

## Dedicated-Use Moorings in the Whitsundays Registrations of Interest Summary Report

18 May 2006

### Introduction

The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA), in conjunction with the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS), called for registrations of interest in dedicated-use moorings in the Whitsunday Planning Area in January 2006.

This was a direct response to requests by tourism representative bodies, community groups and tourism operators for a funding contribution mechanism that delivers additional public moorings in the Whitsundays Planning Area, in return for dedicated periods of use of those moorings.

Registrations of interest (ROI) were received from individuals and representative organisations. This report summarises those responses and is for information only. It does not attempt to analyse the submissions or any issues raised.

### Background

The Whitsundays is well known for its spectacular island scenery, fringing and offshore reefs, which make it a popular destination for both recreational users and tourists.

Currently, the GBRMPA and the QPWS maintain a Reef Protection Programme including a network of 85 public moorings and 43 reef protection markers throughout the Whitsunday Planning Area. This programme provides protection to environmentally sensitive sites, whilst supporting safe and reliable access to this renowned World Heritage Area.

Within the Whitsunday Planning Area, the Plan of Management (the Plan) provides for private moorings in *Setting 1* areas. However, the Plan also allows for the installation of public moorings in other setting areas. Feedback from the Whitsundays Moorings Workshop, held in May 2005, strongly supported public moorings instead of additional private moorings, as a primary management tool in the Whitsunday Planning Area.

Since the workshop, the Whitsunday Local Marine Advisory Committee, the Tourism and Recreation Reef Advisory Committee, key tourism industry representatives and community groups requested the GBRMPA and the QPWS investigate a mechanism for funding public moorings that would have dedicated times set aside for specific use.

These moorings would deliver a high level of operational certainty by improving access to a specific mooring at a regularly visited site, and provide additional safe access for recreational users at other times.

Such moorings also create a unique opportunity for increased access for all reef users, and support the existing Reef Protection Programme.

### Summary of Submissions

The call for ROI attracted 15 submissions from tourism operators and representative organisations. The summary of the registrations is separated into three sections:

1. Location and access requirements
2. Summary of contributions to Marine Park management
3. Investment proposals

#### 1. Location and access requirements

From the registrations, 20 individual sites were requested for dedicated-use moorings - some received multiple requests that reflect demand and use of the site. Requested sites are listed in the table below:

Location	No. of requests
Bait Reef	3
Betty's Beach	1
Black Island	1
Blue Pearl Bay	2
Chalkies Beach (Hazelwood Island)	2
Chance Bay	1
Cid Harbour	1
Dumbell Island	1
Langford Reef	1
Langford Sand Spit	1
Luncheon Bay	4
Mantaray Bay	2
Maureen's Cove	1
Nara Inlet	1
Pitstop	1
Scrub Hen Beach	1
Shaw Island	1
Tongue Bay	1
Whitehaven	3
Whitsunday Island (Southern side)	1

Three of the registrations indicated mooring installation in the Whitsunday Planning Area more generally, rather than at specific locations.

The time of access requested in the registrations was variable and largely dependent on individual operational requirements. Generally, access was required between the hours of 0900 and 1700, while in several instances 24 hour access was indicated. Access ranged from one to seven days per week and from a minimum of 24 to a maximum of 365 days per year.

No indication was provided in the ROI on the type of mooring sought to be installed. Both screw and block moorings may be suitable, but will be dependent on the proposed location.

## 2. Summary of proposed contributions to Marine Park management

Proposed Marine Park management contributions were directed into three areas:- installation; repairs and maintenance; and other contributions. The responses are summarised below:

<b>Proposed Contribution to Marine Park Management</b>	<b>ROI's Indicating <u>Yes</u></b>	<b>ROI's Indicating <u>No</u></b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>Contribution Amount / Comment</b>
<b>Installation Cost</b>	6	7	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• From \$2,000 to \$7,000</li> <li>• Prepared to cover the cost of installation of a new mooring</li> </ul>
<b>Repairs and Maintenance</b>	9	4	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• From \$1,000 – \$5,000</li> <li>• Prepared to pay for the ongoing maintenance of mooring</li> <li>• Proposal for a profit sharing arrangement with managing agencies through user pays system</li> </ul>
<b>Other Contribution</b>	7	4	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$50 per day for mooring access</li> <li>• Vessel transport for management inspections of moorings</li> </ul>

