



**HANG GLIDERS ASSOCIATION
OF
WESTERN AUSTRALIA**

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**ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT PLAN
FOR
FLYING SITES WITHIN CALM MANAGED LANDS**

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IN CONSULTATION WITH HGAWA, UPDATED NOVEMBER 2006

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HGAWA ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

FOR FLYING SITES LOCATED WITHIN CALM-

MANAGED LANDS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This document is an overview for the environmental management of flying sites located within lands managed by the WA Department of Conservation and Land Management (CALM) used by hang glider and paraglider pilots in Western Australia.

Provided here is an introduction to the sport, its legal status, organisation and the overall management issues that relate to flying sites in CALM-managed land. Of importance, a Code of Conduct for legal, safety and environmental requirements, to be observed by HGAWA pilots when using National Parks, is included and specific site related information and management recommendations are also provided in the Appendices.

Of concern to HGAWA is the fact that there has been a steady erosion of the number of privately owned sites we have previously enjoyed over the years due to changes in land use and ownership. Consequently the establishment and maintenance of flying sites on public lands is a key factor in maintaining sufficient sites to keep foot-launched gliding alive in WA.

HGAWA only seeks access to those sites that present outstanding gliding opportunity, a high degree of safety for pilots and require minimal disturbance to the environment.

1.1 Hang Gliding and Paragliding

Hang gliders and paragliders are both foot-launched un-powered gliders used for recreational gliding.

Hang gliding and paragliding are sports that, although carried out by individuals piloting their own gliders, are highly socialised. These sports are dependent on a highly regulated framework that provides safety standards for equipment, training, rules of conduct and of the use of airspace. Pilots are dependent on their fellow pilots for support and mentoring and for the development of a “corporate knowledge” of sites and conditions. The joy of flight is enhanced when it can be shared with other pilots both in anticipation and in hindsight both at flying sites and at club gatherings. Both hang gliding and paragliding are also spectator sports and wherever pilots are exhibiting their flying skills, people will gather to watch. The flight of hang gliders is a joy to watch; the colour of paraglider canopies against spectacular natural backdrops is breathtaking. Such are the comments

often received by pilots from spectators. Furthermore, gliding flight is silent and does not disturb the peace and quiet of the natural environment.

Gliding activities are highly regulated both internationally and throughout Australia to ensure the safety of participants, other users of airspace and the public in general. These activities are physically demanding and require considerable training, mentoring and a dedication to skill development by individual pilots. Pilots are required to attend formal training, pass examinations for endorsements for all levels of competence and are required to clock up minimum flying hours each year to maintain certification. Hang gliding and paragliding attracts participants from the legally minimum age of fourteen to many who are in their seventies.

1.1.1 Requirements for Launching

Of all outdoor sports, hang-gliding and paragliding would have the lightest impact on the environment. A glider launching site only requires a direct impact area of about 100 square metres with additional area required for an access pathway. Launching sites are only used under the most suitable weather conditions and all sites are subject to the requirements of distance and season. Winds come from different directions and at different velocities on a seasonal basis and only the launching site that can meet exacting conditions may be used at any one time. A glider landing will have not more impact than the occasional person who might walk across an open area of land – that has been chosen to land on because of its lack of vegetation.

This document and its appendices deal solely with that part of the sport related to soaring; this sport being solely dependant on the lift created by a pressure gradient caused by air flowing over a hill or cliff face. Not considered here are the other aspects of the sport where pilots are towed aloft by one means or another - where sufficient height can be reached to utilise thermal uplifts.

Only those hill sites with special characteristics are suitable for foot-launched gliding. The requirements are for a hill which faces a given wind direction; which has the correct profile; and which is of sufficiently uniform length to allow movement of gliders back and forth along its length. The number of such sites that may be both accredited and suitable on any day are extremely limited and may require hundreds of kilometers of travel by a pilot for a given wind direction and wind speed at any given time of year. Consequently any given site may only have occasional use that is dependant on seasonal conditions.

