

Information sheet

Visitor Management

Standard guided tour permit

This Information Sheet will assist authorised commercial tour operators holding a Standard guided tour permit understand their obligations and how they can best be met while conducting approved activities in QPWS managed areas.

Table of Contents

Purpose	2
Overview	2
Definitions	2
Key features of the Standard guided tour permit	3
Locations	3
Activities and access limits	3
Meeting legal obligations and best practice expectations	4
Park Alerts	5
What participants should know	5
Respecting other park users	5
Structures and exclusive access.....	6
Sales and advertising	6
Caring for our QPWS managed areas	7
Safety	8
Respecting First Nations People and culture	9
How to identify Traditional Owners	9
What to know about the Standard guided tour secondary activities	10
Camping	10
Photography	11
Cycling.....	11
Non-motorised watercraft.....	12
Motor Vehicle Use	12
Need to know more about the authority?	13

Purpose

This information sheet is a reference tool for authority holders who have a commercial activity permit to conduct low-impact guided tours on Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS) managed areas, under the *Nature Conservation Act 1992*, *Recreation Areas Management Act 2006* and/or *Forestry Act 1959*. The purpose of this information sheet is to provide clear information on relevant legal obligations as well as some best practice guidance, that ensures commercial tour operators can conduct low-impact activities safely and appropriately.

Overview

The *Commercial Activity Permit: Standard guided tour* (Standard guided tour permit) is a fully standardised permit, meaning the guided tour activity and any allowable secondary activities have been pre-assessed as small scale and therefore present a low to very low risk of impacting park values and native title rights and interests. This is provided the authority holder complies with the location, access limits and condition requirements and understands legal obligations and best practice expectations, not included on the permit — which is the focus of this information sheet.

Definitions

Term	Definition
Relevant legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) <i>Nature Conservation Act 1992</i> and Nature Conservation (Protected Area Management) Regulation 2017 (b) <i>Recreation Areas Management Act 2006</i> and Recreation Areas Management Regulation 2017 (c) <i>Forestry Act 1959</i> and Forestry (State Forests) Regulation 1987
Standard guided tour permit	<p>a low-impact and low scale Commercial Activity Permit for the primary purpose of a guided tour, with the following characteristics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) class assessment has been undertaken to address legislative assessment criteria (b) involves management treatments including access limits and standard conditions (c) applies only to QPWS managed areas included for these purposes (d) may include secondary activities such as four-wheel driving and camping
QPWS managed area	include protected areas (State land) dedicated under the <i>Nature Conservation Act 1992</i> , recreation areas under the <i>Recreation Areas Management Act 2006</i> (RAM Act), and State forests (other than areas of State plantation forest), forest reserves and timber reserves managed under the <i>Forestry Act 1959</i> . For the purposes of this information sheet, those areas discussed under 'Locations' of this information sheet
Non-restricted walking tracks, roads, visitor facilities and day-use areas	<p>For the purposes of the Standard guided tour permit means -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) walking tracks: in accordance with the Australian Standard, Walking tracks, Part 1: Classification and signage – Classifications 1-4 (b) roads: a natural surface either formed or unformed, paved or sealed that provides access primarily for vehicles, walkers, bicycles and horses (c) visitor facilities: viewing platforms, lookouts, boardwalks, foot bridges and the like (d) day use areas: a developed area designated for visitor activities that exclude camping and overnight stays. They are accessible by motorised or non-motorised transport – where visitors can picnic, walk, study nature, swim, and participate in active recreation activities. They generally include one or a combination of the following assets, picnic tables, information signage, shelters, barbecues and toilets <p>— that are not closed for management purposes</p>

Camping area	a designated area of park or forest where visitors can set up camp and/or stay overnight and generally include one or a combination of the following assets, cleared defined camp sites, information signage shelters, orientation signage and toilets
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Key features of the Standard guided tour permit

Using the Parks and Forests Permits HUB (PFP HUB), the Standard guided tour permit is a quick and easy way to gain approval for access to QPWS managed areas to conduct small scale commercial guided tours, determined to be consistent with the location and settings. As the locations and scale of activities have been pre-assessed, the permit can be granted quickly via PFP HUB, saving time and providing greater transparency about what can happen and where.

