meet their obligation of ensuring regulations are up-to-date and reflect the current fee structure.

CoM consider a number of factors when setting fees and charges. These include the location of the park, quality of product and facilities, demand, accessibility and competitor pricing. Many CoM rely on caravan and camping park businesses to raise funds for management of other areas of their reserves and take this into account when setting fees.

The setting of fees and charges should ensure, at a minimum, that the cost of running the business and maintaining facilities to an adequate standard are recovered over the period of a financial year.

The following daily and weekly rates for sites and accommodation are common practice in the caravan park industry:

- Daily price set
- Weekly price set – six times the daily rate in off-peak and shoulder periods
- Weekly price set – seven times the daily rate in peak periods
- All prices advertised need to be set and charged as GST-inclusive

Requirements

CoM or park managers must:

- Ensure their regulations are up to date and reflect the current fee structure
- Review fees regularly to ensure they are fair, competitive and cover costs
- Implement strategies to ensure income flow
- Ensure 12-month permit fees are paid upfront or in set instalments.

Recommendations

CoM should:

- Set highest rates in periods of high demand and lowest rates in periods of low occupancy
- Analyse occupancy data regularly. This will enable better management of shifts in demand
- Set and review rates annually
- Review rates when introducing new products
- Ensure rates are provided to park visitors upon arrival
- Include rates on advertising material to attract visitors to your park
- Charge fees for extra guests staying with 12-month permit holders
- Consider charging an additional fee for more than one vehicle per site or for a boat. This can assist in space management
- Consider communicating to existing and potential users when deciding to alter rates outside a normal annual cycle. The increase may not be charged, but it is always easier for a manager to promote a cheaper rate than a rate higher than that advertised
- If a price rise is necessary during the year it may be beneficial to include the increased rates in the park budget in anticipation.

More information

DSE's *Committee of Management Responsibilities and Good Practice Guidelines* provide further information regarding regulations.

– www.dse.vic.gov.au

In order to reduce the number of unused sites in their parks, many CoM and park managers are introducing pricing and management strategies to encourage permit holders to use their sites.

Grassy Hill Caravan Park* – This park has increased its seasonal permit fees to the equivalent of 45 nights a year. This strategy is based on the premise that if permit holders see they are paying for 45 nights they will be more likely to use the sites more to get their money's worth.

Running River Shire CoM* – This CoM has implemented a 'use it or lose it' policy for 12-month permits. Permit holders who consistently leave their vans vacant will be unable to renew their 12-month permit and the site will be made available to another customer who will use the site on a more regular basis. In addition, these parks try to rotate seasonal permit holders around onto different sites each year. This helps to reduce the permit holders feeling of 'permanency'.

Lofty Mountain Park* – This park has introduced a prepaid voucher system. They increased the 12-month permit fee by the equivalent of 12 nights' fees. When permit holders pay their annual fee they are given 12 vouchers for 1 night accommodation. This encourages permit holders to use the site as they have prepaid for 12 nights' worth of stays. This system also means park managers get site fees upfront, which helps their cash flow.

* *The names of these caravan parks have been changed*

Section 4: Managing capacity & demand

Booking and payment

The booking procedures of a park are an important factor in ensuring fair and equitable access to all sites. Particularly during peak season, demand for certain types of accommodation will be very high: it is the responsibility of the park manager to ensure a reasonable number of visitors can enjoy access to their park.

To secure bookings, especially during peak periods when demand can exceed capacity, payment – or part payment – may be requested prior to the visit. Lists of rates and any booking requirements should be readily available to visitors or explained when bookings are taken.

Recommendations

CoM should consider the following booking policies and procedures:

General booking guidelines

- Credit card payment at booking for short casual stays of one to two nights.
- Credit card number left as security for cabin bookings in case of breakages, damage or theft. Customers without credit cards may pay deposits by posting a cheque within five days of booking.
- Check by 2.00 pm. Check out by 10.00 am, check out of sites by 10.00 am.

Twelve-month permit

The customer should sign an agreement that stipulates all the rights and responsibilities of a permit holder. Payments can be made monthly, quarterly or annually, in advance, by direct debit if available.

Recommendations (cont')

Seasonal permit

Seasonal permits should always be granted on the basis that the customer signs an agreement that stipulates all the rights and responsibilities of a permit holder. For consistency, booking policies for seasonal permits should closely follow booking policies for twelve-month permits.

Payments can be made monthly or quarterly, in advance, by direct debit if available. If the season ends before the end of the month or quarter, the last payment should be pro rata.

Short stay

A popular method of allocating sites during busy times is to require advance bookings to have a standard check in/check out day. For example, have guests check in and out on Saturdays. This system minimises the number of vacant site nights during these times.

For peak season bookings a deposit should be payable at the time of booking with the balance due one month prior to arrival.

For shoulder season bookings a deposit should be payable at the time of booking with the balance due on arrival.

For off-peak season bookings, a deposit should be payable at the time of booking with the balance due on arrival.

Cancellation conditions

In some instances, visitors are unable to keep their holiday commitment once bookings have been made or even confirmed. It is advisable that cancellation conditions be clearly available to visitors when they make their bookings and also explained when they advise they will be unable to keep their booking.



Ken Stepnell, Tourism Victoria

Recommendations

CoM may consider adopting the following cancellation procedures:

Peak periods

If cancellation occurs more than 28 days in advance, the full deposit can be retained by the park for a future booking, or the visitor can obtain a refund of deposit, less an administration fee.

If cancellation occurs less than 28 days in advance and the visitor wishes to book at a later date, the deposit can be retained for use for the future booking. If the visitor wishes to cancel their booking without re-booking, no refund would be payable, particularly where it is unlikely the site will be rebooked by another customer.

Off-peak periods

Deposits can be refunded irrespective of the notice period for cancellation, less an administration fee.

Collection of accommodation data

Computerised reservation systems allow the easy and accurate collation of data from guests, as well as taxation compliance and detailed financial and statistical reporting. They can also often simplify the distribution of direct marketing material.

A computerised reservation system can enable important data to be collected from customers and stored in the database for future use. Detailed reports can be produced showing occupancy and turnover for each category of accommodation and compared against previous periods. This will allow park managers to analyse bookings over various seasons or months of the year and will provide CoM with the ability to make informed decisions about the appropriate mix of accommodation for their park.

Recommendations

CoM and park managers may wish to consider managing their business through a computerised reservation system. There is a range of software packages specifically tailored to the caravan park industry.

More information

Details of appropriate software packages can be found via the software manufacturers' websites. A list of software manufacturers can be found on either the Caravan, RV and Accommodation Industry of Australia (CRVA) website – <http://www.welovethiscountry.net.au> or the website for the Victorian Caravan Parks Association – www.vicparks.com.au



Section 5:

Managing marketing and promotion

The Australian caravan and camping industry has changed considerably over the past decade. As demographics and customer expectations continue to change, so will the industry.

Changing markets

The caravan and camping industry is experiencing an increase in customer expectations. Customers tend to favour parks that provide a high standard of accommodation and good service.

The Department of Sustainability and Environment commissioned research into customers' expectations of facility standards in Crown land caravan and camping parks.

Customer expectations identified by Quantum Market Research:

- The majority of respondents expect a caravan park to provide basic toilet, showering and laundry facilities
- Seventy-six per cent of respondents expected easy access to sites
- Sixty-five per cent expected a playground
- Fifty-four per cent expected a children's area
- Fifty-one per cent expected kitchen facilities
- Thirty-five per cent expected internet access.

Sixty-nine per cent of respondents considered the standard of facilities offered when choosing which park they would visit.

Potential markets

The more a CoM knows about its region – those who visit it and the experiences they are seeking – the more targeted its marketing can be.

Tourism Victoria commissioned research to investigate the markets available to caravan and camping park operators. The following were the groups most likely to use caravan and camping parks:

Basic needs – Travel primarily to visit friends or relatives. They also like to gamble (play pokies and bingo) while on holiday. The low discretionary income of this segment is reflected in the low overall cost of their holidays and greater use of package tours.

Traditional family life – Keen holiday tourers, as reflected in their high use of caravans and campervans. Sightseeing is an important aspect of their holiday experience, with a greater tendency to visit museums, art galleries, historical places and wineries. Visiting friends or relatives is also an important aspect of the TFL's holiday experience.

Look at me – Take an average number of holidays, but lack the necessary budget to travel interstate. They use buses, trains and friends'/relatives' cars to reach their destination. They participate in social activities such as cinemas and nightlife and outdoor activities, particularly adventure activities such as snow-skiing, water-skiing and sailing. This segment is also likely to visit theme parks.

Something better – Like to gamble, with a tendency to visit casinos and play poker machines. This segment also participates in outdoor activities such as fishing, sailing, swimming and other beach activities.

A fairer deal – Likely to stay with friends and relatives, go camping, or use cabin accommodation. This segment is more likely to use buses and trains on holidays. They like nature-based holidays, going to pubs and nightlife, along with visiting friends or relatives.

More information

Tourism Victoria compiles summaries of domestic and international visitation including market profiles for Victorian caravan and camping tourism – www.tourism.vic.gov.au

Section 5: Managing marketing & promotion

New parks Parks specifically targeting the RV market are beginning to appear in Victoria. To attract RV customers, park managers should endeavour to provide suitable facilities, including larger sites, drive-through sites and dump points.

Overseas markets Park managers should consider opportunities to attract visitors in the growing overseas markets, especially those who prefer to travel in larger motor homes, and backpackers.

Recommendations

CoM should:

- Allocate adequate budget each year to ensure the standard of the caravan park is maintained or enhanced
- Strike the right mix between price and occupancy
- Pursue opportunities to reduce costs in all areas of park management
- Obtain professional assistance in determining the correct mix of facilities, accommodation types and price
- Exploit marketing opportunities and tailor marketing to a niche market
- Encourage better service levels through key reporting of area management contracts and remuneration
- Ensure management teams are customer focus driven and entrepreneurial: surpassing customer expectations will attract repeat business.

More information

Tourism Victoria compiles summaries of domestic and international visitation – www.tourism.vic.gov.au

Marketing support

There are a number of organisations that can assist parks with marketing.

Local Tourism Associations (LTAs)

LTAs refer visitors to local tourism businesses through their websites, visitor guides and tourist information centres.

They can also help parks to develop relationships with other tourism providers in the local area with a view to creating packages or referral business. LTAs also operate visitor information centres and can provide a booking service on behalf of accommodation providers in return for a commission.

Caravan and camping parks may also consider taking up membership with the RACV or Coastal Camping Victoria, which provide member parks with the opportunity to advertise on their website and in their publications.

Tourism Victoria

Tourism Victoria, as the state's tourism body, markets Victoria as a tourism destination to Australia and the world. Tourism Victoria can provide parks with valuable information on marketing or with free promotion in regional marketing campaigns.

Professional marketing companies CoM can seek assistance in promoting their parks from companies who specialise in marketing caravan and camping accommodation.

Investing in effective marketing techniques can ensure visitors will be attracted to a park consistently throughout the year.

Recommendations

CoM should:

- Develop strategies to attract emerging markets, including retirees, and larger groups including schools and tertiary students
- Cater for campervans, mobile homes, recreational vehicles, and provide environmentally sustainable accommodation, and standing camps (higher end tent accommodation)
- Consider how to expand the client base, particularly outside peak season.

More information

The Victorian Tourism Industry Council can provide information on Local Tourism Associations – www.vecci.org.au/vtic

Promotion techniques

Obtaining a star rating

The national star rating scheme in Australia is conducted by AAA Tourism. The scheme uses over 500 criteria to assess a property and determine its rating between one and five stars. A star rating provides a park's customers with assurance as to its quality. To be eligible for a star rating a park should register with the AAA Advantage scheme. Park managers can then conduct self-assessments using the AAA Tourism inspection criteria, which may indicate areas where possible improvements could be made prior to an inspection by AAA assessors. These are available on the AAA Tourism website – <http://www.aaatourism.com.au/>

Web marketing

The internet is one of the most important marketing channels for the accommodation industry. An informative park website is an essential marketing tool.

Recommendations

A park website should, as a minimum, include the following:

- Park name
- Contact details – email address, phone number, fax number
- Location – address, preferably a map and perhaps directions from nearest towns
- Photographs highlighting the major features of the park
- List of accommodation types
- Pricing options and any special rates or packages
- List of park features and facilities.

Additional information may include:

- Floor plans of accommodation or even virtual tours of accommodation or the park
- Digital site map of park
- Downloadable rate cards
- Online questionnaires
- Secure booking and enquiry forms
- Calendar of organised park activities
- Local attractions such as markets, musicals, etc.
- Special offers
- Testimonials from happy customers.