Perth and WA in general is not the best place in world for para- or hang gliding sports. This is due to the limited number of hill or cliff-launching sites due to the mostly flat terrain of the Perth coastal plain, heavily wooded hills in the ranges and flatlands of the interior Wheatbelt.

Consequently, to ensure the continuation of the sport, a relatively spread of accredited sites across the state are required to provide for changing seasonal wind conditions.

1.1.2 Status of the Sport in Western Australia

HGAWA membership stands at approximately 250 for the 2005/06 year. Two annual competition events are listed for WA and there are two professional schools which provide training at all skill levels as well as providing tandem flights for tourists. These are WA Paragliding Academy and Light Flight hang gliding school.

Gliding clubs in WA include: Albany Hang Gliding Club; Cloudbase Paragliding Club; Goldfields Dustdevils; Hill Flyers Club WA; and Western Soarers.

The growth of the sport in Western Australia is currently limited by the number of available flying sites and the consequent low public profile due to the remoteness of these sites. Flying sites on privately owned land are difficult to secure and have fragile prospects for long term tenure due to changes in land ownership and/or land-use requirements.

Formal relationships formed between HGAWA and other organisations or authorities are outlined below.

Avon Valley Aviation Alliance: The York region WA has become the focus of airports in WA where local government has recognised opportunities that aviation sports may provide. Airports provide a large draw to not only participating pilots, but also adventure tourism and sightseers. Visiting pilots get to know the locality and spread the word about the attractions. The *Avon Valley Aviation Alliance* provides a website with links to various air sport sites including hang gliding, paragliding, micro-lighting, ballooning, sky-diving, fixed-wing gliding and light aircraft aviation. Both hang gliding and paragliding clubs are associates of the *Avon Valley Aviation Alliance*. Hang gliding and paragliding launches are made from privately managed land on Mt Bakewell¹ which overlooks York; access to the Mount is via negotiated agreement with private landholders on surrounding lands.

Foot-launched gliding activities have been included within the *West Cape Howe National Park Management Plan (1995-2005)* for launching from the Shelley and Back Beach sites where hang gliders have been flown since the early '70s. This is one of WA's premier gliding locations. The Management Plan states that up to 50 people may be present over Christmas and New Year for gliding activities. The site now includes two wooden launch platforms which improve the safety and quality of the launch site for both pilots and spectators and ensures terrain stability. Actions proposed for the site within the CALM management plan include providing alternative public parking and limiting public access to the launch site when used for glider launching. The excellent launching and flying potential, spectacular terrain and local facilities including leisure and camping areas ensure that this site is popular with pilots on long weekends and holidays during summer.

¹ Mt Bakewell has been used for launching hang gliders since 1976.

The *Leeuwin-Naturaliste National Park Management Plan (1989-1999)* included hang-gliding at Conto's on a trial basis. This submission is for the development of the updated Management Plan.

Walpole Wilderness Area and Adjacent Parks and Reserves - Draft Management Plan (2006): The following are extracted from the draft Plan

- Hang gliding and paragliding infrequently occurs at Point Hillier in Quarram Nature Reserve. Gliders launch from dunes and cliffs and land on Parry Beach. Any increased demand for gliding activities would need an assessment of the potential impacts and safety concerns before the development of a particular site for launching is approved.
- Flying can bring great visitor enjoyment and understanding of natural areas and is less intrusive than roads.
- The operation of aircraft, both powered and un-powered, on or over lands and waters managed by the Department comply with relevant Federal and State air safety regulations and procedures.
- The objective is to allow for safe flight over and within the planning area without damaging the environment or the public enjoyment of the planning area.
- Gliding will be continued to be allowed at Parry Beach, provided environmental impacts or conflicts with other visitors are minimised;
- If demand increases for launch areas for gliding activities, developing ramps, safety barriers, railings and/or safety signs to protect natural values and the safety of visitors if required and in consultation with users.
- Ensuring that all gliding in the planning area is in accordance with the rules and regulations of the Civil Aviation Safety Authority and the ang Gliding Federation of Australia.