Locations

The Standard guided tour permit applies at selected locations within the following QPWS managed area tenures:

1. National Park;
2. Conservation Park;
3. State Forest;
4. Timber Reserve;
5. Forest Reserve; and
6. Resources Reserve.

The Standard guided tour permit allows access to selected QPWS managed areas where small scale, low impact activities are suited. This includes areas where suitable infrastructure is available such as walking tracks, roads, visitor facilities (e.g. lookouts and boardwalks), day-use areas and camping areas, that are suitable in supporting a small, guided tour group, with some selected secondary activities.

Not all locations are permitted under the Standard guide tour permit. Where locations are not included, a full assessment of the proposed guided tour or activity is required, and while taking longer, is an important process to ensure park values are maintained, native title rights and interests are protected, demand and use is managed, and necessary safety matters addressed.

To be clear, the Standard guided tour permit cannot be used as a roving permission and the authority holder can only access those locations listed on the permit.

Activities and access limits

The Standard guided tour permit is primarily for the purpose of conducting a non-competitive, walking guided tour, including a guide(s) with a small group of paying participants. Competitive walking or running is not approved under the Standard guided tour permit, which requires a different authority assessment process.

The Standard guided tour permit can also allow other secondary activities, such as cycling and camping, however secondary activities must be allowable in the relevant area and clearly align, and be subsidiary to the primary guided tour product. The Standard guided tour permit activities and access limits are contained in Table 1.

Table 1. Activities and access limits under the Standard guided tour permit per QPWS managed area

APPROVED ACTIVITIES	ACCESS LIMITS for each QPWS managed estate					
	Maximum Group size – including staff	Total persons per day – including staff	Duration	Vehicles per day	Bicycles per day	Gross Vehicle Mass per vehicle
Standard Guided Tour – Primary activity						
Walking	≤25	≤50	3 years	—	—	—
Secondary activities clearly aligned and subsidiary to the walking guided tour						
Nature Study / Educational	≤25	≤50	3 years	—	—	—
Photography	≤25	≤50	3 years			
Spotlighting	≤10	≤20	3 years	—	—	—
Cycling	≤15	≤45	3 years	—	<15	—
Watercraft - non-motorised	≤15	≤45	3 years			
Motorised - 4WD	≤10	≤50	3 years	≤5	—	≤4.495 tonne
Motorised – Motor-cycle	≤10	≤20	3 years	≤10	—	—
Camping - <i>authority required via Online camping bookings</i>	≤10	≤20	3 years	≤2		≤4.495 tonne

Meeting legal obligations and best practice expectations

QPWS is not required to include on the permit, all local, State and Commonwealth legal obligations, including those specific to QPWS, that an authority holder must comply with. The permit is required to include what, where and how much (e.g. number of participants and locations) is authorised, and any conditions that should apply specifically in that instance, where clarification or specificity is important. Noting that not complying with a condition of an authority can incur a maximum penalty of 60 penalty units for an individual, or a maximum penalty of 60 penalty units for a corporation.

The authority holder conducting the activity is responsible for, at its own expense, being aware of and acting in accordance with relevant laws and statues and taking all reasonable steps to prevent or minimise harm to conservation and cultural heritage values in QPWS managed areas.

While this information sheet does not attempt to capture all laws, statutes and best practice guidance material, it is a collation of information that QPWS considers particularly relevant in assisting commercial tour operators to remain compliant while conducting a small-scale guided tour in QPWS managed areas under the Standard guided tour permit.