Search engine marketing

A park's website should be embedded with targeted keywords that ensure it is ranked well on major search engines such as Google, Yahoo! and NineMSN. These keywords need to be continually revised to keep up with changes in the park's marketing and in the way search engines find and rank sites. Other ways to improve the ranking of the park's site include link exchanges with other sites that rank well in its region, keeping content on the site up to date, and creating pages that are rich with your targeted keywords.

Professional web marketing organisations may be of assistance when developing and optimising websites. Searching the web for 'search engine marketing' or 'search engine optimisation' will provide links to these companies.

Pay per click (PPC)

Pay per click is a form of web marketing that allows advertisers to target specific internet searches and have their advertisement appear at the top or side of search engine results without their actual website having to rank well in the search engine. This is particularly useful when a site is brand new, or when targeting search terms that are very competitive. Google AdWords, Yahoo! Search Marketing, and Microsoft adCenter are the major pay per click providers.

As you pay for every click through to your website this type of advertising can be expensive. Pricing is determined by the popularity of the search terms you target on a bidding system. A park can set a monthly or daily budget for PPC. Its advertisement will no longer appear when you reach your limit for the period.

Online reservations

Online reservations are another way to turn potential customers into bookings. By having an online booking system linked live to your reservation software, customers can browse the site, choose the accommodation type they want, and reserve their site/cabin all in the one process.

Click calling

Click calling is an initiative that gives customers a 'call to action'. A button on an accommodation provider's website connects customers to reservation staff directly. The customer can type in their phone number and click the button. Accommodation provider staff call them instantly.

Click calling is useful for customers who perform all their research on the web but are hesitant to provide credit card details online. It also suits customers who have further questions as staff can finalise the sale immediately.

Section 5: Managing marketing & promotion

Last minute sites

Last Minute sites, such as wotif.com, roamfree.com and quickbeds.com.au allow park managers to convert last minute vacancies into bookings. Vacancies are listed online at a reduced rate, thereby reaching a much wider audience. These sites can be linked live into a park's reservation system so that inventory is updated automatically.

Global Positioning Systems

Many caravanners now carry Global Positioning Systems (GPS) in their vehicles and use them to locate their destination or the closest accommodation to their current position. Ensuring a park is locatable via GPS maximises its chance of attracting visitors.

Travel directories

For a relatively low annual fee managers can list their park in an online travel directory such as Travel Victoria or TravelAU. Travel directories generally rank well on accommodation searches.

Print marketing

There are a number of print publications that provide valuable referrals to caravan parks. In Victoria the three main print marketing publications to consider are the VicParks Directory, the AAA Tourism (RACV) tourism guide and local regional tourist guides.

The VicParks Directory provides details of Victorian caravan parks. It is distributed via member parks and at the annual Caravan and Camping Supershow in Melbourne. Members of the Victorian Caravan Parks Association receive a free park listing in this publication. Parks can also opt to pay for display advertising space for more impact.

Visitors to regional Victoria often refer to local regional tourist guides to help them decide what type of accommodation to book. The guides are distributed through visitor information centres and other tourism outlets. Parks that have joined their Local Tourism Organisation will generally receive a free listing in these directories. Parks can opt to purchase display advertising space for more impact.

The AAA Tourism Tourist Park Guide is one of the most popular reference choices for travelling caravanners and campers in Australia. Listing is free for parks that are registered in the AAA Advantage star-rating program. Display advertising space is available for a fee.

Printed material

Caravan and camping parks can attract additional visitors by distributing information packs to prospective visitors by mail or through local tourist attractions. An information pack would normally include a brochure, rate card, park rules, park map and refund or cancellation policy. These items give customers the information they require to make an informed decision about staying at the park.

Other printed marketing items that can be used to promote a park include branded receipt paper, questionnaires, newsletters, activity flyers, pens and fridge magnets.

Word of mouth

Word of mouth is one of the most reliable and trustworthy sources of information about products and services.

Some ideas to increase referrals and occupancy are:

- Offering a bonus or upgrade or discount to return visitors if they refer a friend or relative
- Giving brochures or cards to departing visitors (particularly long-term travellers) to pass out to people they meet on their travels
- Providing visitors with a souvenir – perhaps a bookmark or postcard – of their stay at the park.

Local area marketing

Local area marketing builds on the relationships a park has developed with other suppliers in the local area. Not only can other suppliers refer visitors to a park, they can also provide opportunities to add value, or 'package' other products or services with those of the park.



Bellarine Bayside Foreshore Committee of Management

Organised activities

On-site activities can increase occupancy through extension of stay and encouraging visitors to return. They also help visitors mingle and develop lasting relationships. There is a wide range of activities that parks can offer to all visitor groups, many of which cost very little. Possible activities include spotlight walks, happy hour at the camp kitchen and barbecues.

Packages

Consideration can be given to providing packages to attract visitors, particularly in off-peak periods. Packages aim to extend the length of stay and add value to the holiday experience.

Possible packages include

Weekend package

This package allows guests to stay for the full weekend without paying the full second night rate. It can be offered during shoulder and off-peak seasons to attract visitors during times of the year they may not otherwise consider staying in a caravan park. It generally includes check-in on Friday and late checkout on Sunday with rates set at three-quarters of the regular rate for two nights.

Special and mid-week packages

These can be offered during shoulder and off-peak seasons to attract visitors during quieter times. Visitors staying four nights mid-week (arriving on a Monday and departing on a Friday) only pay for three nights.

Off-peak promotions

During the quieter months (for example, during winter), packages that include services or goods from local businesses (such as a free dinner, bottle of local wine or entrance into a local tourist attraction), as well as competitively priced accommodation at the park, can increase occupancy.

Obtaining accreditation

Accreditation tells visitors the kinds of facilities and amenities they can expect to find at a caravan and camping park and the standards to which they are maintained. Some visitors will decide to visit one park over another on the basis of this information.

Accreditation improves the overall performance of the caravan and camping park by providing a framework for business planning, risk management, environmental management, human resources management, marketing, and customer service.

It identifies key areas for improvement and helps to address and implement these improvements in a logical and efficient manner. It also provides customers with an assurance that the park they have chosen is operating responsibly.

In Australia accreditation for caravan parks is provided through the CRVA. It is implemented through a step-by-step process that requires parks to create an individualised operations manual that addresses all the key business management areas.

Once accreditation is achieved, a park can legally use the Tourism Tick in all promotional material. The Tourism Tick is a nationally recognised benchmark of quality tourism business performance. Major park insurers also recognise CRVA's accreditation quality management system. They offer discounted premiums that can save a park thousands of dollars annually.

Many Crown land caravan parks may already have many of the policies in place that are required for accreditation. CRVA provides comprehensive self-help guides as part of the accreditation kit. Alternatively, there are CRVA approved licensees that can guide CoM through the accreditation process for a relatively small fee. This fee is usually recouped quickly through reduced insurance premiums. More information, including a list of approved licensees, can be obtained from the CRVA website.





Section 6: Managing planning

Like any business or organisation, a CoM needs a broad vision to operate at its best.

In the case of CoM for caravan and camping parks on Crown land, an ongoing strategy and vision comes through park management planning. A park management plan clarifies the current use and future direction of the reserve and enables everybody involved in the park – managers, employees and visitors – to work towards the same outcomes. It draws upon information contained in other CoM documents – the business plan, the environmental management plan or development and maintenance plan.

A major part of management planning is strategic planning; that is, deciding what the future holds for the park, and working towards that vision. Strategic planning will deliver improvements in the management of a park and efficiency in the operation. The planning process, and the plan itself, will help to:

- Increase awareness of business operations and efficiency
- Increase awareness of environmental and sustainability considerations
- Prepare for and control risks
- Understand financial needs and identify financial efficiencies.

The management planning process can be broken down into three broad parts: **setting objectives, defining the asset** and **creating a plan**.

Principles of running a successful business

CoM should consider adopting, at a minimum, the following business principles:

Plan

The importance of planning cannot be emphasised enough! Not having a business/management plan is like navigating without a map.

Principles of running a successful business (cont')

Grow to survive

Growth might not be the CoM's primary objective, but if a business doesn't grow at least in line with inflation, then it is going backwards. A business will eventually lose money if its revenue does not grow in line with inflation.

Understand your environment

Many problems are caused through a lack of understanding and knowledge. A business needs to understand the competitive environment in which it operates, the customers it targets and the policy and legal requirements that affect it.

Understand risks

Risks come in all shapes and sizes and many businesses are not even aware they exist until it's too late. It is important to identify any risks and potential risks early on, and put plans in place to deal with them.

Know your assets

The physical asset – the reserve – is the lifeblood of a caravan and camping park business. It is important for the CoM to know its asset thoroughly: how it works, how it can improve in the future, which parts produce revenue, which parts require expenditure and which parts represent the biggest risks.

Cash is air

One of the biggest dangers for businesses is running out of money. It is imperative that a business plans to have cash on hand, continually monitors its cash position and makes the cash readily available.

Recommendations

CoM should contact their local DSE office for assistance when commencing the management planning process – www.dse.vic.gov.au

More information

Further advice on the principles of business management is available through Business Victoria – www.business.vic.gov.au

Section 6: Management planning

Setting objectives

Setting objectives is the first step in strategic planning. This is where the vision and goals for the park's future are defined.

Victoria's vision

In most cases a CoM for a caravan or camping park is managing a business. But in all cases a CoM is managing an asset for Victoria. So whilst the CoM has the autonomy (and the responsibility) to set a strategic direction for the park, it must be aware of the wider policies and objectives of Victoria and DSE.

The relevant policy from DSE and other arms of the Victorian Government might differ for each park, so it is the CoM's responsibility to find out what obligations they have. Below is some suggested reading for committees.

Requirements

- *The Crown Land Reserves Act 1978*
- *Policy for Improving Equity of Access to Crown Land Caravan and Camping Parks*
- *Nature-Based Tourism Strategy*
- *Victorian Coastal Strategy 2008* (where appropriate)
- *The Residential Tenancies (Caravan Parks and Movable Dwellings Registration and Standards) Regulations*

A full list is provided at Appendix 1.

Recommendations

- For guidance regarding management planning, CoM should refer to DSE's *Committee of Management Responsibilities and Good Practice Guidelines*.

Defining the asset

This is where the CoM sets out what type of park it has, what type of business it operates, its financial position and its environmental and social obligations.

Know your business

Knowing and understanding the business is the foundation for building a good management plan and implementing it effectively. It means understanding everything about the asset that generates the revenue, understanding its strengths and weaknesses and identifying risks and available opportunities.

The first move to knowing a business is to get down on paper the features of the business. This will later form part of the management plan. Once this is done it is time to analyse the business.

Start to list all the features of the park by answering the list of questions below. Begin by noting down any detail that might be relevant and expand on any questions in the next table, where appropriate.



State Library of Victoria



Question	Note
What type of business do I run?	Where is it? Is it for passing travellers? How do I generate income? What services do I provide?
What is the management structure?	Refer to the 'Management models' information in the <i>Managing responsibilities</i> section. Draw a management tree (including all employees and stakeholders) and list the roles and responsibilities of each person/group.
What assets do I have?	List all the assets in the park and include: description, function, condition, expected life, servicing requirements. Also consider assets that are lacking and could be acquired in the future.
What environmental assets do I have?	List all major environmental assets including description and condition. Describe how each asset will be maintained, improved and sustained.
What responsibilities do I have in managing part of Victoria's land estate?	Refer to the information at 'Victoria's Vision' (above) and create a short list (four or five) of the most important policies and guidelines affecting your committee.
Who are my customers?	Do I cater for a cross section of society, or is my clientele specific? Where do they come from? How do they know about my park?
What is my financial situation?	Consult or table the last two years' financial accounts. If you need to table these, use a format suitable to your business or borrow from the example at Appendix 7.
What are the greatest risks to my business?	Risks could be in the assets that generate your income, or a nearby commercial park eroding your customer base, or potential of bad weather to make for a poor season. List all possible risks and reduce the list to those most major and with most potential.

Section 6: Management planning

One of the most widely used tools to analyse a business is SWOT – **S**trength, **W**eaknesses, **O**pportunities, **T**hreats analysis. This is an elementary analysis that will benefit every organisation. A committee should sit down and draw up a SWOT analysis to refer to in devising its corporate strategy. The SWOT elements are:

- **Strengths:** attributes of the park that will help achieve organisational objectives and strategic goals
- **Weaknesses:** attributes of the park that will obstruct organisational objectives and strategic goals
- **Opportunities:** external conditions and factors that could help achieve objectives and improve the business
- **Threats:** external conditions and factors that could damage the park's performance or potential.

Summary of SWOT analysis matrix:

	Helpful to achieving business objectives	Harmful to achieving business objectives
Internal Origin Attributes of the business	S	W
External Origin Attributes of the environment	O	T

Use the SWOT analysis template at Appendix 8 to begin an analysis. The questions included are not exhaustive and will need to be supplemented with questions specific to each CoM.