WA Government: HGAWA is formally recognised by the WA Department of Sport and Recreation in that funding has been continued for the 2005/08 triennium. The three year grant has been made with the aim of fostering the sport in WA.

Local Government Authorities: Access to flying sites have been negotiated between HGAWA and/or flying clubs with Local Government Authorities; these include:

- A 21 year lease negotiated with the City of Albany and Western Power for a flying site located at the Sandpatch wind-turbine farm which includes a hard-stand launch site, top-landing area and access road;
- A flying site at Cottesloe beach negotiated with Cottesloe Town Council.
- A flying site agreed with the Town of Mosman Park for a flying site overlooking the Swan River.
- Mullaloo, Burns Beach and Two Rocks beach flying sites agreed with Shire of Wanneroo.

- Warnborough Sound flying site agreed with Rockingham City Council.
- Use of the Mount Bakewell Reserve, vested in the Shire of York, for access to launching sites located on Reserve land leased for grazing purposes.

Regional Airspace Users Advisory Committee: HGAWA is represented on this committee which makes recommendations on the use of airspace in Western Australia.

Agreements with private land holders have been agreed for the following:

- Westerly facing sites at Toodyay and Serpentine. The Toodyay site, which has been used since the inception of hang-gliding, has recently been sold for development. It is likely that this site will be lost to gliding activities when development commences on the site. Both of these sites are only suitable for flying under very limited weather conditions.
- Access through privately owned farmland to the Mount Bakewell Reserve.
- Access to Mesa formations inland of Geraldton on two private properties. These sites are only flyable in winter months.

1.1.3 International Status

Hang gliding began to grow as a sport in the early seventies with paragliding arriving as a new addition to the gliding sports scene in the middle eighties. In earlier days both forms of the sport were regarded as being only for risk takers because regulation was non-existent and equipment was in an early stage of development. With sufficient development time the sport now provides a level of safety that has seen astounding growth across America, Europe and countries such as Turkey, India, Taiwan, South Korea and Japan. This spectacular growth has been due to:

- advanced glider design techniques;
- incorporation of advanced materials technology into glider construction;
- professional test pilots for testing new designs;
- growth and development of a regulatory climate in most western countries; and
- the international recognition of the German (DHV) and French (AFNOR) glider design and performance standards for both gliders and gliding equipment; these standards provide certainty that a given glider is within the pilot's accredited rating capability.

Hang gliding and particularly paragliding now have a huge and growing popularity in both America and Europe with pilots visiting South American, African and Asian destinations for both competitions and gliding tours. The sport has grown to the point where sponsorships are of a level that allows for professional pilots to compete on an international competition circuit. As an example, the World 10th Paragliding Championships are to be held at Manilla NSW in early 2007 with a Pre-Worlds event in 2006. A previous "Worlds" was held at Stawell Park in 2005. Substantial development

funding has been provided by both State and Federal agencies to ensure a world class venue at Manilla.

Adventure tourism is now a revenue earner for those countries that have taken advantage of the opportunities where paragliding is always high on the list of adventures. This is because, for the touring pilot, the glider can be carried in a backpack and for the tourist, tandem flights offer safe but spectacular opportunities for both hang and paragliding flights. For example, New Zealand is now legendary for the opportunities it offers to the adventure tourist; paragliding is on offer as well as bungy jumping, white water rafting, hiking and winter sports. Throughout the world government agencies are sponsoring or organising paragliding competitions because of the large numbers of both pilots and spectators that can be drawn to such events, especially when it is known that professional pilots will be competing. Furthermore, these agencies see the events as an investment where competing pilots may want to return again on their annual holidays bringing family and encouraging friends to join them. Typically destinations as diverse as Turkey, Bulgaria, Indian states, Nepal, Reunion Island and Cape Town all have adventure tourism highlighting paragliding as a tourism attraction.

