



Transport SECTOR MEETING
Wednesday 11 February TCA Boardroom

Meeting Commenced 10:05 am

ATTENDANCE: Phil Taylor (Wayoutback), Henry Szczypiorski (DPI), Jessica Bonanni (P&WL) Don McDonald (Alice Springs Airport), Tony Papworth (Discovery Ecotours), Chris Champers (Alice Springs Holidays), Peter Lewis (Greyhound), Dean Dunn (Greyhound), Gary Weir (Watarrka National Park), Peter Allsop (Lucky Miles), Jimmy Cocking (ALC), Julie Hansen (Adventure Tours) Anita Meyer (OnTour NT), Steve Shearer (Thrifty), Peter Grigg (TCA)

APOLOGIES: Warrick Rock (APT), Denise Horner (Emu Tours), PJ Besser (DUT), Craig Cotterill (Alice Wanderer), Andy Hood (Tourism NT), John Stafford (Tourism NT) Mechelle Collins (Alice Springs Helicopters), Chris Collins (Alice Springs Helicopters), Wayne Thompson (Dysons), Tija McMullen (Adventure Tours,

GUESTS: Peter Allsop & Jimmy Cocking (ALEC)

CHAIRPERSON: Phil Taylor (Wayoutback)

Welcome to all for first meeting of 2009 with an intro around the table of attendees

MINUTES: Marilyn McIver (TCA)

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING:

The minutes of the previous meeting were circulated to the meeting's attendees. A motion was put forward that minutes of the December 2008 meeting be accepted.

Moved: Don McDonald **Seconded:** Peter Grigg

Motion carried.

BIOFUEL WORKSHOP: Peter Allsop & Jimmy Cocking (ALEC)

Gave a rundown on Biofuel and details of the workshop Sunday 24 May. Working with camel industry to utilise that product. Invitation to be extended to TCA members to attend

BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETING:

Concern expressed yet again at the time taken for renewal of HR endorsements, still having problems. Crimtrak operating earliest May, Peter reiterated the need to attend to as soon as renewals received. Suggested renewals be sent by registered mail to ensure renewals are received.

A motion was put that licences for CPV be sent by registered mail to ensure renewals are received.

Moved : Chris Chambers

Seconded: Anita Meyer

Motion Carried

ACTION: General Manager to discuss with May Taylor regarding possibility of registered mail being used.

Red Centre Way:

Henry gave update. Moving Alice Ahead

Completing seal on Namatjira Drive and Larapinta Drive Inner Loop

Projects to complete the "inner loop" Namatjira Drive and Larapinta Drive is dependent on resolution of access to gravel resources on Aboriginal land and proposed realignment impacting on the Aboriginal Land Trust.

A land exchange formal agreement with CLC has been agreed and land excision is proceeding. DPI are currently verifying gravel sources with CLC for appropriate clearances.

No project development or design has commenced on the balance of the works to complete Larapinta Drive which is referred to as the "outer loop."

Maps:

Chris queried map from T&W re actual names of roads that T&W refer to them as and difficulty in getting the maps.

Henry advised maps readily available through map dept in Alice Plaza.

Discussion on offshoot roads and their official names ie Palm Valley Road took place.

Henry displayed "southern region road" map available but still some dissention on the road names (some little side roads known as local names and not on map).

Action:

Peter suggested Henry arrange an overhead for next meeting to be shown for discussion. Needs further redefinition of road names as to how to identify various roads.

Mereenie Loop Road:

Chris stated still major problems in certain sections of Mereenie Loop Road. Phil reiterated the previous discussion of last meeting on this matter. Peter commented we need to keep the funding here even if for alternative infrastructure in the interim.

Phil stated we need to get a priority plan in place with alternatives to present to Govt from all road operators. Steve stated we should keep the pressure on as well be concentrating on other roads used, other than by tourist operators because of flooding problems for example.

Peter advised TCA focus is still on the Mereenie road as well as other roads.

Chris recommended TCA pursue all avenues to get the Mereenie Loop properly maintained and completed. Henry advised T&W still have plans in place to continue with this.

Action:

TCA will continue pursuing this matter. Peter advised we have been offered a meeting with the Minister which we are following up.