Park Alerts

In some instances, it will be temporarily unsafe to conduct a guided tour due to severe weather, fire danger or obstruction. QPWS rangers are responsible for all natural resource and land-use management activities as the land manager. This can include activities such as, track maintenance, removing fallen trees from paths and/or conducting burns. Important information that will restrict access for authority holders and all park users, is collated and made available daily via Park Alerts on the Department of Environment and Science website.

It is the responsibility of the authority holder to refer to Park Alerts prior to each scheduled tour to check if it is safe to do so. It is recommended that the authority holder always have a contingency plan in place for notifying participants if a scheduled tour cannot proceed or needs to be altered. If access is restricted, authority holders are required to either cancel the activity or temporarily re-route the tour to a more appropriate location included on the permit. Park Alert updates can be received by:

- Following @QldParkAlerts on Twitter
- Subscribing to one of the park alerts RSS feeds on the Department of Environment and Science website

As a rule, at the beginning of every day, the authority holder should check Park Alerts for the latest information on access, closures and conditions. QPWS park management work can often be scheduled in advance, so it is worth looking beforehand to pre-empt the sale of a tour that would need to be re-routed, rescheduled or cancelled.

In the case of natural disasters and wildfires for example, it is not always possible to give forward notice. In addition, not all QPWS managed areas have Park Alerts, in which case, the authority holder is responsible for assessing whether it is safe for the activity to proceed, seek advice from QPWS if needed, and adhere to any direction provided by a QPWS Ranger.

What participants should know

The authority holder is responsible for briefing all participants on QPWS managed area regulations, authority requirements, emergency/evacuation procedures, responsibilities in relation to other park visitors, and trip/slip hazards and all other relevant safety requirements.

Respecting other park users

QPWS managed areas are for the enjoyment of all and there is no commercial activity permit available that can grant exclusive use of an area or visitor facilities. Activities conducted under the Standard guided tour permit must not impede, interfere with, or negatively impact on other users' enjoyment of the area.

QPWS requests authority holders to consider general etiquette when interacting with other park users while conducting guided tours. For example, this could mean ensuring the group does not obstruct access to paths or block others from using facilities or having access to facilities provided to optimise a scenic view for an unreasonable amount of time, for example.

Here are some important ways authority holder's are required to manage tour groups, to avoid potential conflict or incident with other park users:

- during peak times, break the group into smaller groups and stagger tour start times if possible;
- request participants give right of way to all other users on tracks, including stopping if necessary;
- avoid congregation on, for example lookouts, viewpoints, creek crossings if other visitors are present;
- always have a guide supervising the group who can provide direction and guidance to participants;
- ensure that support vehicles do not obscure any tracks or road access or in any way restrict public access or opportunity to enjoy the scenery; and

- do not use sound amplifying equipment other than small portable battery powered music/media players used for communicating with participants. The volume of the portable player must not cause excessive noise. Where this activity is occurring unauthorised, the person or authority holder responsible may receive a fine of 2 penalty units (over \$280) or can incur a maximum penalty of 50 penalty units (over \$7,000).

Structures and exclusive access

As per the relevant legislation, a person must not erect or store a structure or equipment, other than for camping under a camping permit. A person responsible for unauthorised structures may receive a fine of 5 penalty units (over \$718) or can incur a maximum penalty of 165 penalty units (over \$23,000). In addition, the authority holder is not permitted to claim exclusive right of use for any area or facilities. To do so can be considered an offence, incurring a maximum penalty of 50 penalty units (more than \$7,000).

Under the Standard guided tour permit, the authority holder is not authorised to do the following, without further written authority from the Chief Executive:

- install any permanent infrastructure or equipment
- leave or store anything on-site for any period of time
- cordon off or claim to have exclusive right of use
- erect barriers which prevent access to an area by other users
- erect permanent route markers, signs, controls, checkpoints or similar
- restrict access to barbecues, tables or other facilities in the area.

