

Federation of Western Australian Bushwalkers (Inc)

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The Principal Research Officer
 Economics and Industry Standing Committee
 Legislative Assembly
 Parliament House
 PERTH WA 6000

Inquiry Into The Provision, Use And Regulation Of Caravan Parks (And Camping Grounds) In Western Australia

The Federation of Western Australian Bushwalkers (Inc) makes the following comments related to the above enquiry. We apologise for the late submission and ask that you waive your deadline. The Federation directly represents the nine incorporated bushwalking clubs in Western Australia, and their 900 members. We also indirectly represent a further 84,000 people in WA who claim in the annual ERASS statistics that they bushwalk, and another 534,000 people who claim they walk.

For many of these people camping is a regular part of their activity. Sometimes they stay in a hotel or motel, sometimes in a designated caravan park or camping ground, but also often in a very informal campsite set up either en-route-to, or in convenient proximity to a walking trail. Sometimes the campsite is part of the walking trail. On occasions our members have fallen foul of 'officialdom' operating under this act, that because our members are 'camped' within a specified radius of an existing camp ground they must either move on or face a penalty.

Our members may respond by staying home, and thus reducing their outdoor activity. In the current socio-economic climate with government at all levels promoting physical activity, and active tourism, and continuing community concern about an 'obesity epidemic', encouraging people to 'stay home' must surely be a very unacceptable consequence of this Act. Another bushwalker response is simply to hide deeper in the bush, becoming less easy to detect. This has public safety implications. This Act has the potential to put otherwise law-abiding citizens outside the law, and we do not believe this to be a desirable state of affairs. The Act does appear to be an attempt to protect the custom of commercial camp ground operators, but if the intended custom stays home instead then there are no winners.

We do not support camping where there a nuisance is being committed, however the bushwalking community would like to see the review of this Act and any corroborative local government regulation remove the concept of camping being illegal simply because of its proximity to an existing camp ground.

Yours faithfully,

Ian N McDonald
 President

11 May 2009

-----Original Message-----

From: Ian [mailto:ianpenny@bigpond.com]

Sent: Tuesday, 12 May 2009 12:32 AM

To: Committee, Economics & Industry Standing

Subject: submission regarding inquiry into caravan and camp grounds

Dear Sir or Madam,

Please find the attached submission from the Federation of Western Australian Bushwalkers Inc concerning the inquiry into the Provision, use and Regulation of Caravan Parks (and Camping Grounds) in Western Australia.

We trust you find the comments useful and that they assist you in making the Act less restrictive on our members activities than it currently is. A 'hard' copy will follow within a few days.

Best regards

Ian McDonald

President

Federation of Western Australian Bushwalkers (inc)