



My Name is Phillip Chadd,

I appear before the Inquiry representing The Campervan & Motorhome Club of Australia (CMCA)

I am the WA State Co-ordinator for The CMCA National Member Benefits Team

I would like with permission of the Chair to add a short statement of relevance.

I am also the Delegate on behalf of the Western Australian Recreational Camping Organization (WARCO) to the Caravan Parks and Camping Ground Act Advisory Committee which is currently in recess for an unknown period. WARCO represents a wide range of clubs involved with bush camping, angling, fossicking, 4WD camping, Caravan and Motorhome RVs etc.

Quote from email dated 26 June 2009 from Dept LG & RD

The meeting (*Advisory C'ttee*) for 2 July 2009 has had to be cancelled.

The Department is in the process of a major restructure incorporating the Office of Multicultural Interests and the Department of Heritage and losing Regional Development and as a result there will be many staff changes within the Department. As it is uncertain who will be in charge of the Advisory Committees it is felt that it would be inappropriate to try conduct a meeting until such time as it becomes clear where the Committee sits in the new structure.

Merja Stockton

Policy and Research Officer

Statutory Support

Department of Local Government and Regional Development

E&I STANDING COMMITTEE INQUIRY NOTES:

CMCA is providing an alternative solution for modern day Recreational Vehicle Tourism. The RV Friendly Town/Location Scheme

CMCA is filling the holes created throughout Australia following the sale of prime caravan park sites, by promoting this innovative scheme to Rural Australia

CMCA is the only organisation that is proactively seeking viable solutions. The RV Friendly Town Scheme is a low cost, high revenue tourist scheme for Rural Australia.

RVFTs are environmentally friendly and possibly capable of earning carbon credits through the use of Solar Power and low energy Rest Areas.

Governments and Commercial entities on the other hand seek either protectionism or are extremely tardy in recognising the urgency of the situation by holding onto out-dated regulations.

Once again urgent action on outdated legislation is being frustrated by deferred meetings, restructuring of the Department for Local Govt & Rural Development and ~~an~~ at best an indeterminate wait to recommence action finally begun in 2009.

Quoted Email cancelling meeting

In WA failure to act positively and meet the consumer's demands will have disastrous effects on the WA economy.

- The 54,000 WA-RVs registered with DPI in 2007/08 contribute at best, based on my own experiences and spending, about \$8,000 to \$10,000pa. This total of ~\$44m includes vehicle regn, insurance and expenditures on tour.

- At 12% of the overall \$6.5b spend by RVs Australia wide; WA's share is around \$700m of which \$650m therefore must come from outside our borders. *SEE NEW FIGURES LATER*
- WA's share of visitors is dropping particularly in the area of International RV visitors, where the 2008 spend figures were \$121 per night or \$847 per week. These camping visitors are worth overall \$8204 per visit; Fly-in fly-out visitors spend \$3200 less or \$5004 overall per visit.
- In WA nothing is done by TourismWA to encourage RV visitors or promote safaris or interesting tours for International or Interstate camping visitors.
- Much however is being done by local authorities using the consumer unfriendly CP&CG Act to discourage camping visitors in WA.

Quote member's email re Kalbarri, dated May 2009

My husband, Joseph and I called into Kalbarri W.A. for breakfast on the foreshore. We parked our Toyota Hiace in the designated carpark and opened the back of the vehicle to get our cereal etc. We did not set up any chairs or tables or mats outside the vehicle. A guy, wearing a park ranger shirt proceeded to hassle us by saying repeatedly that we were 'camped' there because we had the back of the vehicle open and were eating from it.

The International visitor rate to Australia has risen by 2% pa since 2000.

RV travel holidays are well understood and favoured by the overseas market where facilities at home are often provided free in villages along highways.

RVF Towns since their inception in WA in Nov 2006 are now proving to be very popular across Australia and in many ways mirror the continental experience. **Anecdotal indications are WA's share is falling**

NZ is known all over the world as an RV Friendly Country a model we could well copy even with it's faults.

WA has nothing to be proud of either in the provision of Caravan Park Services or in its Legislation. Parks are greedy, monopolistic, and self-serving, with little or no regard or loyalty to the consumer, whilst Legislation mirrors a typical WA attitude of NO This, NO That or NO Anything else.

- Sections of the CP&CG Regulations as far back as 2004 were found to be in breach of the National Competition Policy but nothing has been done to overturn those sections of the Regulations that are in breach of the Policy.
- Regs can be changed with a stroke of the pen but nothing has really been attempted for more than 10yrs to make the changes.

Successive Ministers or Director Generals either lacked understanding of the industry or the will to make the necessary changes.

Refer then to Local Government Minister Paul Omodei in Feb 1999 media statement:

'Mr Omodei said today (Feb 1999) that the CP & CG Regulations would be amended to allow people to camp for 24hrs in designated rest areas for any reason or on any road reserve for emergency or safety reasons'

In 1999 the emergency provisions were put in but removed again in 2002 to make way for the 50km exclusion zone around Caravan Parks. Other essential amendments have not seen the light of day, in particular the removal of the exclusion zone and the freeing up of Nature Based provisions

Without the proactive actions of the RV organisations in WA, RV tourism would be in an even more perilous position than it currently is. A major thorn in their side however is the existing Regulations and their enforcement in crucial locations. When did we read of a Caravan Park promoting anything other than self-interest? They just expect business to come their way.