The authority holder can however bring in small scale temporary structures, that are easily packed down and removed at the conclusion of every tour. This could include for example, temporary shade structures such as small scale tents or marquees. Provision of temporary shelter from sun, rain or wind may also be necessary. Other equipment can be used, such as trestle tables and chairs, where picnic facilities are not already provided, or the area is known to be in high demand.

Before temporary structures are erected, the authority holder should consider circumstances, in particular weather conditions, as some structures may need to be weighted down or pegged for safety reasons.

Any temporary equipment brought onto QPWS managed areas for the enjoyment and comfort of the tour group, should not inadvertently limit other people's enjoyment of the area.

Sales and advertising

The Standard guided tour permit does not authorise commercial vending activities such as the sale of food, beverages and other items in QPWS managed areas. A separate authority is required to do this. This is generally done via a Commercial Activity Agreement whereby different criteria is considered and different fees are likely to apply. Where a commercial activity is being conducted unauthorised, the person or authority holder responsible can incur a maximum penalty of 165 penalty units (more than \$9,000.00).

It is essential that any rubbish or scraps generated in QPWS managed areas resulting from bringing any sale items into the area, such as food and beverage packaging, is removed at the conclusion of every tour.

In addition, the Standard guided tour permit does not authorise advertising or seeking information for the purposes of gain, from participants or other park users. Visitors to QPWS managed areas should expect that their opportunities for quiet enjoyment of the natural surroundings without undue disturbance or interference from other park users, including commercial tour operators and their participants, is protected by QPWS.

The authority holder must not:

- solicit for business
- erect or display advertising material, signage or distribute flyers, leaflets or brochures, other than advertising affixed to an associated vehicle
- use marquees and other structures for advertising purposes

Where the activity of soliciting for business is conducted unauthorised, the person or authority holder responsible can incur a maximum penalty of 20 penalty units (more than \$2,000). These types of activities may be possible in some QPWS managed areas, but will require a separate authority, with associated considerations and fee charging.

Caring for our QPWS managed areas

QPWS managed areas protect Queensland's wonderful natural diversity, scenery and cultural values. A Standard guided tour authority holder should be aware of the following ways to care for this resource:

- **Remain on non-restricted walking tracks, roads, visitor facilities and day-use areas always.** The Standard guided tour permit is considered low risk as it limits activities to areas where there are suitable facilities and infrastructure to support the activities. All activities must be confined to existing visitor use areas (i.e. picnic areas, car parks, walking track, boardwalks etc). No new tracks are to be made and shortcuts must not be taken. Exploring more natural settings would require a different permit assessment process and authority.
- **Protect the wildlife and plants.** Ensure staff and participants do not interfere with or attempt to feed wildlife. Do not approach a distressed animal. Report injured, sick or orphaned wildlife to the Wildlife Hotline 1300 130 372. Refer to the Queensland Government website for more information. Collecting or interfering with any plant, animal/s or artefact, soil, rock, water sample, for example, in QPWS managed areas, is not permitted under the Standard guided tour permit.
- **The lighting of fires is not permitted** under the Standard guided tour permit. There are, however, places where fires are allowed in QPWS managed areas, where it is clearly signed and/or a barbeque, fire pit or the like is provided. Where this activity is conducted unauthorised, the person or authority holder responsible can incur maximum penalty of 165 penalty units (more than \$23,000).
- **Abiding by signage and responding to directions.** QPWS managed area signage is often regulatory, meaning, it can be an offence to not observe and abide by the requirement. It is also an offence to not abide by directions given by a QPWS Ranger/staff member. Irrespective of how a direction may interfere with a planned guided tour or whether the direction appears unwarranted, they must be adhered to by law.
- **Littering and waste is prohibited.** The authority holder must ensure that the activity does not result in litter or waste being left in a QPWS managed area. All food, litter and other waste materials must be placed in secured containers and removed from the site at completion of the activity. Where this activity is conducted unauthorised, the person or authority holder responsible can incur a maximum penalty of 20 penalty units. Human waste must not be left at any QPWS managed area. Where toilets are not readily available, the authority holder must ensure alternative options are available for participants. Where this activity is conducted unauthorised, the person or authority holder responsible can incur a maximum penalty of 50 penalty units (more than \$2,000).
- **Take care of park infrastructure and facilities.** The authority holder may be liable to compensate QPWS for the full cost of rectifying any damage caused to the area because of the permitted activities.