Once the SWOT analysis has been completed, the information can be used as a foundation for the management plan. The analysis can be incorporated by considering:

Translate into tasks and goals of management plan	Strengths	Weaknesses
Opportunities	How do I utilise the organisation's strengths to take advantage of these opportunities?	How do I overcome the weaknesses that prevent me from taking advantage of these opportunities?
Threats	How do I use my strengths to reduce the likelihood and impact of these threats?	How do I reduce or overcome the weaknesses that leave me prone to these threats?



Creating a management plan

After consulting the relevant government policy and thoroughly analysing the business, a CoM should be well placed to begin drafting a park management plan. This is where the CoM plans how to use its resources to achieve its objectives. It will also include a financial plan to outline how the CoM will fund its objectives.

When creating the plan be mindful of the importance of a user-friendly format. A good management plan acts as a reference document used regularly to ensure the business is on track to achieving its goals and meeting its obligations.

Requirement

CoM and park managers must prepare a plan in consultation with stakeholders and submit it to DSE for endorsement prior to its implementation.

Recommendation

CoM and park managers should use the park management plan template available at Appendix 9 as a framework.

Writing the plan

The park management plan should include the following:

Executive summary

The executive summary is the high level summary of the park and plan. What type of park is it? Where is it located? What purpose does it serve? Who are the stakeholders? What Unique Selling Proposition does it offer? (Refer to 'Marketing strategy' below for more information). Write paragraphs or use dot points to describe the park and features, purpose, service to the community, etc. This section should include a 'mission statement': a summary of the strategic objectives or description of where the park is going. Develop a brief but comprehensive mission statement encapsulating the vision and goals for the future of the park. This statement will be the ultimate strategic guide for the CoM and future committees. The executive summary should also introduce the plan and outline who created it and who it is intended for.

Recommendations

CoM should include in this section:

- A description of the park, its purpose and the service it provides to the community
- A mission statement.

Management structure

This section should outline how the CoM intends to manage the Crown land reserve and how this management is structured.

Recommendations

CoM should include in this section:

- A description of the management model for the park (refer to '*Managing the reserve*' for more information)
- Details of any lease terms, tenure, performance criteria, dates or important information
- A management tree showing all stakeholders and how they relate to each other, and to the management of the park
- A list of all committee members, park managers and employees and a description of job function. For larger businesses, this might be limited to management
- Any future further employee requirements.

Marketing strategy

This section details how the manager intends to sustain or increase visitor numbers in order to meet strategic objectives. If there is an existing marketing plan, this section should summarise it.

The marketing strategy should include a description of the park's Unique Selling Proposition (USP). The park's USP is a benefit that a competitor cannot or does not offer. A clearly defined USP is fundamental to successful marketing.

Section 6: Management planning

In developing marketing goals, there are **five fundamental marketing questions to be answered: who, what, when, where and how.**

1. Who are your customers?
Who are your competitors?
2. What are you selling? (incorporate your USP)
3. Where is your target market located?
Where can you reach them?
4. When are your customers most likely to buy?
When is your busy season?
5. How will you reach your customers?
(advertising, networking and PR)

A good marketing plan should contain a customer service strategy. Consumers have an expectation of good service and their expectation must be met to ensure return business and referrals. The section should describe what the minimum customer service levels are and how management will ensure they are met. Customer consultation will be a valuable tool in setting customer service levels: get out and ask the customers what they expect.

Recommendation

CoM should include in this section:

- The aims of the marketing strategy (be specific about the goals e.g. the target number of customers to be reached next year)
- Strategies for developing partnerships with local businesses and utilising local tourist attractions
- Strategies to encourage return visitors and extended stays
- An advertising plan providing details of where to advertise (web, radio, TV etc.) and what material to use (brochures, posters and signs, etc.)
- Clearly articulated levels of customer service
- Methods for monitoring and reporting on customer service levels
- A process for encouraging customer feedback to ensure service is responsive to customer needs
- A process for ensuring staff are adequately trained in customer service.

Development and maintenance strategy

This section draws on the list of assets identified when defining your business and writing the executive summary. It will consist of two distinct parts: planning for the maintenance of the current asset base; and identifying future development.

Recommendation

CoM should include in this section:

- A list of all assets, including function, condition and ongoing maintenance requirements. Maintenance costs need to be estimated too, for inclusion in the financial plan
- A maintenance schedule providing three to five year projections of expected works and upgrades
- A development plan providing details of improvements that are planned for the future. Improvements may be as small as planting some new trees or sowing new grass seeds, or as large as installing a new amenities block or building.

Initially, any development needs to have a realistic projected schedule that states when development will start and finish and a cost estimate that errs on 'the high side'. The plan should also state specifically where and how the finance would be sought. When a project is approaching (months ahead for a small project, years ahead for a large), further planning can take place. In the case of any larger development or maintenance, consult with local DSE staff for information on scoping, planning and financing capital works.

Environmental management plan

All Crown land reserves represent some environmental significance and contain some environmental assets. This section should describe the environmental significance and assets of the park, and plan how they will be maintained and sustained for future generations to enjoy. This section should also outline how the park will minimise its environmental impact, locally and for the wider region.



Recommendation

CoM should include in this section:

- A statement of the environmental significance of the park, and a list of environmental assets (drawn from your response to the 'Know your business' section above)
- A description of the overall environmental significance, and how each asset individually will be sustained for long-term enjoyment.
- This section may include strategies or policies for minimising resource usage (power, water, gas), minimising waste, revegetation (or removal of pests), dune management, erosion control, managing water runoff etc.

Risk management plan

This section should describe the risks identified in 'Know your business' and threats identified in the SWOT analysis. Each risk should be defined with reference to impact and likelihood. The corresponding actions that will be taken to minimise each risk should be described.

Recommendation

CoM should include in this section:

- Occupational health and safety details
- A summary of the park's safety plan and evacuation procedure.

Financial management plan

This section defines how the park will use its financial resources to fund its strategic goals.

Having consulted the last two years' accounts, the CoM should be familiar with the financial position and requirements of the business – how much it costs to keep the park running, maintained and operational – and how much revenue the park is likely to generate in the next one to three years.

The financial plan will include four key documents:

1. The budget (or forecast) profit and loss (P&L) statement is a projection of the income and expenses for the next three to five financial years. It will show the predicted profit/loss of the business. There will be two statements: a 12-month P&L broken down month-on-month and a three-year P&L broken down year-on-year.

Start building the P&L by breaking it down to smaller projections – revenue, inventory expenditure, maintenance costs, marketing costs, employee costs, etc. Make assumptions on whether these costs will change from the previous year, and why.

2. The forecast cash flow statement will forecast all the cash coming in and going out of the bank account/s for the next financial year. This will show the predicted bank account balance at year's end.
3. The budget balance sheet shows the financial position of the business at a point in time (what the business owns and owes). The balance sheet will show assets (owned) and liabilities (owed) in two categories: current and non-current. 'Current' means cash or assets that can be converted into cash within 12 months. 'Non-current' refers to long term, such as property and equipment.

4. Most of the projections, particularly the P&L projections, will be based on financial assumptions: for example, maintenance costs to rise by \$2000 due to an extra generator; camping revenue to rise 30% due to more powered sites; employee charges to rise due to increase in award wages, etc.

The integrity of the financial projections relies on considered and realistic assumptions. These financial assumptions should be listed as the first three accounting documents are created.

Create the first three accounting documents in the order listed, and populate the financial assumptions concurrently. Each document should be created against the most recent financial accounts available, usually the last financial year's figures. It may also be helpful to consult the last financial year's month-on-month accounts.

Use the financial template documents available at www.dse.vic.gov.au as a base and add or remove line items as required.

Section 6: Management planning

Implementation strategy

A good park management plan can only be an effective tool if it is used. This is why it is important to develop an implementation strategy.

Sometimes goals and projections will need to be revised throughout the year (plans should be totally revised annually and new budget projections made). It is important to remember that goals should remain ambitious – if goals are easily achievable the park will not operate at its full potential.

Recommendations

CoM should answer the following questions in this section:

- **How will any changes defined in the plan be implemented?**

Who is going to contact local tourism businesses to form alliances? Who will be responsible for monitoring and updating the OH&S policy?

- **How will the CoM ensure the plan is referred to and updated regularly?**

If the CoM meets regularly, they should make an agenda item to consult the plan. They should check whether they are on track to achieve objectives and have measurable milestones to check off and compare the previous month's actual revenue/expenditure figures to the budgeted figures. Variations in actual figures and budget should be explored and any necessary changes made to objectives.

- **How will the CoM ensure its stakeholders are familiar with the plan?**

Refer to the plan regularly and contribute to updates.



Tourism Victoria

Section 7: Appendices

Appendix 1: Relevant policies, rules and regulations

Crown land managers appointed by the Minister for Environment and Climate Change are responsible for the management of Crown land under the following legislative frameworks:

- *Land Act 1958*
- *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978*
- *Forests Act 1958*
- *National Parks Act 1975*
- *Alpine Resorts (Management) Act 1997*.
- *Residential Tenancies Act 1997*.

The following legislation and policies apply specifically to caravan and camping park management:

Planning and development

- *Planning and Environment Act 1987* (and other local government planning requirements)
- *Coastal Management Act 1995*
- *Victorian Coastal Strategy 2007*
- *Landscape Setting Types for the Victorian Coast* (VCC 1998/2007)
- *Siting and Design Guidelines for Structures on the Victorian Coast* (VCC 1998/2007)
- *Australian Building Standards*
- *Australian Safety Standards*.

Managing a Crown land caravan and camping park

- *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978*
- *Land Act 1958*
- *Local Government Act 1989*
- *Residential Tenancies Act 1997*
- *Residential Tenancies (Caravan Parks and Movable Dwellings Registration and Standards) Regulations*
- *Improving Equity of Access to Crown Land Caravan Parks*
- *Committee of Management Responsibilities and Good Practice Guidelines*
- *Plumbing Code of Australia 2004*.

Occupational health and safety

- *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*
- *Road Safety Act 1986*
- *Electricity Safety Act 1998*
- *Country Fire Authority Act 1958*
- *Country Fire Authority Caravan Park Fire Safety Guideline 2006*.

Managing for the environment and cultural heritage

- *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*
- *Environment Protection Act 1970*
- *Native Title Act 1993*
- *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*
- *Victorian Heritage Act 1995*
- *Victoria's Native Vegetation Management: A Framework for Action 2002*
- *The Environmental Protection Authority's Code of Practice for Septic Tanks & Treatment Plants*.
- *Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010*.

Running a small business

- *Retail Leases Act and Regulations 2003*
- *Land Tax Act 2005*
- *Equal Opportunity Act 1995*
- *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*
- *GST Bulletin GSTB 2001/2*
- *DSE's Committee of Management Responsibilities and Good Practice Guidelines* provides information regarding the financial responsibilities of CoM.

Appendix 2: Employer rights and responsibilities

As an **employer** you must provide a safe and healthy workplace for your workers and contractors. This includes:

- providing and maintaining safe plant (such as machinery and equipment) and safe systems of work (such as controlling entry to high risk areas, controlling work pace and frequency and providing systems to prevent falls from heights)
- implementing arrangements for the safe use, handling, storage and transport of chemicals (such as dangerous goods and other harmful materials)
- maintaining the workplace in a safe condition (such as ensuring fire exits are not blocked, emergency equipment is serviceable, and the worksite is generally tidy)
- providing workers and contractors with adequate facilities (such as clean toilets, cool and clean drinking water, and hygienic eating areas)
- making sure workers have adequate information, instruction, training and supervision to work in a safe and healthy manner.

You must also:

- adequately monitor your workers' health (such as providing hearing tests for workers exposed to high noise levels, providing blood tests for workers exposed to lead and monitoring fatigue levels of transport and other workers)
- keep information and records relevant to your workers' health and safety (such as records of biological monitoring, asbestos assessments, first aid records and relevant medical information)
- employ or engage people with the necessary qualifications or expertise to advise you on health and safety issues affecting your workers
- consult with employees on matters that may directly affect their health, safety or welfare. Where the employees are represented by a health and safety representative (HSR), the HSR must also be involved in the consultation
- nominate a senior management representative (or yourself) to deal with workers and their health and safety representatives in resolving health and safety issues at the workplace
- provide your workers with information in the appropriate languages about your workplace health and safety arrangements, including the names of those to whom the workers can make an inquiry or complaint.

Previous injuries

- When hiring new employees you should inform them, in writing, of the nature of the work and ask if they have any pre-existing injury or illness that may be affected by the work.
- You should also inform them, in writing, that failing to notify or hiding a pre-existing injury or illness which might be affected by the nature of the proposed employment, could result in that injury or illness being ineligible for future compensation claims.

