

Tourism and Recreation Group

NEWSLETTER NO 15

The Tourism and Recreation Group's quarterly newsletters provide an update on some of the current issues and initiatives that may affect tourism and recreation stakeholders.



Australian Government

Great Barrier Reef
Marine Park Authority

August 2005

The Directors Desk

This month marks the 30th Anniversary of the establishment of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority. We are delighted that Senator the Hon Ian Campbell will be visiting Townsville to celebrate this significant event with us and to recognise the important industries and contributors to the Great Barrier Reef over this time. The tourism industry has, and continues to play, a pivotal role in Marine Park protection and presentation, and I am encouraged by the hard work I see up and down the coast by operators who make 'looking after the reef' a key part of their business.

I am also pleased to announce that there are now 24 Marine Park tourism operators, running over 46 products, who have achieved the GBRMPA recognition for their high standards (checkout our website for details). In addition, Marine Park tourism operators have recently become the first to volunteer their help in our Reef Water Quality Protection Plan monitoring.

But, I'd like to add its not a one way street! T&R staff have also been working hard to ensure that the GBRMPA rewards operators who help the reef, and listens to the needs of your industry, incorporating these as much as possible in our work.

I hope you find this brief update on T&R and GBRMPA activities useful.

Lisha Mulqueeny
Director
(07) 4750 0777

Certification update

In June 2005, Lisha Mulqueeny and Hilary Skeat attended the Australian Tourism Exchange (ATE) in Perth as part of the GBRMPA's focus on

showcasing high standard Marine Park operators. Continuing this support for ecocertified operators, T&R staff met with 10 inbound operators at a Townsville Enterprise organised workshop last month to discuss how to identify a high standard operator.

To join the growing list of high standard operations check out www.gbrmpa.gov.au or call Hilary Skeat on (07) 4750 0842.



Hilary Skeat (right) and Simone Bennett of Ecotourism Australia with a tourism buyer at ATE.

Operators help monitor success of Reef Water Quality Protection Plan

In yet another example of the GBRMPA and operators working together to achieve a healthy reef, tour and island resort operators are helping to set up a long-term monitoring program for herbicides and pesticides at Low Isles, Fitzroy, Orpheus, Normanby, Bedarra, Magnetic, Long and Keppel Islands.

Operators and staff are keen to see the results of this sampling to track what chemicals are reaching inshore marine environments.



Bill and Andrea from Long Island Dive & Snorkel monitor the Long Island site

To get involved in other partnership programs call Lorelle Schluter on (07) 4750 0705.

Moorings workshops

At recent industry workshops on moorings, key issues discussed included private investment opportunities for public infrastructure and expression of interest allocation systems.

For more information on these initiatives, contact Stefanie Myers on (07) 4750 0788.

Moorings information now online

Do you want to know about moorings at specific locations and who to contact for permission to use them? To assist you, the T&R team has developed an online Moorings Register at

http://www.gbrmpa.gov.au/corp_site/key_issues/tourism/moorings.html

The GBRMPA is moving to mandatory display of reference numbers on permitted moorings in 2006.

If you are unsure of your mooring reference number, please contact the Permits Unit on (07) 4750 0700 or email permits@gbmpa.gov.au

our great barrier reef
let's keep it great



Do you use a public mooring?

Remember to make sure that your vessel type and length are within the specifications displayed on the colour-coded band on the moorings and on the mooring tag attached to the pickup line.

GBRMPA is listening to regional communities

Leanne Fernandes has taken the helm of the Director of the newly created Community Partnerships Group. This group which has offices in Cairns, Townsville, Mackay and Rockhampton has been set up to ensure the GBRMPA works even closer with local communities. She is assisted by Belinda Jago (Manager) and Tracey Rehbein.