- **Being pest-free.** Prior to entering a QPWS managed area, the authority holder should check that any vehicles, clothing, footwear and gear are free of soil, seeds, parts of plants, eggs, insects, spiders, lizards, toads, rats and mice. While in the park, staff and participants should remove soil, weeds, seeds and pests from any vehicles, gear and clothes, wrap the material and place them into the authority holders rubbish containers before moving to a new area.
- **Biosecurity.** Everyone in Queensland has a General Biosecurity Obligation (GBO) to minimise the biosecurity risk posed by their activities. This includes the risk of introducing and spreading weeds and pests to QPWS managed areas. To understand more about your GBO's, visit the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries website.

The authority holder should also be aware of any management plans or strategies that may be in place at the relevant area. These documents provide information specific to how management is delivered on-ground and are prepared under the Values-Based Management Framework (VBMF). The Register of Planning Documents and information on the VBMF can be found on the Department of Environment and Science website.

Safety

The authority holder has a duty of care with respect to the health and safety of all staff and participants associated with the guided tour and ensuring their enjoyment is not jeopardised by something that could have been avoided. This means being prepared if something goes wrong.

The authority holder is responsible for:

- **Adequate insurance** is required to hold a Standard guided tour permit, which is included as a permit condition. The authority holder must have public liability insurance for not less than \$20 million. All insurance requirements must be in place and current prior to the guided tour taking place and throughout the life of the permit.

It is important to ensure insurance cover never lapses as, by agreeing to the authority, QPWS is indemnified from and against all adverse consequences in connection with the guided tour. That also means, QPWS cannot be liable for any loss experienced by the authority holder resulting from conducting the guided tour.

It is also important to know that QPWS does not guarantee that the QPWS managed area where the guided tour is taking place is completely safe and that the authority holder uses the relevant area entirely at its own risk. It is the responsibility of the authority holder to first check the relevant area before the activity takes place, to ensure that it is safe for each guided tour conducted.

- **Ensuring the group is prepared** with suitable equipment such as water, radio/mobile phone, first aid kit and a record of participants. The guides conducting the tour should be carrying suitable communication equipment to allow contact with emergency services, particularly in more remote, or less frequented locations.
- **Supervision and safety briefing to all participants** should be provided by the tour guide including emergency and evacuation procedures, trip and slip hazards, potentially dangerous wildlife, and all other safety requirements prior to the tour commencing. While not always mandatory, it is advised that a guide be present to supervise the group or be close by, and contactable should something go wrong.
- **Reporting all incidents** involving death or severe injury to any person involved in the activity, to the relevant QPWS management unit immediately and complete the online incident form located on the Queensland Government website. All other injuries or incidents must be reported to the department using the same form within 24 hours. This reporting is a conditional requirement of the permit and not complying

with a permit condition can incur a maximum penalty of 60 penalty units for an individual or 60 penalty units for a corporation.

- **Managing potential impacts from weather events.** If severe weather (e.g. significant rainfall event with >100mm rain and insufficient drying time prior to the activity), heat, fire or other natural disaster is forecast for the tour day, the activity should be postponed, cancelled or possibly relocated.
- **Being crocodile, dingo and shark smart** and ensuring staff and participants are briefed about the potential presence of, and dangers posed by, estuarine crocodiles, dingos and/or sharks prior to conducting activities where relevant. The authority holder should refer to the Be Crocwise, Be dingo-safe and Shark Smart information on the Department of Environment and Science website, to understand what is relevant.
- **Queensland Work Health and Safety Act 2011 requirements.** Workplace health and safety rules stipulate those persons conducting businesses or undertakings' are required to exercise due diligence to meet work health and safety obligations to their clients and staff.