1.2 Proposed Activities within National Parks

Paragliders and Hang gliders have differing requirements due to the physical size and weight of gliders. Hang gliders can weigh anywhere from 25 to 35 kg with performance gliders in the top of the weight range. Hang gliders are transported folded up and have to be set-up prior to launch. Paragliding gear including harness, canopy and emergency chute which together may weigh up to 13 kg are carried in a back pack. One should also consider that a pilot not only needs to carry gliding equipment and protective gear and clothing as well as food and water as may be required by any person intending to spend a few hours in the open air.

In general terms the requirements for both activities are:

- Access by vehicle to a car park within a reasonable carrying distance of the launch site;
- Access pathway between car park and launch site;
- For hang gliders, a set-up site within close proximity to or sufficient space on the launch site;
- A launch site with stable ground surface. At some locations, beach launching in the up-draught at the base of a dune is sufficient for paraglider launching;
- A landing area. This can be on a beach or paddock below the launch site, open level ground anywhere near the launch site or on the launch site itself if there is sufficient room. For Restricted-rated pilots a “bottom-landing” site is required. This is a landing area beneath the launch site where a pilot may land if sufficient lift is not gained to stay above the height of the launch site. Those sites without a bottom-landing site are restricted to advanced-rated pilots (eg Mosman Park).
- Access pathways between the landing area and launch site.

- Signs, power lines, fences and any other vertical structures around the launch site should be avoided where possible or else carefully positioned or be clearly visible so as not to present a hazard to pilots.

1.3 Terminology – Access

Note that the management plans (see Appendices) for individual sites discuss access using the following terms:

- Informal walking tracks: these are pathways through virgin bush formed by pedestrian traffic. Very often, these are a source of erosion as they do not follow landscape contours and frequently break across fragile landscape elements without the use protective structures.
- Formal walking tracks: these are managed by CALM and local conservation groups; where possible they follow natural contours and have been engineered using timber or rock to prevent erosion.
- Vehicle Tracks: these are unsurfaced tracks approved by CALM for public use. Only if the surface is uniformly firm, will 2WD vehicle access be recommended; otherwise assume 4WD only. On these tracks always engage 4WD to minimise damage to the substrate. CALM management practices have ensured that informal vehicle tracks have been closed off to traffic where possible.
- Formal Roads: These are managed by CALM, are formally constructed roads of either compacted limestone or laterite and are either sealed or unsealed with bitumen and are open to all traffic.

2.0 Regulatory Control

2.1 Regulation of Hang Gliding and Paragliding at a National Level.²

The Hang Gliding Federation of Australia (HGFA) is a body originally constituted to administer the sports of hang gliding and paragliding at the national level in Australia.

The civil aviation laws in Australia require that a person acting as a pilot in command of a hang glider or paraglider must be licensed through the HGFA. It is a Federal statutory requirement, through delegated powers from the Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) to the HGFA (*Civil Aviation Order Pt 95 S95.54 Issues 4 Exemption from provisions of the CASA Regulations 1984 – Hang Gliders*), for all hang glider and paraglider pilots to be issued by a Pilot Certificate by the HGFA or be under instructor supervision. Visiting pilots from other countries are required to obtain temporary HGFA certification if intending to fly in Australia. Temporary HGFA membership and certification is only granted where satisfactory documentary evidence of competence is provided. For example, Australia recognises and uses the *Federation Aeronautique Internationale* (FAI) International Pilot Proficiency Identification (IPPI) card.

Pilot licenses are issued at different competency levels by HGFA and only upon the recommendation of HGFA licensed instructors. These levels include Student, Restricted, Intermediate and Advanced Pilot ratings. Other specialised endorsements may also apply to the various ratings. Restricted flying conditions are imposed on all but the Advanced Pilot rating. Minimum flying hours and examination are required to pass from one pilot rating to the next or for other endorsements. For example, a minimum total of 100 hours flying time and examination is required before a pilot may be considered for an Advanced Pilot rating.

Australian civil aviation laws require that a hang glider or paraglider pilot undergo training and is subject to the privileges and limitations specified within the HGFA Operations Manual (www.hgfa.asn.au). This manual thus is an extension of the laws and regulations governing aviation in Australia.

