

EJ Walker

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Sent: Monday, 9 June 2008 10:13 AM
Attach: Attachment B - Barry Powell - Email re camping issues.htm
Subject: Email from Barry Powell

Good morning members,

Please find attached an email from Mr Barry Powell which ties into issues proposed for discussion.

Best wishes, Matt.

Matt Hayes

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Statutory Support

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Checked by AVG.

Version: 7.5.519 / Virus Database: 269.24.6/1486 - Release Date: 5/06/2008 6:29 PM

9/06/2008

From: Barry [longlucas@fastmail.fm]
Sent: Monday, 26 May 2008 3:06 PM
To: Matt Hayes
Subject: Re: Camping in WA

From: Barry [mailto:longlucas@fastmail.fm]
Sent: Sunday, 20 April 2008 3:27 PM
To: Camping
Cc: Garry Keeffe
Subject: Camping in WA

Department of local Government and
Regional Development in Western Australia

I understand that the matters I am addressing are under review again.
I am a private Australian citizen who has been touring WA since early December 2007.
I am touring in a self contained vehicle and have no need of the amenities offered at commercial caravan parks.
I further choose never to stay in one, mainly because of the severe crowding conditions where sites are packed closer than apartments in the city. Other issues relate to caravan parks being full and not permitting dogs.
I much prefer the solitude of the wilderness and that is where I have been overnighing as I travel.
I have had a wonderful visit to WA and with the exception of one unpleasant experience, have been treated with courtesy and respect.
I avoided a visit to Esperance. The only road in has a sign banning camping for the whole shire. I enjoyed a visit to Denmark. I was unaware of the same restriction on camping in this shire until it was pointed out to me by the ranger. The ranger was most friendly and advised us of some lovely spots which we subsequently visited. The ranger informed me that he gets called by the local commercial caravan park operators, giving the location of "illegals" and he then does his rounds. He found us in the morning as we were preparing to move on.
I have found many camping sites where camping is free and appears to be sanctioned.
You should have these in all shires and many of them.
Many travellers today are completely self contained and have no need of even toilet facilities.

My most unpleasant experience occurred in the Shire of Northampton while stopped for the night in the bush near Kalbarri.
It appears to be the aim of the shire to herd all in to a tightly packed square km in an enormous wilderness of coastline, bush and river bank.
It further appears, that graft to line the pockets of commercial operators is the main motivation.
I have included my correspondence with the Shire for Northampton below:

Mr. Garry Keeffe
ceo Northampton Shire.

Last night I was parked in a bush area outside Kalbarri after driving many miles and resting.
Around 8:30pm A ranger, Zoltan Fabo knocked on my van door and insisted I move immediately to a caravan park. He further lectured me, claiming that I need to learn the rules for WA and that it is illegal to rest in a vehicle anywhere except a caravan park.
I will not be bullied in to patronizing any commercial establishment and asked where the ranger wanted me to move to. He claimed that he would fine me \$100 if I did not immediately drive out of the shire.
I went to the service station to purchase fuel to get me out of your jurisdiction. They were closed. I went to the police station for advice. They were also closed.
I drove 30 km out of Kalbarri in the dark to the nearest road side rest stop.
I have to return to Kalbarri this morning for fuel to get the 176 km to the next station. I will visit the police station as well to lay a complaint about being forced to drive at night while fatigued.
I did note a large sign on the road many miles before Kalbarri. There was no safe place to pull over and read it all.
I find this treatment of an Australian in his own country disgraceful.
Please be assured that the matter will not end with this letter.

I will contact the ministry this morning as will others, who have been advised of my treatment.
Barry Powell

I received this unsigned response:

I acknowledge your email.

This Council receives many complaints on visitors using parking areas and other areas for camping and we need to act on it to ensure it does not escalate and therefore have a local law that no persons are allowed to camp in areas of Kalbarri unless they are in a caravan park.

The Ranger was undertaking his duty as required by the Council and we request all visitors to adhere to the rangers instructions.

I responded further to Mr. Keffe:

Thank you for your response.

When I woke in the morning at the road side rest area 30 km from Kalbarri, others were also there who had been roused from isolated bush spots by your Ranger. These included a couple from Switzerland and another couple from Belgium.

They stated that your ranger advised them to drive 80 km to the Galena site at night if they refused to book in to a Caravan Park. They explained that the ranger further did a calculation of costs for them to show that it would be cheaper for them to pay the fee at the caravan park, rather than the round trip to Kalbarri.

As an Australian I felt quite shamed that we would treat our visitors in this manner. I explained that corruption for commercial interests was still common in Australia and unfortunately still supported by some of our laws. I advised them to report the matter to their embassies.

In having your ranger carry out your instructions, I suggest that he be instructed to tell the complete truth regarding the Law in WA. He told me that it was only legal to camp in a caravan park anywhere in WA. This is clearly false.

I draw your attention to this one:

In WA it is legal to park/camp in an area where you do not impede the general flow of traffic for **any emergency concerning the driver or a passenger** for up to 24hrs.

I advised your ranger that I needed rest, and would willingly move as soon as I had rested. He still insisted that I drive 80 km at night, if I refused to go to a caravan park.

When I laid my complaint at the local police station the next morning, I was advised that I could have refused to move. The police said that I may still receive a fine though.

This issue clearly needs testing in court.

Barry Powell.

Mr Keffe has not responded further.

Please consider my submission. I understand that litter can be an issue and that health issues relate to human waste in the countryside.

These problems are likely to need dealing with in any event and probably have little to do with people overnighing in remote locations. Plenty of people travel in the daylight hours and some unfortunately have

poor habits.
Yours Faithfully,
Barry Powell.



Running costs: High prices at the bowzers are forcing elderly caravanners to rethink their plans. Picture: Barry Baker

Rising fuel costs hit grey nomads

TIFFANY LAURIE

ising fuel prices are forcing grey nomads to rethink their travel plans.

As the cost of diesel tops \$1.90 a litre in the State's North-West, caravan park operators have reported a slow start to the traditionally busy cold season as the "winter drifters" delay their holidays, cut back on the distance travelled and linger in each town longer in a bid to save money.

In what many operators believe to be the start of a new pattern driven by rising fuel costs, demand for fixed accommodation has jumped as former nomads leave the car at home and fly to popular destinations, while others report an increase in the number of people illegally camping near public facilities.

Ningaloo Lighthouse Caravan Park manager Darren Tate said his bookings for May had dropped more than 60 per cent as many of his regular customers delayed their annual booking until June.

Ningaloo Caravan Holiday Resort manager Muddy Martin said his park had enjoyed a good start to the season, but that free camping — where people used caravan sites and public facilities without paying — had become a massive problem for the industry. He said the practice had forced him to invest in wheel clamps and the council had hired a ranger specifically to target people camping illegally.

But Caravan Industry Association WA chief executive Pat Strahan said while skyrocketing petrol prices were forcing people to alter their holiday plans, it had little effect on the numbers of West Australians planning driving holidays around the continent.

Notice

No Lotto tr

On Sunday 8 June 20 lottery gaming system on that day.

Players will not be able and the Cash 3 draw (r tickets will be available

We anticipate that nor

For more information (08) 9340 5200, or visit

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