Respecting First Nations People and culture

The Department of Environment and Science recognises that building strong and meaningful partnerships with First Nations peoples is essential to protecting cultural and natural values, conserving biodiversity, enhancing the resilience of QPWS managed areas and conducting activities in a culturally appropriate way.

Traditional Owners or Custodians are the First Nations peoples with cultural connections and obligations to a particular area of Country. The Department encourages all existing and potential authority holders to be aware of who the Traditional Owners of a relevant area are, and where appropriate and welcomed, work with them to help ensure the best outcomes for protecting cultural heritage values in the development and delivery of a guided tour product.

Traditional Owners may be interested in the type of activity and the specific areas where the activity is proposed to be conducted, to ensure their cultural heritage values are not negatively impacted. There may also be interest in opportunities that support and/or add value to the guided tour product – such as:

- the ability of the tour guide to confidently identify and verbally acknowledge the Traditional Owners where the guided tour is operating
- the tour guides awareness of culturally significant values, protocols and sites where the guided tour is operating, and the need to protect them
- where permission from Traditional Owners has been granted to do so, share traditional stories or include cultural elements to the guided tour narrative as appropriate – while respecting intellectual property rights
- being able to employ First Nations peoples, preferably Traditional Owners of the relevant area where the guided tour is operating

It is also important to understand that should it be determined at some future date by any court or tribunal that native title exists over the relevant area, this may affect the status of a Standard guided tour permit.

How to identify Traditional Owners

- **Queensland Native Title Vision** - This is an online map prepared by the National Native Title Tribunal that will help authority holders to locate any claims or determinations of native title which cover a particular area. Where there is a native title determination there will be a registered native title body corporate, which is a registered organisation that could potentially provide contact with cultural knowledge holders for a relevant area.

- QLD Globe – This is an online map prepared by the Queensland Government to view Queensland's location based information. It includes native title layers from the National Native Title Tribunal as well as a Cultural Heritage 'topic' which includes data from the Department of Seniors, Disability Services and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships cultural heritage database and register.
- Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations – This is a public register provided online by the Australian Government which contains contact details for all Indigenous Corporations.
- Native Title Representative Bodies (NTRB) – These are organisations appointed under the *Native Title Act 1993* to assist Indigenous people with all aspects of their native title claims and can assist with contact details for native title claimants. You can search for NTRB's on the Queensland Government website.

What to know about the Standard guided tour secondary activities

The primary activity approved under the Standard guided tour permit is a walking guided tour for groups (inclusive of staff) of up to but not exceeding twenty-five people, with the frequency managed by capping the total number of people per park, per day to fifty. A commercial tour operator may also like to offer other activities ancillary to the guided tour for the enjoyment and experience of participants. To streamline the assessment process in this scenario, the supported secondary activities were assessed and rated low to very low-risk of impact on park values, where management treatments (access limits, conditions etc) are adhered to.

The full list of Standard guided tour secondary activities is contained in Table 1, Page 2 of this information sheet. Information is not provided on all secondary activities, only where it is considered particularly relevant to the Standard guided tour permit.

Camping

The Standard guided tour permit allows for camping where it supports the primary purpose of conducting a guided tour. For example, some commercial tour operators may like to offer participants the opportunity to stay overnight and continue the guided tour experience the next day.

The Standard guided tour permit supports camping at the locations authorised on the permit, where it is consistent with the access limits contained in Table 1. However, while guided tour groups can be up to, but not exceeding twenty-five people including staff, camping is limited to a maximum group size of 10 and total persons per day (overnight) of 20. Where camping overnight is sought, the authority holder is required to apply for a camping permit online. This may result in groups sizes or availability being further limited, depending on specific camp site capacities available online.