To effectively control the sport, HGFA has established prescriptive standards for operations, pilot certification and pilot training. Operation in accordance with these standards ensures that the requirements of the *Civil Aviation Act (1988)* and the *Civil Aviation Regulations 1988* and *Civil Aviation Safety Regulations 1998* are met. Operations that are not in accordance with these standards and procedures may result in breaches of the Act and/or the Regulations.

The standards and any amendments are prepared by the HGFA and submitted for approval by the Directorate of Aviation Safety Regulation, for the Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA).

² Most of Sections 1.4 and 1.5 are paraphrased from the HGFA Operations Manual, in so far as foot-launched gliding is concerned.

HGFA members operating in breach of these standards may be disciplined in accordance with the HGFA Constitution and the Disciplinary Code. Persons who breach the requirements of the Civil Aviation Act and/or the Civil Aviation Regulations may face prosecution by CASA.

To foster a high level of safety among the participants of the sport, recommendations for standard operating procedures have also been developed and encoded within the HGFA Operations manual. These recommendations have been developed from the collective experience of many HGFA members and as such can be considered *state of the art*. Further development and refinement of these operating procedures is encouraged and will be incorporated in future revisions to the Operations Manual.

As stated above, only a person issued with an HGFA license may pilot a hang glider or paraglider. The license:

- is issued for a for only one year at a time; temporary two-month licenses are issued to overseas pilots who carry IPPI documentation;
- is issued only on an ongoing basis to pilots who have achieved a minimum prescribed annual flying time - pilots who have not achieved the required flying hours will require re-certification by an accredited instructor;
- lists endorsements for prescribed activities for which the pilot attained a required standard and has passed examinations;
- is endorsed with the name of the pilot's HGFA-associated club membership and the delegated state authority (in WA it is the HGAWA); and
- also carries third-party insurance for the holder to a maximum liability of \$10 million

A police officer or an officer of the CASA may at any time request a pilot to produce his or her license and log book; failure to do may result in prosecution by the CASA; in effect, it is a criminal offence to be in command of a hang glider or paraglider without proper authority.

Accidents or breaches of CAA regulations by glider pilots require immediate notification to HGFA by club officials and subsequent enquiry outcome at club and state level to be forwarded to HGFA.

2.2 Regional Regulation and Administration of Foot-Launched Gliding

2.2.1 State Bodies

The principal roles of regional and state bodies (HGAWA in Western Australia) are to:

- provide assistance to the Executive Director in the management and administration of the affairs of HGFA;
- coordinate, as necessary, the activities of affiliated clubs in:
 - the control of operations;
 - the retention and development of sites;
 - the liaison with local, state and/ or regional bodies; and
 - the conduct of competitions.
- to encourage and foster the development of the sports' administered by the HGFA and local clubs to control the operational aspects of these sports.

Breaches of flying regulations are reported by Clubs through HGAWA to HGFA and are dealt with in the Federal arena. The HGAWA deals locally with breaches of Code of Conduct subject to Section 7.2 of the HGFA Operations Manual.

2.2.2 The Role of HGFA Affiliated Clubs

All hang gliding and paragliding clubs in WA are HGFA-affiliated. The principal roles of affiliated clubs are to:

- be responsible to the HGFA General Manager for the supervision and control of operations of hang gliders and paragliders at sites within their area (as designated by the HGFA Operations Manager);
- be responsible to members for the retention and development of sites;
- encourage and foster the local development of the sports administered by HGFA;
- ensure that accidents at sites where operations are under their control are reported, investigated and appropriate actions to reduce hazards are initiated;
- maintain a library of current CAA and HGFA publications;
- represent to the appropriate state or regional body, the views of members in the management and administration of the affairs of HGFA; and
- provide a social focus and a point of contact for local and visiting pilots.

