

Tour Operator and Activity Provider Licensing

Competitive allocation of licences

Fact Sheet
May 2021

What is the purpose of a licence?

The tour operator licensing system provides a consistent legislative framework for licensing commercial tourism and commercial recreation activity on public land and waters in Victoria.

Licensing provides land managers and government with assurances that tour operators and activity providers are:

- implementing risk management measures associated with tour or activity
- meeting relevant safety standards
- complying with environment protection conditions.

Competitive allocation of tour operator licences

The majority of tour operator and activity provider licences in Victoria are issued on a non-competitive basis. This is because it generally isn't considered necessary to limit to the number of licences available for a site or activity.

However, there are circumstances in which a public land manager may consider it necessary to restrict the number of licences operating at a particular site or area, to protect natural or cultural values or visitor safety.

In these circumstances, public land managers may grant licences through a public, competitive process (also known as an expression of interest) to ensure commercial access to public resources is allocated fairly and in accordance with Government policy.

Guidelines

The Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) has prepared guidelines to inform public land managers, licence applicants and other stakeholders about the policy and principles applicable to competitive allocation of tour operator licences. These are 'Competitive Allocation of Tour Operator Licences, 2018'.

Public land managers are strongly encouraged to obtain professional probity advice in the preparation and management of processes for competitive allocation of tour operator licences.

Fees for competitively allocated licences

The regulations establishing tour operator licence fees provide that:

- public land managers may set the annual fee for a competitively allocated licence, but must advertise the fee in a public expression of interest document before licence applications are made
- as a minimum the annual fee must be equivalent to the annual fee for standard tour operator licences (as set out in Table 1)
- use fees for competitively allocated licences are the same as for standard tour operator licences (\$2.40 adult, \$1.60 child (16 years and under) or school student
- no use fee cap applies to competitively allocated licences.

The annual fee should also reflect a fair and appropriate return to the land manager while ensuring that the system of administration of the licence is both cost effective and efficient.

For annual fees greater than \$5 000, public land managers should seek a valuation by the Valuer General Victoria or a registered valuer.

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Table 1: Summary of standard tour operator licence fees

Category	Fee for 2021-22
Annual fee – standard one year licence	\$312.30
Annual fee – standard licence greater than one year (per year)	\$245.00
Use fee – adult ^a	\$2.40
Use fee – child (16 years and under) and school student ^a	\$1.60

a. Per person per day

Further assistance

For more information on tour operator licences please visit www.forestsandreserves.vic.gov.au/tour-operators or call the DELWP Customer Contact Centre on 136 186.

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