Other health and safety obligations

You must ensure that **other people** (such as your customers, visitors and the general public) are not endangered by the conduct of your business (for example, by providing protection from falling debris around construction sites, controlling traffic access to your workplace and limiting public access within your workplace).

You have additional specific obligations if your business involves the:

- manufacture, importation, transportation, supply, storage, handling or use of dangerous goods
- design, manufacture, importation, supply, erection or installation of plant
- manufacture, importation, or supply of substances.

You also have obligations to:

- meet particular licensing, registration and certification requirements
- immediately notify WorkSafe of certain dangerous incidents
- co-operate with WorkSafe Inspectors
- comply with Inspector's Notices and Written Directions issued by WorkSafe Victoria OHS Inspectors.

Appendix 2: Employer rights and responsibilities

Penalties

Penalties for breaches of the Occupational Health & Safety Act 2004 were substantially increased. The maximum penalties are now \$1,075,050* for a body corporate and \$215,010 for a natural person* for individuals.

Workplace Injury Insurance

- Take out a WorkSafe injury insurance policy with a WorkSafe Agent of your choice (unless your annual financial year payroll is expected to be \$7500 or less).
- If you employ apprentices or trainees, you must have a WorkSafe policy regardless of your annual payroll.
- Notify your WorkSafe Agent of workplace or business activity changes (these changes can affect your classification and premium).
- Notify your WorkSafe Agent if the address of your workplace changes or if you change your legal business operating name.
- Check your annual estimate of remuneration (and, if you have any claims, your claims statement) sent to you by your WorkSafe Agent before the calculation of your premium each year.
- Notify your WorkSafe Agent within 28 days if your remuneration increases or is likely to increase by 20% or more, above your last estimate of remuneration for the financial year.
- Certify your remuneration at the end of each financial year by the due date.
- Pay your premium by the due date shown on your invoice.

Claims

- If you are injured poster must be displayed in every workplace otherwise you could be liable for a penalty of up to \$35,835* for a body corporate and \$7,167* for a natural person. The poster must be displayed where all workers can read it.
- You have to keep a Register of Injuries to keep track of work-related injuries and illnesses.
- For workplace incidents that cause or could have caused serious injury or death you must notify WorkSafe on 13 23 60.
- When an injured worker records an injury or illness in the Register of Injuries, you must acknowledge this registration in writing to the worker.
- If required the worker may visit a doctor. The doctor may call you to discuss possible return to work/alternative duties options.
- Stay in touch with the injured worker - it is advisable that you maintain contact with the injured worker as it can be beneficial to their recovery to feel that they have not been forgotten.
- Upon receipt of a claim for compensation, you must complete the employer section of the Worker's Injury Claim Form and acknowledge the receipt of the claim in writing as soon as reasonably practicable.
- It is an offence for you to:
 - dismiss or threaten to dismiss a worker from employment alter or threaten to
 - alter or threaten to alter the position of a worker to the worker's detriment
 - treat a worker less favourably than another worker in relation to a promotion or reemployment
- Complete an Employer's Injury Claim Report if you receive:
 - a Worker's Injury Claim Form for weekly benefits
 - a Worker's Injury Claim Form for medical and like expenses more than your employer excess
 - a Dependant's Claim for Compensation.

Employer's Injury Claim Reports are available online, from post offices, your WorkSafe agent or by calling the WorkSafe Advisory Service on 1800 136 089 or 03 9641 1444.

Appendix 2: Employer rights and responsibilities

- Forward claims to your WorkSafe Agent within the required timeframe. You must forward your Employer's Claim Report with:
 - the completed Worker's Injury Claim Form
 - any Certificate(s) of Capacity for time off work
 - other relevant documents such as medical and like accounts, investigation reports, etc.
- You are required by law to forward to your WorkSafe Agent:
 - all claims for weekly payments (regardless of the number of days lost) within 10 days of receiving it from the injured worker
 - claims for medical and like services only, which do exceed the first \$610* of your employer excess must be forwarded within 10 days of receiving it from the injured worker
 - claims for medical and like services only, which do not exceed the first \$610* of your employer excess, can be forwarded at 3 month intervals.
- Additional liability and penalties may be applied if you forward any claim for time loss outside the legislative timeframes.

In addition, if you forward a claim for time loss and it is received by your WorkSafe Agent or WorkSafe more than 38 days after it was served on you by the worker, the claim is deemed accepted.
- If you accept a claim you are liable for payment of the first 10 days that the injured worker misses from work and also the first \$610* of medical and like services (referred to as the employer excess), unless you have selected the Excess Buyout option.

If you are not accepting liability at this point, you do not have to pay anything at this stage. Simply forward the claim forms and certificate/s to your WorkSafe Agent and await the Agent's decision.
- Once a claim for weekly benefits is accepted you will be advised by your WorkSafe Agent and you will be required to make payment of weekly compensation to the worker on their regular pay day while an entitlement exists.
 - Further claim lodgement information
- If a claim has been accepted but you do not believe that you were the employer of the worker at the time of the injury, or that the worker was not a worker within the meaning of the Accident Compensation Act 1985, then you have the right to request the decision to accept liability be reviewed.

You have 60 days from the date you receive notice of the acceptance of liability for the claim to request WorkSafe undertake the review. If it is determined that liability for the claim should not have been accepted against your WorkSafe insurance policy then any necessary premium adjustments will be made.

Employers also have return to work obligations, details of which can be found at www.worksafe.vic.gov.au

More information

- Download and view the publication – *What to do if a worker is injured, A guide for employers*
- Suitable employment for injured workers – A step-by-step guide to identifying suitable duties
- Contact your WorkSafe Agent or ring the Advisory Service on (03) 9641 1444 or 1800 136 089

The information in this document is intended as a guide only. It is not a substitute for professional advice.

Appendix 3: Sources of support

There are a number of organisations that CoM can contact for support and advice in implementing these guidelines. Chief among these are:

Department of Sustainability and Environment

Departmental staff can provide assistance to CoM and park managers when implementing these guidelines. The guidelines and other useful documents are available on the department's website – www.dse.vic.gov.au

Municipal Association of Victoria

The MAV can assist CoM and park managers when dealing with local government. The Association's website provides details for each of Victoria's 79 councils – www.mav.asn.au

The Victorian Tourism Industry Council

The Victorian Tourism Industry Council is the peak tourism industry body in Victoria. It represents businesses, tourism associations, and local government on tourism matters. The Victorian Tourism Industry Council website contains information on Local Tourism Associations and Visitor Information Centres – www.vecci.org.au/vtic

In addition, park managers may wish to refer to the following websites:

www.aatourism.com.au – information on star rating scheme and marketing publications

www.aboriginalaffairs.vic.gov.au – Aboriginal Affairs Victoria

www.business.vic.gov.au – Business Victoria can provide assistance with workplace relations issues

www.cfa.vic.gov.au – provides access to the CFA publications *Caravan Park Fire Safety Guideline and Caravan Parks, Fire Danger Periods, and Total Fire Bans*

www.cleanup.org.au – contains information on how to reduce waste

www.crva.com.au – Caravan and Recreational Vehicle Association website

www.dpc.vic.gov.au – provides access to the website of the Office of the Victorian Government Architect

www.epa.vic.gov.au – information on water recycling and conservation

www.esc.vic.gov.au – the Essential Services Commission Victoria can provide additional information on energy and water installation safety requirements

www.health.vic.gov.au – information on water recycling and other health issues

www.legislation.vic.gov.au – provides access to all Victorian legislation

www.nevrwaste.vic.gov.au/businesses/sustainablecaravan-parks-1 – Sustainable Caravan Park Information Sheets

www.ourwater.vic.gov.au – the Our Water Our Future website provides information on water management and planning in Victoria

www.racv.com.au – the RACV's website provides a marketing portal for caravan and camping parks

www.ses.vic.gov.au – provides access to the SES publication *Caravan Parks Flood Emergency Management Plan Guidelines*

www.standards.org.au – Standards Australia website

www.sustainability.vic.gov.au – Sustainability Victoria website

www.vcc.vic.gov.au – provides access to the publication *Siting & Design Guidelines on the Victorian Coast*

www.vichealth.vic.gov.au – VicHealth website

www.vicparks.com.au – Caravan Park Association website (Victoria)

www.vicwater.org.au – The Victorian Water Industry Association can provide information on water restrictions and links to water authorities

www.visitvictoria.com.au – Victoria's official tourism website
www.workcover.vic.gov.au – Worksafe Victoria website

www.workplaceauthority.gov.au – The Workplace Authority can provide information on workplace relations

Appendix 4: Standard site holder agreement

CoM should review this agreement before issuing to prospective permit holders and raise any specific concerns with their local DSE staff.

TWELVE MONTH SITEHOLDER AGREEMENT

Under regulations made under Section 13 of the *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978* dated [insert date of gazettal] the [insert name of CoM] Committee of Management may grant permits and make rules for the operation of the caravan park.

Definitions

Abandoned means that the park user not used the site or caravan for a period of at least 3 months and has not paid any rent or hiring charges for that period; or where the park user has left the site or caravan and in all the circumstances it would be unreasonable to expect him or her to return.

Agreement means this agreement and includes all schedules *[and appendices, attachments, plans and specifications, annexures – (remove as necessary)]* and exhibits to it.

Clause means a Clause of this Agreement; a reference to a Clause followed by a number refers to the relevant Clause in this Agreement.

Crown Land Holiday Park means a caravan park (that is, land, including a camping ground, on which caravans, or caravans and other Movable Dwellings, have been, are or are to be placed) that is located on Crown land and is used solely for the purpose of tourism and recreation.

Movable Dwelling means a Movable Dwelling that is, or has been, registered or is required to be registered under the *Road Safety Act 1986*;

Park Manager means the lessee, manager or Committee of Management responsible for managing the park.

Park Manager's Representatives means a person aged over 16 who normally collects the Permit Fees.

Park Rules means rules which have been established for the management of the park and which have been incorporated into regulations made under Section 13 of the *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978*.

Permit Fees means fees set in the reserve regulations and paid by the Permit Holder for the 12 month permit to use the Site.

Permit Holder means the Permit Holder specified at Clause 3 and who is signing this agreement.

Site means the Site specified at clause 5.

Part 1 – Introduction

Date of this Agreement

[Fill in date on which both the Park Manager and the Permit Holder signed the Agreement, or, if one signed on one date and the other on a later date, fill in the later date].

How long does this Agreement last?

The fixed term of this Agreement is for 12 months, beginning on [fill in start date] and ending on [fill in end date].

Who is making this Agreement?

This Agreement is made between:

- (a) the Park Manager, [fill in the name and address of the Park Manager], and
- (b) the Permit Holder or each of the Permit Holders, [fill in the name and address of the Permit Holder or Permit Holders].

Agreement to comply with the terms of this Agreement

The Park Manager and Permit Holder agree to comply with the terms of this Agreement.

Appendix 4: Standard site holder agreement

Where is the Site?

This Park Manager gives the Permit Holder the right to use the Site (Site number [fill in the Site number]) at [fill in the name and address of the holiday park] and the following parking space and storeroom [fill in details of any parking space or storeroom].

The condition of the site

The Permit Holder and the Park Manager agree that at the commencement of this agreement the site is vacant and reasonably clean and fit to use (fair wear and tear excepted).

What can the Site be used for?

The Site is located on Crown land and must be managed according to the Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978. It can be used only for holiday and recreational use. It must not be used for:

- Permanent residence
- [fill in any other ways that the Site must not be used]

How many nights per year can the Site be used for?

The Site cannot be used for more than 59 consecutive nights per year or for a total of more than 180 nights per year.

Who can use the Site?

No more than [fill in number] persons may ordinarily use the Site at any one time.

Part 2 – Permit Fees and charges

Amount of Permit Fees

- (1) The Permit Fees payable are [fill in amount] payable every [specify whether the fees are payable every week, fortnight, month or quarter] starting on [fill in date].
- (2) The Permit Holder agrees to pay the Permit Fees on time.

Amount of other charges (such as water, electricity or gas charges)

The Permit Holder agrees to pay, in connection with the Site, for [fill in the things that the Permit Holder agrees to pay for, such as]

- (a) water charges
- (b) electricity charges
- (c) gas charges
- (d) any charges arising from compliance with government legislation and policy
- (e) [fill in any other charges that the Permit Holder agrees to pay]

Payment of council rates and other charges by Park Manager

The Park Manager agrees to pay, in connection with the Crown land holiday park on which the Site is situated, for:

- (a) Council rates, and
- (b) [fill in any other charges that the Park Manager agrees to pay]

Appendix 4: Standard site holder agreement

How to pay Permit Fees

The Permit Fees may be paid in the following ways [fill in any way that Permit Fees may be paid]. These methods of paying may be changed during the term of this Agreement if both the Park Manager and the Permit Holder agree in writing.