With respect to camping under the Standard guided tour permit, the authority holder should:

- be registered as a Commercial Operator in the Queensland National Parks Booking Service;
- pre-book (up to 12 months) and pay for camping prior to commencement of the activity. Bookings can be made online at the Queensland National Parks Booking Service website;
- in the first instance, book the authorised locations where designated commercial camping sites are provided and in accordance with the relevant booking rules;
- where these facilities do not exist, all other park user camping sites can be booked where available. If there are no campsites available, other camper bookings cannot be displaced and the authority holder must consider other permitted options available to them or not camping;
- note any specific conditions that apply on the camping permit, camping tag or sign and be aware that penalties can apply if this is breached;

- note that tents, camper trailers, caravans and motorhomes can be accommodated, but suitable sites may not be available at all camping areas – check online;
- note that campers must not rope off areas for exclusive use within any camping areas, including designated commercial camping sites;
- ensure that camping equipment and litter are removed at the end of each camping trip to return the site to its pre-existing condition;
- note that the longest period for which anyone can camp is 30 days; and
- QPWS may close whole or parts of camping areas either temporarily or seasonally for nature conservation and/or park management purposes and Park Alerts should always be checked.

QPWS aims to ensure that camping opportunities are safe, protect the environment and enable visitors to interact with and appreciate the natural and cultural values of the areas they visit.

QPWS undertakes rigorous assessments to identify where camping is suitable, involving a detailed understanding of, for example, regional ecosystems, landscape classifications, physical suitability of the area, supporting facilities - both within and outside the relevant area and the presence of protected wildlife and/or places of special cultural significance. Bush camping is not acceptable under the Standard guided tour permit.

Camping in most QPWS managed areas without a valid permit, authority, or other approval is an offence. Where this activity is conducted unauthorised, the person or authority holder responsible can incur a maximum penalty of 20 penalty units (more than \$11,000.00).

Photography

The relevant legislation provides the basis for managing commercial filming and photography activities in QPWS managed areas. The Standard guided tour permit does not authorise commercial filming and photography, however, it does allow the authority holder to let staff and participants, in groups of up to twenty-five people, take photographs or film for their own experience and personal use, as a secondary activity to the guided tour.

If an authority holder is wanting to undertake commercial filming or photography activities involving up to 10 people without prescribed structures (e.g. platform, tower etc), an authority is not required. All other commercial filming and photography activities will require a different assessment process and additional commercial activity permit to the Standard guided tour permit. For more detailed information refer to the Operational Policy: Commercial filming and photography in QPWS managed areas, on the Department of Environment and Science website.

Anyone that does undertake commercial filming and photography must submit an online form, which can be located on the Queensland Government – Business Qld website, at least 14 days before entering the QPWS managed area – regardless of permit requirements. The notification is used to inform local Rangers in case of an emergency (e.g. fire), protect sensitive sites, and ensure culturally sensitive areas are not being filmed.

Cycling

The Standard guided tour permit allows for cycling, with the exclusion of mountain biking (i.e. riding on rough terrain for sport, usually with specially designed mountain bikes), where it supports the primary purpose of conducting a walking guided tour. The touring style of cycling is considered low risk where access limits are adhered to, where it is secondary to the primary walking guided tour, and where there is no form of competition, adventure sport (e.g. downhill and freestyle) or organised event associated with the activity.

With respect to cycling under the Standard guided tour permit, the authority holder should ensure:

- all bikes are clean of mud, weeds and seeds before entering the relevant area;

- in addition to the safety matters noted under 'Safety' above, all riders are to be briefed on safety matters related specifically to cycling in the relevant area, including potential trip and slip hazards;
- all riders wear appropriate personal protective equipment including helmets, have appropriate skills to operate the bikes being used and can navigate through the relevant area;
- all cycling activities are postponed when soil conditions are significantly saturated. Indicators for this include: bicycle tyre sinks into natural ground level 10mm or more, significant rainfall of 100mm or more, repetitive wet weather events over a short period of time that do not allow appropriate drying of local soils;
- riders avoid skidding and sliding around turns and down slopes as this can cause collisions with others and damages the track;
- riders keep the bicycle as close as practicable to the left boundary of the road or track when traversing the relevant area.