## 3. Investment Proposals

While the 15 ROI were based on individual operational requirements, they can be summarised into five implementation models as outlined below:

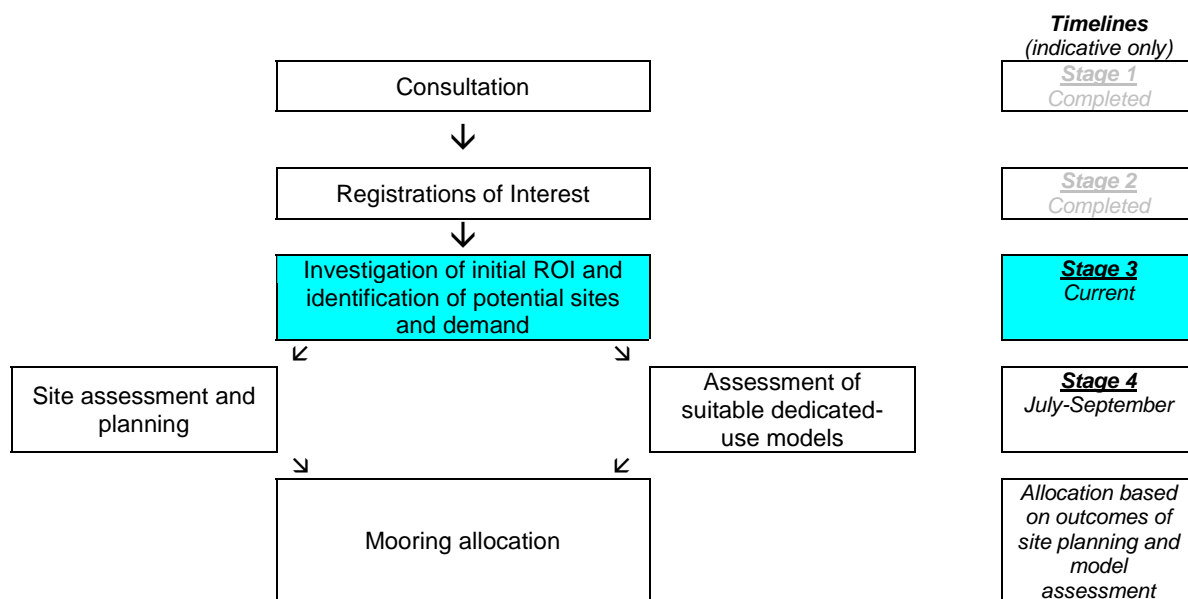
	<b>Description</b>
<b>Model 1</b>	Financial contribution for installation and maintenance of new moorings at designated sites.
<b>Model 2</b>	Financial contribution for use and maintenance of existing public moorings at designated sites.
<b>Model 3</b>	Installation, maintenance and management (including revenue collection) of all moorings. Revenue raised may be split on a profit sharing basis with the management agencies.
<b>Model 4</b>	Dollar for dollar funding is provided by Whitsunday bareboat operators, charter vessel operators (through industry associations) and the managing agencies. Funding will pay for the installation and maintenance of moorings.
<b>Model 5</b>	Mooring installation and maintenance to be put out to tender. An independent contractor would manage all aspects of mooring installation, maintenance and user fees. Operators using the moorings would pay the contractor for use.

[NOTE: Some proposals indicated support for Environmental Management Charge funds to be directed specifically to moorings and reef protection markers in the Whitsundays.]

The proposals provided specific information which has not been shown above, however, this information will be taken into account when determining feasible options for delivering dedicated-use moorings.

### What are the next steps?

Investigation of the dedicated-use moorings initiative is being progressed through a series of stages. The process is outlined below:



Two working groups have been established to review the ROI and further develop the dedicated-use moorings concept. These groups will run in parallel to prioritise site selection and determine an implementation model(s). The working groups consist of government agencies involved in the management of the Marine Park.

Working group outcomes will form the basis of further consultation with tourism operators, industry associations and the community.

Updates on the progress of this proposal are provided regularly by email. If you wish to be included in a mailing list for updates, please forward your details to [l.brown@gbrmpa.gov.au](mailto:l.brown@gbrmpa.gov.au).