Manner of paying Permit Fees

(1) Permit Fees must be paid [delete whichever does not apply]:

- (a) to the Park Manager at [fill in address of Park Manager or Park Manager], or
- (b) at any other reasonable place the Park Manager names to the Permit Holder in writing, or
- (c) into the following account [fill in account details], or any other account nominated to the Permit Holder by the Park Manager.

(2) The Park Manager agrees to provide a receipt for any Permit Fees or other charges under this Agreement paid to the Park Manager. If the Permit Fees or charges are not paid in person, the Park Manager agrees only to make the receipt available for collection by the Permit Holder or to post it to the Permit Holder.

(3) The Park Manager agrees that any receipt for Permit Fees or charges must include the following particulars:

- (a) the name and address of the Crown land holiday park, and the number of the Site,
- (b) the period for which the fees or charges are paid,
- (c) the date on which the fees or charges are received,
- (d) the amount of fees or charges paid.

(4) The Park Manager is not required to provide or make available a receipt if Permit Fees or other charges are paid, in accordance with a written agreement between the Park Manager and the Permit Holder, into an account at an authorised deposit-taking institution (such as a bank, building society or credit union) nominated by the Park Manager.

Fee increases

The Park Manager cannot increase the Permit Fees during the 12 month term of this Agreement.

Refund of Permit Fees

- (a) Any refund of fees will be based on a pro rata rate of the unexpired permit.
- (b) The Park Manager agrees to refund any fees paid in advance if the use of the Site is ended by the Park Manager, and there is no breach of the agreement by the Permit Holder, before the end of the fixed 12 month term of this Agreement.
- (c) The Permit Holder agrees that if the Park Manager ends the agreement as a result of a breach of the agreement by the Permit Holder, any refund of fees will be at the discretion of the Park Manager.
- (d) The Permit Holder agrees that he or she is not entitled to a refund of fees if the Agreement is ended by the Permit Holder before the end of the 12 month term of this Agreement.

Appendix 4: Standard site holder agreement

Part 3 – Rights and obligations

Division 1 – Obligations of the Permit Holder

Permit Holder's responsibility for the actions of others

The Permit Holder agrees to be responsible to the Park Manager for any act or omission by any person the Permit Holder allows on the Site, or elsewhere in the Crown land holiday park, who breaks any of the terms of this Agreement.

Offensive behaviour

The Permit Holder agrees not to

- (a) interfere with or cause or permit interference with, or allow any person that the Permit Holder invites into the holiday park to interfere with the reasonable peace, comfort or privacy of any neighbour of the Permit Holder or any other person lawfully in the Crown land holiday park, or the proper use and enjoyment of the Crown land holiday park by the other Permit Holders or users of the holiday park.
- (b) cause or allow a nuisance

Use of the Site

The Permit Holder agrees:

- (a) not to use the Site, or cause or permit the Site to be used, for any illegal purpose, and
- (b) not to use the Site, or allow any person that the Permit Holder invites into the Crown Land Holiday Park to use the Site, as a permanent residence within the meaning of the *Residential Tenancies Act 1997*.

Cleanliness of and damage to the Site

The Permit Holder agrees:

- (a) to keep the Site reasonably clean, and
- (b) to notify the Park Manager as soon as practicable of any damage to the Site, and
- (c) not to intentionally or negligently cause or permit any damage to the Site or any other part of the Crown land holiday park, and
- (d) when this Agreement ends, to leave the Site vacant and reasonably clean and fit to use (fair wear and tear excepted).

Alterations and additions to the Site

The Permit Holder agrees not to attach any fixture or renovate, alter or add to the Movable Dwelling or the Site, other than as required for reasonable repairs, without the Park Manager's prior written permission.

Keys and opening devices

The Permit Holder agrees to return any key or other opening device provided to the Permit Holder, when this Agreement is terminated.

Selling the Movable Dwelling [delete whichever does not apply]

(1) The Permit Holder agrees:

- (a) Not to sell the Movable Dwelling while it is on Site without notifying the Park Manager
- (b) To comply with the process prescribed in the Park Rules (Schedule 2) for the sale of caravans
- (c) To ensure all prospective buyers are provided with a copy of the 'Notice to Prospective Buyers' (Schedule 1)
- (d) To relinquish their permit to the Park Manager upon sale of the caravan.
- (e) That the 12 month permit is not transferable except where the Park Manager allows the transfer of the unexpired 12 month permit to the Permit Holder's spouse or child in the case of the Permit Holders death or incapacity.

Appendix 4: Standard site holder agreement

- (f) If the caravan is not sold within the term of the permit or six months, whichever is longer, the vendor must remove the caravan from the Site and a permit for the Site only will then be offered to new park users
- (g) If the vendor decides not to proceed with the sale he or she must advise the Park Manager
- (h) If the vendor decides not to proceed with the sale, (f) will not apply.

Agreement not to transfer

- (1) The Permit Holder and the Park Manager acknowledge that the Permit Holder cannot transfer the whole or part of the Permit Holder's interest under this Agreement, except in the case of the Permit Holder's death or incapacity. In these circumstances, the unexpired period of the term covered in this permit may be transferred to the Permit Holder's spouse or child.

Agreement not to install an unregistrable movable dwelling on the site

- (1) The Permit Holder acknowledges that the Permit Holder must not install an unregistrable movable dwelling in the park.

Movable Dwellings must be registrable and roadworthy

- (1) The Permit Holder agrees to provide the Park Manager with evidence that the van to be used on the 12 month permit site has been certified as registrable and roadworthy within the last five years.
- (2) The Permit Holder agrees to maintain that the Movable Dwelling according to the standard required by any relevant regulations under the Road Safety Act 1986 or corresponding interstate law.

Condition of Movable Dwelling and other structures

The Permit Holder agrees to make sure that the Movable Dwelling and any other structure that the Permit Holder is permitted to erect is kept in a condition allowing it to be moved.

Division 2 – Obligations of the Park Manager

Permit Holder's right to no undue interruption

The Park Manager agrees that the Permit Holder will have use of the Site without undue interruption by the Park Manager.

Cleanliness

- (1) The Park Manager agrees to make sure the Site, everything provided with the Site for use by the Permit Holder, and the common areas of the Crown land holiday park, are reasonably clean and fit to use
- (2) The Permit Holder agrees to take reasonable care of her or his Site, everything provided with the Site for her or his use and the common areas of the Crown Land Holiday Park.

Tradespeople allowed to come in

- (1) The Park Manager and Permit Holder agree that any tradespeople that the Permit Holder reasonably requests should be allowed into the Crown land holiday park will be allowed in without unreasonable interference
- (2) The Permit Holder agrees that any tradespeople that the Park Manager reasonably requests should be allowed on the Site will be allowed in without unreasonable interference.

Permitting family members of Permit Holder and others to temporarily use a Site

- (1) A family member of the Permit Holder or any other person may temporarily use the Site if he or she has the prior permission of the Permit Holder and the Park Manager.
- (2) The Park Manager and Permit Holder agree that the Park Manager may demand proof that the family member of the Permit Holder or any other person has the permission of the Permit Holder to use the Site. That proof may be given in person, in writing or over the telephone.

Appendix 4: Standard site holder agreement

Part 4 – Ending or termination of this Agreement

Division 1 – When can this Agreement be ended?

Ending this Agreement

The Park Manager and the Permit Holder agree that this Agreement can be terminated in one or more of the following circumstances:

- (a) if the Park Manager or the Permit Holder gives notice of termination under this Part,
- (b) if the Permit Holder has Abandoned the Site,
- (c) if the Permit Holder delivers up vacant possession of the Site with the prior permission of the Park Manager, whether or not that permission is subsequently withdrawn,
- (d) by disclaimer (for example, on repudiation by the Permit Holder accepted by the Park Manager),
- (e) if the fixed term ends and no arrangement has been made for the issue of a new permit.

Permit Holder obligations at the end of this Agreement

When the time for this Agreement ends the Permit Holder must remove her/his van and any accessories from the Site, except where the committee of management has approved the sale of the van on Site.

Division 2 – When can the Permit Holder end this Agreement?

Termination by Permit Holder on breach of Agreement

- (1) The Park Manager and the Permit Holder agree that the Permit Holder may give the Park Manager a notice of termination of this Agreement if the Park Manager has breached a term of this Agreement.
- (2) The Park Manager and the Permit Holder agree that a notice of termination given under this Clause must give at least 14 days' notice as to the day on which vacant possession of the Site will be delivered up to the Park Manager.

Division 4 – When can the Park Manager end this Agreement?

Termination on breach of Agreement

- (1) The Park Manager and the Permit Holder agree that the Park Manager may give notice of termination of this Agreement to the Permit Holder if the Permit Holder has breached a term of this Agreement.
- (2) The Park Manager and the Permit Holder agree that a notice of termination given under this Clause must not specify a day earlier than 14 days after the day on which the notice is given as the day on which vacant possession of the Site is to be or will be delivered up to the Park Manager.
- (3) The Park Manager and the Permit Holder agree that a notice of termination given by a Park Manager on the ground of a breach of the Agreement to pay Permit Fees has no effect unless the fees have remained unpaid in breach of this Agreement for not less than 14 days before the notice is given.
- (4) The Park Manager and the Permit Holder agree that a notice of termination given by a Park Manager on the ground of a breach of the Agreement to pay Permit Fees is not ineffective merely because of any failure of the Park Manager or the Park Manager's Representatives to make a prior formal demand for payment of the fees.

Appendix 4: Standard site holder agreement

Division 5 – Notices of termination

Notices of termination

The Park Manager and the Permit Holder agree that a notice of termination must:

- (a) be in writing, and
- (b) state the address and Site number of the Site, and
- (c) be signed by the person giving it, and
- (d) be dated, and
- (e) allow the required period of time, and
- (f) give the date the Permit Holder intends to, or is required to, give vacant possession, and
- (g) give the reasons for ending this Agreement (if any), and
- (h) be properly given.

How notices are properly given

(1) The Park Manager and the Permit Holder agree that a notice of termination given to the Permit Holder may be:

- (a) posted to the Permit Holder's Site and to the Permit Holder's principal place of residence, or
- (b) given to the Permit Holder personally

(2) The Park Manager and the Permit Holder agree that a notice of termination given to a Park Manager may be:

- (a) posted to the Park Manager's residence, or
- (b) given to the Park Manager or to the Park Manager's Representatives personally, or
- (c) posted or faxed to the Park Manager's, or to the Park Manager's Representatives or place of business, or

Division 6 – Miscellaneous

Apportionment and recovery of Permit Fees on termination

The Park Manager and the Permit Holder agree that the Permit Fees payable under this Agreement accrue from day to day and on termination or end of the fixed term any outstanding permit fee is payable.

Breach or notice of termination not waived by acceptance of Permit Fees

The Park Manager and the Permit Holder agree that a demand for, any proceedings for the recovery of, or acceptance of, Permit Fees payable under this Agreement by the Park Manager:

(1) does not operate as a waiver of:

- (a) any breach of this Agreement, or
- (b) any notice of termination on the ground of breach of this Agreement given by the Park Manager, and
- (c) is not evidence of the issue of a new permit.

Appendix 4: Standard site holder agreement

Part 5 – Renewal of this Agreement

No right of renewal

The Park Manager and the Permit Holder agree that the Permit Holder has no right to renewal of this fixed term Agreement.

Issue of a new permit to the Permit Holder

- (1) The Park Manager may accept an application for a new 12 month permit from the Permit Holder but is under no obligation to issue the Permit Holder with a new permit.
- (2) The Park Manager agrees that the Permit Holders will be dealt with fairly and transparently according to the processes set out in the Park Rules (Schedule 2) for issuing of permits.
- (3) The Permit Holder agrees that, where the Park Manager determines to issue the Permit Holder with a new permit, the Park Manager is under no obligation to allocate the Permit Holder the same Site allocated in this fixed term Agreement.

Part 6 – Agreement to minimise loss

Parties to minimise loss from breach of Agreement

The Park Manager and the Permit Holder agree that the rules of law relating to mitigation of loss or damage on breach of a contract apply to a breach of this Agreement. (For example, if the Permit Holder breaches this Agreement the Park Manager will not be able to claim damages for loss that could have been avoided by reasonable effort by the Park Manager.)

Part 7 – When can someone else come onto the Site?