The Standard guided tour permit does not authorise the use of motorised bicycles (e.g. e-bikes), which require a different commercial activity permit assessment process.

Non-motorised watercraft

Non-motorised water sports involving equipment such as a kayak, canoe, stand-up paddleboard, wind surfer, inflatable device and other single person sit/stand-on-top craft is supported under the Standard guided tour permit, where it is secondary to the primary purpose of conducting a walking guided tour.

Any hiring of non-motorised watercraft by the authority holder or third party must be arranged at a location outside the QPWS managed area, unless an appropriate permit has been issued for this activity within the relevant area.

The authority holder must ensure that when crafts are removed from the water, it is done in a manner that causes no or minimal impact to the relevant area (e.g. watercraft must not be dragged over banks of the river). Landing must take place in designated areas only, where this is available. All equipment must be removed at the end of each guided tour and nothing left at the relevant area, particularly overnight.

Motor Vehicle Use

A motor vehicle is a road vehicle driven by a motor and generally includes cars (inclusive of four-wheel-drive vehicles) and motorcycles. The use of cars and motorcycles is supported under the Standard guided tour permit, where it supports the primary purpose of conducting a walking guided tour. As the primary purpose is authorisation of a walking guided tour, tag-along tours or vehicle convoys are not permitted.

With respect to motor vehicle use under the Standard guided tour permit, the authority holder should ensure:

- all vehicles are fully road registered and the driver is fully licenced;
- all vehicles are washed and cleaned of seed prior to entering the relevant area to prevent the spread of weeds and contamination of any waterways;
- traversing is restricted to formed roads and tracks only. Motor vehicle use within plantation areas must be restricted to major through roads suitable for two-way traffic;
- where possible, all vehicles are clearly identified as part of a tour group;
- vehicles are not driven in a way that causes damage to the relevant area, disrupts someone else's enjoyment and safety or obstructs other vehicles passage. Where this activity is conducted unauthorised, the person or authority holder responsible can incur a maximum penalty of 20 penalty units (more than \$2,000.00).
- traversing any wet creek crossings does not exceed a speed of 10km/h;

- access to fire trails, stream banks and beaches is prohibited;
- stock or improvements including any fences or grids must not be interfered with. All gates must be securely closed immediately after use;
- participants do not conduct activities during seasonal conditions when use will cause unreasonable damage to QPWS managed areas; and
- non-standard vehicles are not used, including motor vehicles that are ineligible for general road registration and/or are required to be conditionally registered by the Department of Transport and Main Roads (e.g. quad bikes and side-by-side vehicles).

Need to know more about the authority?

Where an authority holder needs to know more about the Standard guided tour permit, enquires should be made using the contact details provided on the Information Notice – Notice of decision provided with the authority.

Human Rights Act 2019 compatibility

The department is committed to respecting, protecting and promoting human rights. Under the *Human Rights Act 2019*, the department has an obligation to act and make decisions in a way that is compatible with human rights and, when making a decision, to give proper consideration to human rights. When acting or making a decision under this Standard guided tour – information sheet, officers must comply with that obligation (refer to Comply with Human Rights Act through the Queensland Government website).

Disclaimer

While this document has been prepared with care, it contains general information and does not profess to offer legal, professional or commercial advice. The Queensland Government accepts no liability for any external decisions or actions taken on the basis of this document. Persons external to the Department of Environment and Science should satisfy themselves independently and by consulting their own professional advisors before embarking on any proposed course of action

Approved By

Ben Klaassen

Signature

Deputy Director-General
Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service

08/02/2023

Date

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