



Tourism and Recreation Group

NEWSLETTER NO 11

APRIL 2004

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.

Representative Areas Update

The new Zoning Plan and associated regulations will become law on Thursday, **1 July 2004**. Until then, all existing Zoning Plans for the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park remain in effect.

In the weeks leading up to 1 July 2004, information on the new Zoning Plan will be forwarded to all operators and be available generally in local communities. In addition, the GBRMPA staff will be available for meetings and information sessions.

The GBRMPA would like to thank the Tourism and Recreation Reef Advisory Committee (TRRAC), the Queensland Tourism Industry Council (QTIC), the Association of Marine Park Tourism Operators (AMPTO) and all individuals within the marine tourism industry and local communities for their input and support throughout the rezoning.

For further information about the new zoning contact the GBRMPA on the free call number 1800 990 177 or go to www.reefed.edu.au/rap/

Hinchinbrook Area



The Hinchinbrook Plan of Management 2004 came into effect on **15 April 2004**. It aims to protect the outstanding natural values of the Hinchinbrook region and to provide for the long-term sustainable use of this world famous area.

If you operate within the Hinchinbrook Planning Area, you are encouraged to view the Plan and Information Sheets at the GBRMPA web site: www.gbrmpa.gov.au to see how the Plan relates to your style of operation.

The GBRMPA would like to thank the Hinchinbrook Local Marine Advisory Committee, tourism operators and the local community for assistance in developing the Plan.

For further information about the Plan contact the Public Information Unit at GBRMPA on (07) 4750 0700.

Reminder to Make Use of Your Permit

Do you have a special tourism permission? Special tourism permissions allow you to conduct a particular tourism activity that has been capped or limited.

Your tourism program permit is likely to be a special tourism permission if it allows one or more of the following in the Cairns or Whitsundays Planning Areas:

- more than 50 days access per year without a booking (Whitsundays)
- more than 50 days anchoring access per year without a booking (Cairns)
- more than 50 days access per year to a Sensitive Location without a booking (Cairns) or access to a setting 5 area (Whitsundays)
- more than 50 days anchoring access per year to a Location (Cairns)
- a larger group size than that provided for in the setting (both areas)
- long range roving operations (both areas) or bareboat operations (Whitsundays)
- the activities of whale watching (both areas) and swimming-with-whales (Cairns)

- the activities of reef walking other than at Hardy Reef or Black Island Reef and fishing in the Marine National Park 'A' zones (Whitsundays).

If your special tourism permission is due to expire after 13 August 2004 and you apply for a new permit to replace it, the GBRMPA will review whether you have made reasonable use of your permit. For most special tourism permissions this is an average of 91 days per year for every primary vessel or aircraft.

For further information about reasonable use and special tourism permissions, contact Hilary Skeat on (07) 4750 0842 or email h.skeat@gbbrmpa.gov.au

Tourism and Recreation Reef Advisory Committee (TRRAC)

This Committee provides advice to the GBRMPA about tourism and recreation issues in the Marine Park. Its 15th meeting was held in early March 2004 and valuable advice was received on the draft Marine Tourism Contingency Plan, selection criteria for ranking expressions of interest, and research priorities for tourism and recreation on the Great Barrier Reef.

For further information about TRRAC contact Hilary Skeat on (07) 4750 0842 or email h.skeat@gbbrmpa.gov.au

GST and the EMC

In response to concerns by the industry about GST on the Environmental Management Charge (EMC), changes have been introduced so that, from 20 April 2004, operators will not be required to pay GST on the EMC. The liability to pay the standard tourism program charge has been shifted to the visitor. The operator is required to collect that amount from the visitor and pay it to the GBRMPA.

For further information about the EMC, contact Bernie Lee on (07) 4750 0764 or email b.lee@gbbrmpa.gov.au

What's New in Research

Have you ever wanted to know more about Crown-of-Thorns Starfish, marine pests, or tourism on the Reef? Then you may want to read the latest CRC Reef research brochures 'Crown-of-thorns Starfish on the Great Barrier Reef', 'Introduced Species in Tropical Waters' and 'Marine Tourism on the Great Barrier Reef' or Technical Report No 49 'The Changing Patterns of Reef Tourism'.

These and other CRC publications can be found at: www.reef.crc.org.au/publications/index.html

Getting Feedback from You

The Tourism and Recreation Group is collating the results of our recent telephone survey about operator information needs. Thank you to those who participated, your responses will help us to deliver management information products that work for you.

Whale Season Is Almost Upon Us

Every year the number of whales visiting the Great Barrier Reef is increasing. Whales are social animals and may approach boats or people in the water so if you are operating a vessel or aircraft, be alert and watch for whales at all times (especially from May to September). If there is a sudden change in whale behaviour, move away immediately. Report sick, injured, stranded or dead whales to the Marine Animal Hotline on 1300 360 898. Approach restrictions and best practices you should follow during the whale season can be found at the GBRMPA web site: www.gbbrmpa.gov.au

Commercial operators require a specific Marine Parks permit before offering whale watching or swimming-with-whales activities.

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