Park Manager's access to the Site

The Park Manager agrees that the Park Manager, the Park Manager's representatives or any person authorised in writing by the Park Manager, during the currency of this Agreement, may enter the Site only in the following circumstances:

- (a) in an emergency or in urgent circumstances (including entry for the purpose of carrying out urgent repairs),
- (b) if required to by a direction of the Committee of Management or the Department of Sustainability and Environment.
- (c) if there is good reason for the Park Manager to believe the Site is Abandoned,
- (d) if electricity, water or gas is supplied to the Permit Holder by the Park Manager, to inspect and read an electricity, water or gas meter situated on the Site,
- (e) to carry out regular maintenance and caretaking of the Site, such as by mowing the lawn,
- (f) to carry out functions required under any legislation,
- (g) and for other circumstances where the the Permit Holder agrees,
- (h) [fill in any additional circumstances].

Appendix 5: Notice to permit holders template

This Notice to permit holders is for use by CoM who manage their Crown land caravan and camping park directly. Where a Crown land caravan and camping park has been leased, the Notice to Permit Holders will be issued by the lessee.

Notice to permit holders

Under regulations made under Section 13 of the Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978 dated [insert date of gazettal] the [insert name of CoM] Committee of Management may grant permits and make rules for the operation of the caravan park

Permit holders should note:

- The park is situated on Crown land and is managed in accordance with Government policy and Victorian law for the benefit of all Victorians.
- The site is hired for 12-month tenure and there is no **guarantee** for a term beyond the yearly agreement.
- Sites can only be used for a maximum of 59 consecutive nights per year and a total of 180 days in a calendar year. Sites cannot be sublet and:
- It is Victorian government policy that Crown land caravan and camping parks should not acquire permanent residents, i.e. a person who occupies a site as his or her only or main residence.
- **These permits are not automatically granted and if granted the user must abide by strict conditions that are set out on the permit.**

If these conditions are not followed, the permit can be revoked and the permit holder may be subject to prosecution for breaches against the Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978 and associated regulations.

Applicants must also be aware that a permit may be revoked under the direction of a DSE Authorised Officer where extreme weather events are predicted or are present.

Unregistrable mobile dwellings [mobile dwellings that are not eligible for registration under the *Road Safety Act 1986*] are not permitted in Crown land caravan and camping parks.

Appendix 6: Notice to prospective buyers template

This Notice to prospective buyers is for use by CoM who manage their Crown land caravan and camping park directly.

Where a Crown land caravan and camping parks has been leased, the Notice will be issued by the lessee.

Prospective buyers should note:

- This park is situated on Crown land and is managed in accordance with Government policy and Victorian law for the benefit of all Victorians.
- The on-site sales process allows for the purchase of a caravan and annexe and to hire the site for the balance of 12 months only.
- The site is not owned by the seller and cannot be owned by the buyer.
- The purchase price of the caravan should be based on the value of the caravan, annexe and attachments only.
- The purchase price of the caravan and accessories should be equivalent to the price of similar items sold outside of the caravan park.
- The site is hired for 12-month tenure and there should be no expectation of a term beyond the yearly agreement.
- Sites can only be used for a maximum of 59 consecutive nights per year and a total of 180 days in a calendar year.

Sites cannot be sublet; and

- It is Victorian government policy that Crown land caravan and camping parks should not acquire permanent residents, i.e. a person who occupies a site as his or her only or main residence.
- These permits are not automatically granted and if granted the user must abide by strict conditions that are set out on the permit.

If these conditions are not followed, the permit can be revoked and the permit holder may be subject to prosecution for breaches against the Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978 and associated regulations.

The Committee of Management is not a party to the contract of sale and therefore can not make any warranty in relation to the fitness, quality or condition of the item sold.

Prospective purchasers should obtain independent valuation and legal advice.

Prospective purchasers may obtain a copy of the relevant 12 month site-holder agreement with conditions from the Park Manager/Committee of Management.

Appendix 7: Financial management planning

<insert name here>

Balance Sheet

Line Item	2009	2010
BALANCE SHEET		
Current Assets		
Cash		
Inventory		
Receivables		
Prepayments		
Total Current Assets	\$0	\$0
Non-current Assets		
Plant and equipment		
Property		
Other		
Total Non-current Assets	\$0	\$0
Total Assets	\$0	\$0
Current Liabilities		
Payables		
Overdraft		
GST collected		
PAYG withholding		
Other		
Total Current Liabilities	\$0	\$0
Non-current Liabilities	\$0	\$0
Total Non-current Liabilities	\$0	\$0
Total Liabilities	\$0	\$0
Total Equity	\$0	\$0

Appendix 7: Financial management planning

<insert name here>
Forecast Cash Flow
1 July 2010 – 30 June 2011

Line Item	2009	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June	Annual	Variance (%)
CASH FLOW															
Opening Cash Balance		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Cash flow from operating activities															
Cash receipts from customers														\$0	\$0
Cash paid to suppliers and employees														\$0	\$0
Interest received														\$0	\$0
Net cash flow from operating activities	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	
Cash flow from investing activities															
Proceeds from sale of plant/equipment														\$0	\$0
Interest earned														\$0	\$0
Net cash flow from investing activities	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Net increase/(decrease) in cash	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Closing Cash Balance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Appendix 7: Financial management planning

<insert name here>

Budget Profit & Loss

P&L 3 Year Projections

Line Item	2009	2010	2011	2012
Profit and Loss				
Revenue				
<i>example items</i>				
Camping				
– unpowered				
– powered				
Caravan				
Food and beverage sales				
Interest Received				
<i>insert new lines here</i>				
Total Revenue	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Labour Expense				
<i>example items</i>				
Wages and on-costs				
Superannuation				
<i>insert new lines here</i>				
Sales and Marketing Costs				
Web page development/maintenance				
Advertising				
<i>insert new lines here</i>				
Visitor Services				
Food and beverage				
Visitor safety				
Public liability insurance				
<i>insert new lines here</i>				
General and Administrative				
Accounting/audit/consulting fees				
Bank charges				
Motor vehicle expenses				
Insurance				
IT				
<i>insert new lines here</i>				
Utilities				
Gas				
Electricity				
Sewerage				
Water				
<i>insert new lines here</i>				
Total Expenses	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Operating Result [Surplus/(Deficit)]	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Depreciation				
Earnings after depreciation	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Appendix 8: SWOT analysis template

SWOT Analysis Template

State what you are assessing here. Please note that these criteria examples relate to assessing a new business venture or proposition.

Many listed criteria can apply to other quadrants, and the examples are not exhaustive. You should identify and use any other criteria that are appropriate to your situation.

<p>EXAMPLES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advantage of proposition? Capabilities? USPs (Unique Selling Points)? Resources, assets and people? Experience, knowledge and data? Financial reserves and likely returns? Marketing reach, distribution and awareness? Innovative aspects? Location and geography? Price, value and quality? Accreditations, qualifications and certifications? Process, systems, IT and communications? Cultural, attitudinal and behavioural? Philosophy and values? 	<p>strengths</p>	<p>EXAMPLES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disadvantages of proposition? Gaps in capabilities? Lack of competitive strength? Reputation, presence and reach? Financials? Timescales, deadlines and pressures? Cashflow and start-up cash-drain? Continuity and supply chain robustness? Effects on core activities and distraction? Reliability of data and plan predictability? Morale, commitment and leadership? Accreditations etc Processes and systems etc? Management cover and succession?
<p>EXAMPLES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Market developments? Competitors' vulnerabilities? Industry or lifestyle trends? Technology development and innovation? Global influences? New markets: vertical and horizontal? Niche target markets? Geographical: export and import? New USPs? Tactics: surprise and major contracts? Business and product development? Information and research? Partnerships, agencies and distribution? Volumes, production and economies? Seasonal weather and fashion influences? 	<p>opportunities</p>	<p>EXAMPLES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Political effects? Legislative effects? Environmental effects? IT Developments? Competitor intentions? Market demand? New technologies, services and ideas? Vital contracts and partners? Sustaining internal capabilities? Obstacles faced? Insurmountable weaknesses? Loss of key staff?
	<p>weaknesses</p>	
	<p>threats</p>	

Appendix 9: Park management plan template

Insert Name]

Caravan and camping park management plan

[Insert Date]

Executive Summary

Introduction

[This section provides details of

- Where the park is located (you may wish to include a map or plan of the park)
- The type of park (e.g. caravan and camping park)
- The service the park provides to the community. You may include
 - Recreation
 - Amenities
 - Water
 - Electricity
 - Gas
- The park's stakeholders
- The park's Unique Selling Point
- Landscape
- Tourism in the area. You may include
 - Trends
 - Drawcards]

Mission Statement

[The Mission Statement is a summary of the strategic objectives or description of where the park is going. It encapsulates the vision and goals for the future of the park. Objectives may include improvements to

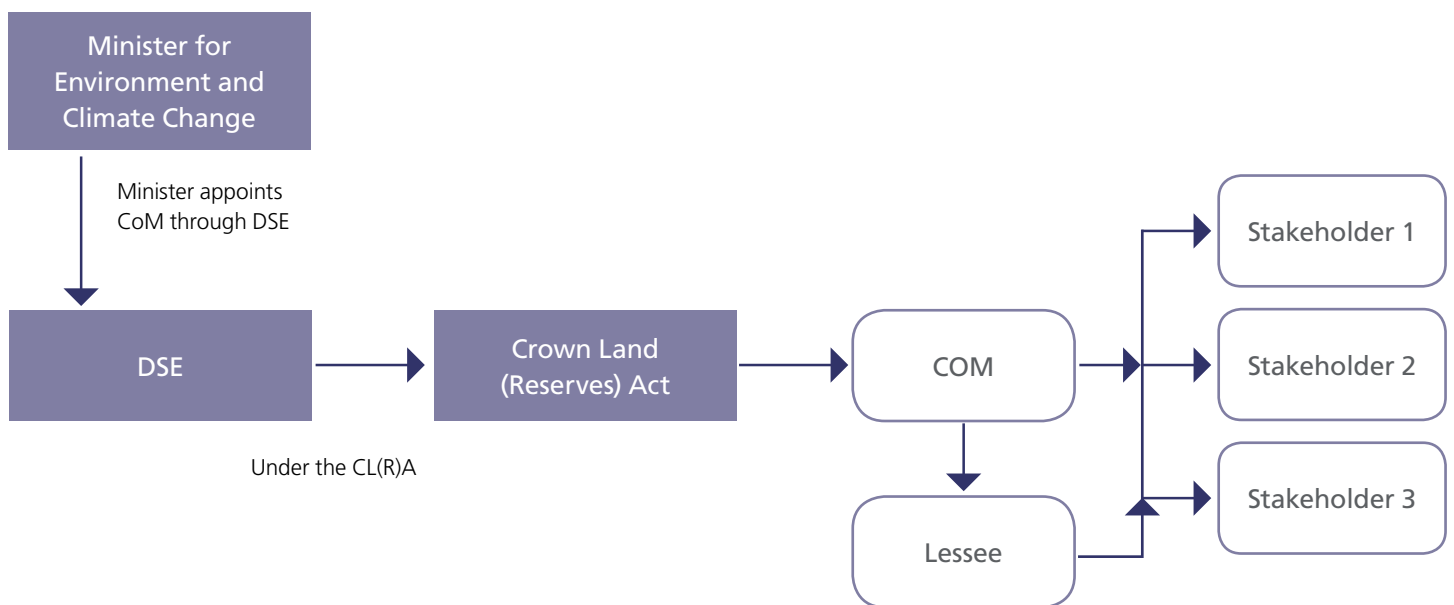
- Management
- Recreational facilities
- Park presentation
- Ecological sustainability
- Environmental management
- Safety]
- Who will use this plan?
- Who created the plan?

Appendix 9: Park management plan template

Management Structure

[This section includes

- A description of the management model (the 'Managing the reserve' section of the Best Practice Management Guidelines provides further information)
- Details of any tenure, performance criteria, dates or important information
- A list of all committee members, park managers and employees and a description of their job function
- Any future further employee requirements
- A management tree showing all stakeholders and how they relate to each other and to the management of the park. The structure below provides an example:]



Appendix 9: Park management plan template

Access and Visitation

[This section provides details of the park's access policies. Access and visitation should be discussed in the context of relevant legislation and government policy, particularly *Improving Equity of Access to Crown Land Caravan Parks 2011*.