- In 2011 CMCA is proposing to hold a National Rally in WA. This single activity can bring upward of \$1.5m to the proposed site of Kalgoorlie, but it could bring upward of a further \$2m to WA rural and coastal tourism over a brief period of about 3months. Caravan Parks can and will benefit but they must look to benefit in a positive way not just expect things to happen
- WA's RV tourism reputation will be at stake, but more importantly the re-visitation \$millions will be placed in jeopardy without urgent positive action.

Such an event as this Rally brings benefit to all sections of the Community when conditions are right.

Millions of dollars are at risk unless WA changes the CP&CG Regulations to provide a much friendlier atmosphere for all camping related visitors

- TourismWA needs to show a far greater interest in supporting rural tourism than it did when the last Rally was last held in WA in 2002. Without TourismWA taking an active role in rural centres, the very lucrative dwell time will be foreshortened and many hundreds of thousands of dollars lost to the WA economy and in particular rural WA. (up to \$2m could be at stake)
- CMCA has provided subsidies toward 60% of the publicly available low or no cost roadside sanitation disposal units (aka Dump Points) in WA
- The demand for these units is so great that CMCA has run out of available Member and Sponsor funds to keep the programme running up to the end of December 2009.

See attached DP stats.

- The need for action by TourismWA to increase RV tourist numbers is of utmost urgency. Caravan Parks are not the issue, consumer numbers are.

Consumer numbers are the lifeblood of the Caravan Park industry without them tourism in WA will fall back on the few iconic locations that have been developed and heavily promoted. These however are just the tip of the WA RV tourism iceberg.

- We believe that coastal park overflow problems can be helped by developing rural tourism to provide alternative tourism solutions (presumably sought by this Inquiry).

As stated in the CMCA written submission, separating out sections of the CP & CG Act into Tourism and Public Housing sections is paramount. This will allow experts in each of these fields to approach the inherent failures in each section in a timely manner.

- 10 year delays are just so unseemly in this day and age.

Economics;

Just released National RV visitor annual spend Y/E 2008. *Tourism Research Aust.*

(336,100) International visitors spent \$2.76b

Domestic visitors spent \$5.25b. (46.1m nights @ \$114pn) 2.1m less than in 2007

WA has about 12% of the total market share (of \$8b) or \$960m.

DUMP POINT STATS.

Western Australia State Report.

This State now boasts 9 RVFT's and 26 Dump-Ezy units. Interestingly, we recently did an audit of our dump point subsidy scheme and came up with some very interesting statistics:

CMCA/KEA units account for:

60% of all public units in WA

24% in Victoria

7% in Tasmania

64% in SA

23% in Queensland

25% in the NT and

30% in the ACT

Overall, our units account for 29% of all public dump points across Australia.

Camping free in WA

New organisation

WHILE the WA camping debate is still raging on, some people are doing what they can to clarify the situation, and to reach an agreement suitable to all sides.

One of the latest letters received at *On The Road* regarding such action is from T. A & M. A. Perry, of Dandaragan, WA, who wrote to us earlier this year to let readers know that they were lobbying the Government to amend Western Australia's caravan and camping laws. Their latest letter follows:

In early 1999 a new group was formed called the Western Australian Recreational Campers Organisation (WARCO). This group has one purpose: To restore the traditional camping rights of all Australians.

"We note from the letters published in On The Road how concerned many Australians are about the new WA regulations.

WARCO is growing rapidly but needs as many members as possible to provide a strong lobby group.

"Anybody wanting to give us support can write to us at WARCO, 3 Gretna Court, Kinross WA 6028. A stamped, self-addressed envelope would be appreciated so we can reply.

Minister speaks

ANOTHER WA reader, Don Skirrow, from Mandurah, drew our attention to a ministerial media statement issued on February 28. It stated:

"Local Government Minister Paul Omodei has moved to clarify the rights of people to camp on the roadside for up to 24 hours.

"Mr Omodei said today that the Caravan Parks and Camping Grounds regulations would be amended to allow people to camp for up to 24 hours in a designated roadside rest area for any reason, or on any other road reserve for emergency or safety reasons.

"Main Roads WA or a local government could designate rest areas simply by erecting appropriate signs on road reserves under their control.

"There would be no other change

to the general ban on camping on Crown land, but government agencies which had control on Crown land would be able to permit camping in designated areas.

"Mr Omodei said there appeared to be a widespread misconception that a right to camp on Crown land had only recently been removed. In fact, the ban on such camping had been in force since 1974.

"If authorities in control of Crown land proposed to allow camping in particular places they could do so by erecting the appropriate signs.

"It was expected that before doing so, authorities would give careful consideration to the proximity of registered caravan parks or other facilities.

"Regulations under the National Parks legislation already permitted camping in designated areas in national parks for up to 28 days.

"Mr Omodei said the proposed changes were not a general approval for random camping and cautioned caravanners that it would be some time before the regulations were formally gazetted and departments erected appropriate signs in designated areas."

thirstiness? alcohol?