Four Regional Liaison Managers have been appointed to get to know local issues better across the regions:

- Cape Region:
Simon Towle (Manager)
- Far Northern Region:
Tony Stokes (Manager) and Sarah Offner
- Northern Region:
Paula Tomkins (Manager)
- Central Region:
Randall Owens (Manager) and Cath Maclean
- Southern Regions:
Dave Lowe (Manager) and Kalair Conaghan

T&R will continue to be specific point of contact for industry issues.

Amendments to the Cairns and Whitsundays Plans

We would like to thank those operators who submitted comments on the proposed amendments to the Plans. Submissions are being considered by the GBRMPA. *For more information, please call Sally Peut on (07) 4750 0857.*

Concern over allocation of new permits

The tourism industry and some communities along the coast have recently expressed concern over the release of new permits in the Cairns Area and Whitsundays.

The GBRMPA will not issue these new permits if it will cause an increase in coral damage or environmental harm. The timing of release of any new

permits will be the subject of consultation with relevant communities and industry.

The GBRMPA will continue to facilitate opportunities for new ventures through its permit transfer arrangements. Over the last two years, 70 capped permissions have been transferred, giving opportunities to 28 new operators in the Marine Park.

Site management simplified

T&R and the Program Delivery Group have created a new webpage with links to site-specific information such as site inventories, site plans and site management arrangements.

Low Isles was the first location to have site management arrangements compiled and uploaded to the web in November 2004, and now the latest editions to the site management arrangements section include Blue Pearl Bay and Horseshoe Bay.

Previously developed site plans for locations in the Cairns Area Plan of Management are now available online from this new webpage. They include Norman Reef, Lizard Island and Michaelmas Cay.

Check out these site-specific management information now available at:
http://www.gbrmpa.gov.au/corp_site/management/site_management.html

New cruise ship anchorage map

In response to cruise industry requests, T&R have developed an A1 map showing all cruise ship anchorages in the GBRMP. The map is designed to assist itinerary planners, ground handlers and agents to better plan for cruise ships accessing the Marine Park.

For more information, please call Lorelle Schluter on (07) 4750 0705 or email l.schluter@gbmpa.gov.au

Queensland fishing closures

The Queensland DPI&F implements closures to protect coral reef fin fish each year during spawning.

For 2005, the closures for waters of the Marine Park will be:

- 27 September to 5 October;
- 27 October to 4 November; and
- 25 November to 3 December.

For specific details visit www.dpi.qld.gov.au/fish/16781.html

Bulletin board

- **Ecotourism Australia** will be holding workshops in Mackay, 13 September and Airlie Beach, 14 September. *For more details call (07) 3229 5550 or e-mail info@ecotourism.org.au*
- Provide comment on proposed moorings at **Bauer Bay**. Visit the GBRMPA website under 'Latest News' or call Leanne Brown on (07) 4750 0752.
- The Board of the **Marine and Tropical Sciences Research Facility** held its first meeting in Cairns in August 2005.
- **National codes of conduct for turtle and dugong tourism** are being trialled. See www.dugongturtletourism.org
- The **Tourism and Recreation Reef Advisory Committee** (TRRAC) met in Townsville in June to discuss topical Marine Park issues.
- A reminder to **commence operations** within 2 years if your tourism permit has been granted since 13 August 2003.
- For brochures on **Irukandji** and treatment contact Surf Life Saving Qld. PO Box 3747, South Brisbane QLD 4101.
- 2-5 October 2005 - **Tourism Futures Conference**, Gold Coast
- 23-28 October 2005 - the First **International Marine Protected Areas Congress** (IMPAC), Geelong
- 28 November to 2 December 2005 - **Ecotourism Australia 2005 National Conference**, Tasmania

Need further information

www.gbrmpa.gov.au/corp_site/key_issues/tourism/index.html or contact us by email: tourec@gbmpa.gov.au

Would you like this Newsletter electronically?

Please provide your details to Kirsten Walpole on (07) 4750 0775 or email k.walpole@gbmpa.gov.au

Reef Facts:

New species in GBR - Australian Snubfin dolphin and Barking Crayfish.