Road Closures:

Meeting referred to Owen Springs presently and Palm Valley closures still continuing. Henry advised ongoing repairs still in place. T&W need to inspect and get heavy plant in depending on its availability so it does take time to attend to problem areas.

Kings Canyon Access:

Meeting referred to the draft Watarrka management plan. Need people to read it and make comment. Jessica can distribute to members.

Gary Weir referred to Rim walk management plan previously put out, discussing direction of walks ie does not cater for 2-way traffic, overcrowding in some sections, plus hours of tour companies arriving middle of the day and lack of water etc.

P&WL looking at alternatives, to broaden the KC experience besides the rim walk. General discussion on the lack of responsibility of some guides, general comments on importance of signage. Agreed Operators need to be more responsible themselves

Gary advised each state seems to produce various plans individually and prior recognition between all plans is doubtful.

Meeting agreed it is the tour company responsibility. Issue seems to be companies doing reverse tours in afternoon hours. TCA and members support OH&S issues, safety issues, operational issue.

Phil asked if P&WL are doing anything against companies who abuse the rules. Gary suggested they can put out some guidelines as to the correct procedures for rim walks for those in breach. Local tour ops can assist by taking rego numbers and company names and advise P&WL. It was noted that the people causing these problems don't attend our meetings.

Grids:

In relation to previous comments from Harry Osborne regarding concrete grids, Henry advise that pastoralists put them in some years ago. T&W are now aware of this and will address the situation.

Stanley Chasm:

New managers have been appointed

Signage at both ends of Giles Road:

Peter stated there is an issue with some caravan makers advertising they are made for travel on dirt roads. Rather difficult to erect signs banning caravans from dirt road when it is a public gazetted road.

Correspondence:

In: Chris Burns (Tourism Minister) in response to driver fatigue.

Out: Letter written by Phil on behalf of Wayoutback, addressing some of the questions

These will be distributed to members as a response is needed. If operators feel they can support Phil's comments to advise TCA, as Wayoutback want to progress this matter asap. Invite our operators to support.

General Business:

Anita Meyer: advised no reply from a document she submitted last October regarding overseas escorts, visas and licence endorsements. Phil stated this area is separate from RTS and a separate meeting should be arranged for those actually involved with this.

Action: Anita to re-email through the document for Peter to distribute to those interested in attending to discuss.

Steve Shearer: referred to a "drinking in public places sign" on the airport road. Felt the format was offensive and should be replaced with similar to that displayed at Pt Augusta. Still advises we are a dry town but in a politer manner.

Action: Henry advises there are various departments who put up signs along this road and will investigate.

Gary Weir: Advised of the Desert Guides event coming up in May
Peter advised Desert Guides were set up by TNT and TCA and have been running a number of evenings over past 18 months. Industry has been invited to be involved. Steering committee now in place to train the guides and create standards for Central Australia.

Jessica Bonanni:

Information day at Ormiston Gorge flyer sent out
Visitor surveys will commence in March at various Parks

Re Owen Springs – repair contractors out there now and should be a couple weeks away from completing.

Phil queried Cycad Gorge Palm Valley – any plans? – Gary advise being looked into

Don McDonald:

Airport tug has arrived. Paperwork needs to be completed
Incentive trip Spanish group due in May.

Henry Szczypiorski:

Point to clarify that his Dept does not downgrade maintenance unless other important dramas arise. They have an ongoing continuous commitment to the maintenance of all roads with regular grading twice a year and to do the best they can.

Phil Taylor:

Queried if any additional rest areas on south road area are proposed? Henry advised he is not aware of any additional but some upgrades are proposed.

Phil stated that in relation to outgoing fatigue letter, TCA will present the greatest impact. We are not opposed to legislation, but no one can legally define the work practices of our companies/industry. No consultation with us, primarily for heavy road users and we have been caught up with it. Legislation should be totally scrapped and we keep with OH&S standards.. Legal advice is the Act is discriminatory and it will cost Operators to deliver such a fatigue plan.

Meeting closed 12:05 pm

Next Meeting: 11 March 2009 10:00 TCA Boardroom.