This section outlines the park's

- Permit distribution system including
 - Process for allocating short-term sites
 - Process for allocating seasonal sites
 - Process for allocating twelve-month sites
- Charging structure
- Accommodation mix, for example
 - Cabins
 - Relocatable Dwellings
 - Caravans
 - Camp sites
- Wheelchair accessible facilities, for example
 - Cabins
 - Toilet blocks

Planning Context

- Identification of major policies, plans and strategies. You may make reference to
 - *The Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978*
 - *Improving Equity of Access to Crown Land Caravan Parks*
 - *Policy for Sustainable Recreation and Tourism on Victoria's Public Land*
 - *Victorian Coastal Strategy 2008*
- Zoning and land purpose

Appendix 9: Park management plan template

Environmental Management

[This section describes the environmental significance and assets of the park, and indicates how they will be maintained and sustained for future generations to enjoy. Environmental management of the park should be discussed in the context of relevant legislation and government policy. This section should also outline how the park will minimise its environmental impact, locally and for the wider region. This may include

- Protection of waterways
- Conservation of native flora and fauna
- Environmentally sensitive planning and design]

Environmental Significance

- [This section includes a statement of the environmental significance of the park and a list of environmental assets. The Know Your Business section of the Best Practice Management Guidelines provides further information.]

Long-Term Management

- [Describe how the overall environmental significance, and each asset individually, will be sustained for long-term community enjoyment.]

Environmental Management Plan Projects				
Project		Estimated Costs	Funding Opportunities	Timing
Resource Usage	e.g. Electricity: Installation of energy efficient light globes			
	e.g. Electricity: Use of solar energy			
	e.g. Electricity: Installation of key operated electricity switches			
	e.g. Water: Installation of water tanks			
Waste Minimisation	e.g. Installation of recycling stations			
	e.g. Composting			
	e.g. Waste disposal			
Revegetation	e.g. Protection and use of indigenous plant species			
Pest Management				
Dune Management				
Erosion Control				

Appendix 9: Park management plan template

Cultural Heritage Management

[This section describes areas of cultural heritage significance within the park, and indicates how they will be maintained and sustained for future generations to enjoy. Areas of significance may include

- Aboriginal sites, for example, important landscapes or archaeological sites
- Industrial history, for example, sawmills and fishing piers
- Vegetation

Cultural heritage management of the park should be discussed in the context of relevant legislation and government policy. The 'Managing for cultural heritage' section of the Best Practice Management Guidelines provides further information.]

Development and Maintenance Strategy

[This section draws on the list of assets identified through the activities in the 'Know your business' section of the Best Practice Management Guidelines. It will consist of a list of assets, a maintenance schedule and a development plan.]

Assets

[This section comprises a list of assets and their function, condition and maintenance requirements and costs. It should stipulate maintenance standards and include details of

- Routine maintenance activities may include
 - Replacement of globes
 - Replacement of fuses
 - Maintenance of the hot water service
 - Maintenance of the power heads
- Non-routine maintenance activities may include
 - Installation of street lights
 - Installation of new cabins
 - Installation of new amenity block
- Monitoring and forecasting of maintenance
- Economic life assets
- How replacement and upgrades of assets is built into the park's budget]

Maintenance should be described in the context of relevant legislation and government policy. The 'Managing the reserve' section of the Best Practice Management Guidelines provides further information.

Appendix 9: Park management plan template

Maintenance Schedule

[The schedule identifies what kinds of works need to be carried out and when they will be completed.]

Project	3-Year Projections	4-Year Projections	5-Year Projections
Roads and stormwater drainage			
Replace open drain at north end of park with a concrete spoon drain and connect to stormwater system			
[Asset Name]			
[Asset Name]			
[Asset Name]			
[Asset Name]			

Development Plan

[This section identifies improvements to the park that are planned for the future. These might be as small as planting some new trees or sowing new grass seeds, or as large as a new amenities block or building. Any developments should be described in the context of relevant legislation and government policy. The Planning and Development section of the Best Practice Management Guidelines provides further information.]

All developments should be costed and include a projected schedule. The plan should also state where and how finance will be sought.]

Project	Priority	Estimated Costs	Funding Opportunities	Timing	Responsibility
New amenities block at north end of park	High	\$20,000 – \$50,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government grants Capital funding 	3–5 years	CoM
Lighting in camping areas throughout park	Medium	\$10,000 – \$20,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Park budget 	0–2 years	Lessee
[Development]					
[Development]					
[Development]					
[Development]					

Appendix 9: Park management plan template

Risk Management Plan

[This section describes the risks identified in the 'Know your business' section of the Best Practice Management Guidelines and threats identified in the SWOT analysis. Each risk should be defined with reference to impact, likelihood and corresponding actions to minimising risk. Risk management of the park should be discussed in the context of relevant legislation and government policy. At a minimum, the Risk Management Plan should include the following:]

Site Issues

This section includes discussion of key issues associated with future development and management of the park. It may include

- Accommodation
- Infrastructure
- Access
- Waste management

Occupational Health and Safety

[This section

- Identifies the activities that occur in the workplace
- Identifies the procedures, which will control the risks associated with those tasks
- Identifies an OH&S action plan for each activity
- Identifies hazards in the workplace
- Assesses the risk to health and safety
- Identifies the safe working methods that will eliminate or manage the risks which have been identified

Occupational health and safety procedures and safe working methods can be attached as appendices to the management plan document.

Park managers should also investigate whether or not they have any additional obligations exist under AS1596, AS1940 or the *Dangerous Goods (Storage and Handling) Regulations 2000*. If applicable, these occupational health and safety obligations should be reported here.

Appendix 2 of the Best Practice Management Guidelines provides further information on employer rights and responsibilities relating to occupational health and safety.]

Safety Plan and Evacuation Procedure

[This section outlines

- The safety information that is provided to permit holders and visitors to the park
- How the safety information is distributed
- The park's emergency contact details
- Where the park's emergency contact details are displayed

It should also

- Identify any risks visitors or staff are likely to encounter on the reserve
- Identify any risks visitors or staff are likely to encounter at local attractions
- Provide details of the measures the CoM or park manager has taken to mitigate these risks

Appendix 9: Park management plan template

Emergency Management Plan

[Emergency management plans should comply with AS 3745 and AS/NZS 4360. CoM should work with CFA in drawing up their emergency management plan. The emergency management plan must be located in a position that is acceptable to CFA.]

The CFA publication *Caravan Park Fire Safety Guideline* provides assistance to CoM in complying with requirements for

- Provision & maintenance of access
- Prevention of fire spread
- Provision & maintenance of firefighting equipment
- Identification & management of fire hazards
- Development & implementation of emergency management plans
- Compliance with legislative requirements]

Insurance

[This section should outline the park's insurance policies. CoM or lessees must be insured for

- Public liability
- Buildings
- Workers compensation
- Professional indemnity

Marketing Strategy

[This section provides details on how the CoM or Park Manager intends to sustain or increase visitor numbers in order to meet strategic objectives. It also outlines mechanisms the CoM or Park Manager plans to use to meet changing demands.]

Marketing Objectives

[This section outlines your marketing goals. It will be based on

- Who your customers are
- Who your competitors are
- When your customers are most likely to buy
- When your busy season is

The Potential Market section of the Best Practice Management Guidelines provides further information.]

Advertising Plan

[This section should explain

- Where your target market is located
- Where you can reach them
- Where you will advertise, for example, on web, radio or TV
- What material you will use, for example, brochures, posters and signs, etc.
- You may wish to refer to the Promotion techniques section of the Best Practice Management Guidelines for further information.]

Appendix 9: Park management plan template

Unique Selling Proposition

[Your Unique Selling Proposition (USP) is a benefit that a competitor cannot, or does not, offer. It may include

- Ecotourism opportunities
- Recreational activities

Strategic Alliances

[This section outlines any existing or developing partnerships the CoM or Park manager has with local and regional business, and the way it makes the most of local tourist attractions or activities. CoM and park managers can obtain advice about forming business alliances from Tourism Victoria and their Local Tourism Association.]

Return Visitation Strategies

[This section outlines strategies to encourage return visitation and extension of stays. Strategies may include

- Improvement to facilities
- Improvement to park amenity

Customer Service Strategy

[This section should articulate

- Customer service levels
- The methods you will use for monitoring customer service levels
- The methods you will use for reporting on customer service levels
- The process you will use to encourage customer feedback to ensure service is responsive to customer needs
- The process you will use to ensure staff are adequately trained in customer service]

Financial Management Plan

[This section consists of the following documents

- Budget (or Forecast) Profit and Loss (P&L) Statement [see *Appendix 10*]
- Forecast Cash Flow Statement [see *Appendix 10*]
- Budget Balance Sheet [see *Appendix 10*]
- Financial Assumptions [see *Appendix 10*]

Implementation Strategy

[This section should state

- How changes will be implemented
 - For example, who is going to contact local tourism business to form alliances or who will be responsible for monitoring the CoM's OH&S and updating
- How the CoM will ensure the plan is used and updated regularly
 - If the CoM meets regularly, they should make an agenda item to consult the plan. They should check whether they are on track to achieve objectives and have measurable milestones to check off and compare the previous month's actual revenue/expenditure figures to the budgeted figures. Variations in actual figures and budgets should be explored and any necessary changes made to objectives.
- How the CoM will ensure its stakeholders are familiar with the plan]

Appendix 10: Policy statement – Improving equity of access to Crown land caravan and camping parks

Scope

This policy applies to caravan and camping parks on Crown land in Victoria. It has been developed to improve equity of access to Crown land caravan and camping parks in Victoria, enabling affordable holidays for all Victorians.

This policy does not apply to caravan and camping parks in national parks, on private land, on council-owned land, or to caravan and camping parks on Crown land outside of Victoria.

Background

This policy aims to ensure that a range of accommodation options are accessible to all prospective users; and to discourage long-term exclusive occupancy (longer than 12 months) of caravan and camping sites.

The *Policy for the Occupation of Crown land Caravan parks (1986)* and the May 2010 version of *Improving Equity of Access to Crown Land Caravan and Camping Parks* will be replaced by this policy statement. This policy statement will form part of the *Best Practice Management Guidelines for Committees of Management Managing Caravan and Camping Parks on Crown Land*.

Crown land reserves have been set aside for environmental values and for the benefit of all Victorians. In the 19th century parcels of land were deliberately reserved as Crown land for public purposes, such as roads, churches, quays, schools, resource extraction, defence and recreation. Today land reserved for public enjoyment and recreation supports a whole range of amenities and uses including botanic gardens, bushland, zoos, foreshores and caravan parks.

Crown land caravan and camping parks provide:

- Affordable holiday opportunities to all Victorians
- Fair and equitable access to sites
- Sustainable use of land and natural resources
- Contribution to recreation and tourism through providing short term access
- Income to committees of management to fund improvements to the parks and adjoining reserves
- Social, environmental and economic benefits

They must not be managed for:

- Exclusive long term occupancy
- Permanent residency
- Individual profiteering
- Poor environmental outcomes

Definitions

“Committee of Management” (CoM) refers to a committee which has been appointed by the responsible minister under the Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978 as delegated land manager for a Crown land reserve.

“Park manager” refers to the person responsible for the day to day operation of the caravan park. This could mean the Committee of Management, its employees or contractors, or a lessee to whom the Committee of Management has leased the management of the park.

The term “long term permits” refers to those permits allowing a longer stay than a casual permit. A long term permit offers campers an opportunity to holiday in Crown land caravan and camping parks. These permits may take several forms, including:

- A 12-month permit: allows a caravan and annex to be installed on a camp site for a 12-month period and used by the permit holder for no more than 59 consecutive nights per year and a maximum total of 180 days per year
- Seasonal permits: a wide range available across many parks, they allow a caravan and annex or a tent to be installed on a camp site. The most popular season is usually between November and April.

“On-site caravan sales” refers to the practice of an existing 12-month permit holder selling their caravan and accessories on-site to a new caravan park user. In relation to caravan sales, the term “caravan” refers to a caravan and associated accessories such as annexes and ensuite bathrooms.

Transition

This policy is effective as of July 2011. Committees of Management (CoM) who have leased the management of their parks may agree with the lessee to vary the lease to incorporate this policy. In these cases, the two-year implementation phase will apply immediately. If the CoM and lessee do not agree to vary the lease to incorporate this policy, the implementation phase starts when the next lease is granted.

Objective 1: To enable parks to better respond to increasing demand for sites and facilities, particularly during peak holiday periods.

Policy directions

- 1.1 CoM and park managers must implement systems and processes to provide both new and existing campers with fair and reasonable opportunity to stay in Crown land caravan and camping parks.
- 1.2 Long-term permit sites must be managed through park plans as part of a balanced mix of accommodation types, while maintaining adequate park access for the traditional transit and short-term camping visitors. This includes providing a minimum number of sites for camping.
- 1.3 CoM and park managers must provide DSE with evidence of demand, in the form of waiting list data, for each type of site available in its parks. The data will be provided on an annual basis, in 2012 and 2013.
- 1.4 The previous requirement for CoM to ensure a minimum of 10 per cent of sites within a park is available to new site holders each year or peak season is **suspended until July 2013**. The Minister for Environment and Climate Change will consider retention of the requirement, on the basis of the data discussed at Policy Direction 1.3, following the suspension period.

How to implement policy direction

CoM and park managers must maintain fairness and equity in all park management processes, including the implementation of this policy.

Ensure the conditions and limitations of permits on Crown land are clearly communicated to users

1. Provide an information sheet to all existing and prospective 12-month permit holders, clearly outlining the following details and conditions:
 - The park is situated on Crown land and is managed in accordance with State Government policy and Victorian law for the benefit of all Victorians
 - It is Victorian government policy that Crown land caravan parks should not acquire permanent residents, i.e. a person who occupies a site as his or her only or main residence
 - The site is hired for a 12-month tenure and there is no guarantee for a term beyond the yearly agreement
 - Sites can only be used for a maximum of 59 consecutive nights per year and a total of 180 days in a calendar year.
 - Sites cannot be sub-let
 - Permit holders must not occupy a site for more than 59 consecutive nights per year
 - Permit holders must not occupy a site for more than a total of 180 days in a calendar year
 - Unregistrable mobile dwellings are not permitted in Crown land caravan and camping parks, unless owned by the management body or the lessee with the consent of the management body.

2. Do not use the term “Annual Permit” as it may imply an ongoing arrangement. Preferable terms are “Weekender” or “12-month permit”
3. Ensure information sheets are clearly displayed on caravan sites and park website. Standard site-holder agreements and notices to existing and prospective permit holders, are included in the appendices of the *Best Practice Management Guidelines*.

Minimise profiteering

Do not allow subletting of long-term permit sites.

- Specify that subletting is prohibited - no permit holder may charge any other person for the right to occupy the site
- Charge a fee to visitors other than the registered permit holders. Such a system will work best in parks that have restricted access points (i.e. boom gates) and/or where park managers have the capacity to monitor incoming visitors to the park.

Avoid permanent residency

Ensure new 12-month permit holders are aware of the limitations of their permits (see *Ensure the conditions and limitations of permits on Crown land are clearly communicated to users and Employ strategies to limit the sense of ownership* above).

Terms and conditions must specify that the permit terminates automatically and immediately if:

- The site is occupied for more than 59 consecutive nights or for more than 180 days (in total) in any calendar year, whether the park manager is aware of the breach or not; or
- A permit holder uses or attempts to use the site as their permanent place of residence whether the park manager is aware of the breach or not.

Employ strategies to limit the sense of ownership

1. Include the following additional conditions on information sheets given to permit holders:
 - Establishment of gardens on sites is not permitted. Potted plants are allowed, provided they are within the site boundaries and easily removable
 - All possessions must be packed away inside caravans and annexes when the permit holder is away.
2. Through a master-planning process, reconfigure the park so that 12-month permit sites are consolidated in one area
3. Communicate that permit renewal is not guaranteed. Make it clear in information sheets to all existing and prospective permit holders (see *Ensure the conditions and limitations of permits on Crown land are clearly communicated to users*, above).

Example: Grassy Hill Caravan Park* has established binding agreements for the use of 12-month permit sites that describes the type of dwelling and additions allowed on site. It is clearly outlined that the park manager must inspect and approve all dwellings. A dwelling must be a caravan (as defined in the agreement) or registrable movable dwelling. The agreement states that permit holders may not establish gardens. Indigenous plants are permitted in pots across the front of the caravan only.

* The actual name of the caravan park has been changed.

Ensure accommodation mix and price structures cover costs for park and reserve management

1. Managers need to review fees regularly to ensure they are fair, competitive and cover costs
2. Strategies to ensure income flow
 - 12-month permit fees to be paid upfront (or in set instalments).

Example: Charge a 12-month fee for the right to occupy a site and an additional daily fee for when people stay at the park. Suggest alternatives to a 12-month permit for people living more than two hours' drive of the park, as people who live further away tend not to visit often and leave their sites vacant for most of the year.

Example: Increase the 12-month permit fee by the equivalent of 12 days' worth of daily fees for 2 adults. When permit holders pay for the 12-month permit issue 12 x daily fee vouchers, park managers have more guaranteed income and, having paid for these nights upfront, 12-month permit holders are likely to visit more often, increasing visitation

- Individually meter electricity and water usage where possible.

Example: Meter each site individually and charge quarterly for electricity use plus a service fee. With the installation of suitable infrastructure, water use can also be metered individually.

Maintain appearance of parks

1. Set rules on the age and condition of caravans and additions allowed in the park for long-term permits. Ensure these rules do not require permit-holders to make additions or improvements to their caravans that would be difficult and/or costly to remove at short notice.
2. Seasonal permit-holders will be required to remove caravans from the park in off-season. If the permit-holder returns the following season, the condition of the caravan will be assessed and approved by the park manager on their return.
3. Ensure all possessions are packed away inside caravans/annexes when the occupant is away (see *Employ strategies to limit the sense of ownership*, above).

Example: CoM may decide that caravans older than 40 years must be removed from the park, that caravans older than 30 years cannot be sold on-site and/or that incoming caravans must be less than 20 years old.

Example: 12-month permit holders' caravans are inspected annually to ensure compliance with park regulations. Caravans being brought into the park on a 12-month permit must not be more than 10 years old and must be eligible for registration under the Road Safety Act 1986. Management must approve all alterations to the caravan, annex or site and specifications are set in the "Agreement".

Example: 12-month permit holders must remove or suitably tie down canvas annexes while they are away.

Further options of managing demand

Below are some methods and practical examples for increasing turnover of sites. Committees of Management must maintain fairness and equity in all park management processes, including the implementation of these policy directions.

Expand the client base to respond to growing markets

Develop strategies to attract emerging markets including retirees and larger groups (school and tertiary students), to cater for campervans, mobile homes, recreational vehicles, environmentally sustainable accommodation and standing camps (higher-end tent accommodation). Consider how to expand the client base, particularly outside the peak season.

Example: Consider reconfiguring the park layout and increasing the mix and type of permit sites. This will allow Committees of Management and park managers to maximise current markets and tap into new markets by:

- Increasing overall usage of the park (casual visitors, peak and off peak)
- Increasing peak and off peak visitor markets by providing a diversity of accommodation options and amenities available, e.g. education/multipurpose facility
- Establishing ongoing off peak use through partnerships with educational institutions
- Offering park visitors and local community opportunities to learn about the natural environment.

Objective 2: To ensure affordable and equitable access to Crown land caravan and camping parks

Issues

Selling a caravan on site allows the vendor to avoid the inconvenience of packing up and removing their caravan, annex and other attachments (e.g. storage box). It may also allow them the potential to realise investments made in value-added features such as ensuite bathroom facilities and reticulated sewerage. Unfortunately this may give the purchaser the inaccurate perception they have gained ownership of the site, rather than just the caravan and accessories they have actually bought.

The practice of on-site sale of caravans creates various issues such as:

- Caravan sellers and buyers may falsely assume a sense of ownership of caravan sites on public land
- The purchase price of a caravan on-site may not reflect the true market value of the item/s being sold
- On-site sales may artificially slow turnover of permit-holders as caravan sellers hold out for their desired sale price
- Any person who wishes to obtain a 12-month permit but does not wish to purchase a caravan on-site is disadvantaged
- There is potential for profiteering from public land.

Policy direction

2.1 Caravans may be sold on-site where:

- Committees allow the sale.
- A transparent process occurs, where an independent valuation of the caravan has been done before the sale and the caravan is sold within the permit year that it is first offered for sale. If the caravan is not sold within the term of the permit or six months, whichever is greater, the caravan must be removed from site.

How to implement the policy

Committees of Management and park managers must maintain fairness and equity in all park management processes, including the implementation of this policy.

Process for managing on-site sales

1. The CoM/park manager must develop and maintain a waiting list of people wishing to access a site. The Committee/park manager may choose to charge a fee to cover administration costs. Caravans for sale on-site may only be sold to those on the waiting list.
2. The CoM/park manager must obtain prospective buyers' written permission to pass on their contact details to caravan vendors upon notification of intention to sell.
3. The CoM/park manager must distribute a notice to prospective buyers as they join the waiting list, to ensure they fully understand the purpose of Crown land caravan and camping parks and the process of purchasing a caravan on-site. See *Notice to Prospective Buyers* overleaf for details. The notice must also be displayed on any caravan which is for sale on-site.
4. The CoM/park manager must distribute the notice to all existing 12-month permit holders. The notice should be redistributed annually and displayed on notice boards.
5. The person who wishes to sell the caravan on-site must notify the park manager and surrender their 12-month permit. If a vendor sells without informing the park manager, the buyer will not be entitled to a permit.
6. Only caravans which are registrable and movable and in an appropriate condition according to park rules, may be approved for on-site sale. The park manager may wish to develop an Application For Sale document, where the park manager approves the condition of the caravan and attachments before a sale and site reallocation is allowed to occur.
7. The park manager will provide the details of those on the waiting list to the seller who arranges a sale. Sale is only allowed to a buyer who is on the waiting list, thus who has received the specific information outlined under *Notice to Prospective Buyers*, overleaf.
8. Any person on the waiting list who wishes to obtain a 12-month permit but does not wish to purchase a caravan on-site should not be disadvantaged.
9. While the transaction of selling a caravan does not concern the park manager directly, the 12-month permit held by the caravan seller represents a relationship between the park manager and the permit-holder.
10. The seller must relinquish their permit to the park manager upon sale of their caravan. See *Family Transfer* below.
11. 12-month permits are not transferable. The park manager will enter into a new agreement with the buyer.
12. If the caravan is not sold within the term of the permit or six months, whichever is greater, the caravan must be removed from site.

Valuation

Committees of Management and park managers **must** ensure caravans are valued by an independent valuer and this information be passed on to potential buyers.

Limitations of any sales process

There are many reports of sellers and buyers agreeing to a 'reasonable' price on paper but extra payments happening outside of an established process. While getting a valuation gives the buyer a clear idea of the true value of the caravan, this still doesn't guard against under-the-table deals. Therefore the preferred approach is to ensure everyone involved is provided with clear and accurate information about the park being on Crown land, and the requirements of a 12-month permit so buyers can make an informed decision about whether to buy a caravan on-site and for what price.

Family transfer

Committees may wish to allow the transfer of an unexpired 12-month permit to a permit holder's spouse, defacto partner or child, whether or not they are on a waiting list. Conditions must be detailed in the park's 12-month permit terms and conditions.

Notice to prospective buyers

A notice to prospective buyers is included at Appendix 6 of the Best Practice Management Guidelines. It will include the following information:

- Prospective buyers should note:
 - This park is situated on Crown land and is managed in accordance with Government policy and Victorian law for the benefit of all Victorians
 - The on-site sales process allows for the purchase of a caravan and annexe and to hire the site for the balance of 12 months only
 - The site is not owned by the seller and cannot be owned by the buyer
 - The purchase price of the caravan should be based on the value of the caravan, annexe and attachments only
 - The purchase price of the caravan and accessories should be equivalent to the price of similar items sold outside of the caravan park
 - The site is hired for 12-month tenure and there should be no expectation of a term beyond the yearly agreement
 - Sites can only be used for a maximum of 59 consecutive nights per year and a total of 180 days in a calendar year.
- Sites cannot be sublet; and
- It is Victorian government policy that Crown land caravan and camping parks should not acquire permanent residents, i.e. a person who occupies a site as his or her only or main residence.
- These permits are not automatically granted and if granted the user must abide by strict conditions that are set out on the permit.
- If these conditions are not followed, the permit can be revoked and the permit holder may be subject to prosecution for breaches against the Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978 and associated regulations.
- The CoM/park manager is not a party to the contract of sale and therefore can not make any warranty in relation to the fitness, quality or condition of the item sold.
- Prospective purchasers should obtain independent valuation and legal advice.
- Prospective purchasers may obtain a copy of the relevant 12 month site-holder agreement with conditions from the CoM/park manager.

Implementation of policy within leased parks

1. CoM who have leased the management of their parks may agree with the lessee to vary the lease to incorporate the *Policy for Improving Equity of Access to Crown Land Caravan and Camping Parks* and associated parks rules regarding access and on-site sales. Where the CoM and lessee do not agree to vary the lease to incorporate this policy, these policy directions must be stipulated in new lease arrangements.
2. To ensure the park is managed as desired, make specifications in the lease agreement before a lease begins. The best way of doing this is to make sure a current and comprehensive park management plan and/or business plan is developed in consultation with DSE before a lease begins
3. The *Best Practice Management Guidelines* include a park management plan template to provide Committees of Management and park managers with a framework to address a wide range of issues (see Section 6: Management planning)
4. All park management plans should be prepared in consultation with stakeholders and must be endorsed by DSE before their implementation.

Reporting

CoM are expected to work with their local DSE office in implementing this policy. DSE will work with CoM to establish a process for collection of the waiting list data required by policy direction 1.3.