2.2.3 Club Responsibilities

To ensure appropriate control and management of flying sites under the control of individual clubs, the responsibilities of the incorporated club are as follows:

- appoint Safety Officers and Senior Safety Officers to assist with the supervision and control of operations;
- to determine when the scale of operations at a site warrant the appointment of a Duty Pilot, and arrange for a roster of Duty Pilots and/or Safety Officers to control hang gliding and paragliding activities on the site;

- to formulate and implement plans for the reduction of hazard to both pilots and members of the public;
- to provide advice to pilots of limited experience at the site or in the prevailing weather conditions;
- to notify landowners, Air Services Australia, RAAF Briefing officers or other people where operations at a site require such notification;
- to formulate accident contingency plans and co-ordinate with external agencies in the provision of assistance to accident victims at sites and/or operations controlled by the club;
- to assist the club Senior Safety Officer in the compilation and analysis of accident reports; and
- to notify the HGFA Operations Manager of incidents which may require HGFA disciplinary action to be taken.

3.0 STATUTORY AND POLICY OBJECTIVES FOR THE USE OF NATIONAL PARKS

3.1 Statutory Objective for National Park Management

Under Section 56(1) of the *Conservation and Land Management Act (1984)*, the objective of a management plan is defined as: *in the case of national parks and marine parks to fulfill as much of the demand for recreation by members of the public as is consistent with the proper maintenance and restoration of the natural environment, the protection of indigenous flora and fauna and the preservation of any feature of archaeological, historic or scientific interest.*

The Act provides the overall context for National Park management plans.

It is the intention of HGAWA, through this document, to provide surety that any sites used for non-commercial leisure activities by its members for hang gliding or paragliding purposes are managed and maintained in accordance with S56(1) of the *Conservation and Land Management Act (1984)*.

Where certain flying sites have a recognised history of use for recreational gliding, it is the intention of this document to recommend any changes to bring the management of these sites up to a standard satisfactory to CALM requirements.

3.2 CALM Policy/Initiative Objectives for the use of National Parks

The following subsections discuss CALM policies/initiatives regarding the public use of National Parks.

3.2.1 CALM Policy Statement No.18 (November 2004)

Section 7.0 of Policy Statement 18 is entitled *Flight-Based Activities*; the terminology in this section of the Policy is for “hang gliding” and “parapenting”³.

Under Section 7.1, where issues applying to *Aircraft Use*, that may apply to hang gliding and paragliding are paraphrased below:

- Aircraft operations to be comply with CASA regulations.
 - See Section 9 of this document.
- Location of airstrips (read launching sites) to be consistent with physical site suitability (safety and environmental issues), visitor safety, accessibility from established roads and potential conflicts with other users.

³ The latter is a French term now outdated in English-speaking gliding circles; the commonly used term is now “paragliding” to indicate foot-launched gliding using an unsupported canopy

- See Appendix 2 and 3 and Management Plans for individual sites (Appendix 4 onwards).
- Permission to use non-powered aircraft will require Executive Director or management approval.
 - Management Plans have been developed for all proposed flying sites within CALM-managed lands.

Section 7.2, *Hang Gliding and Parapenting* of Policy Statement 18 has the following policy guidelines that have been paraphrased below:

- Hang gliding and paragliding may be permitted at specified sites by way of management plan or by approval by Executive Director.
 - See attached management plans (Appendix 4 onwards) submitted for approval.
- Organised events to require specific approval.
 - The existing management plans do not include provision for organised events. If such activities are proposed, specific approval will be sought.
- Site development to be undertaken according to site development plan.
 - Management Plans have been specifically developed for this purpose.
- Individual requests for casual or unorganised activities will be assessed on the merits of the application by the District Manager.
 - This document is presented for the purpose of ongoing approval for the use of given launching sites. Individual requests for casual activities may be requested as part of safety-accreditation of any new flying sites.

3.2.2 Form: *Application/Permission to Conduct Organised Non-Commercial Education and Leisure Activities*

CALM requires the completion and submission of a prescribed form⁴ to the local CALM Region or District for those organisations intending to conduct an organised, non-commercial educational or leisure activity on CALM managed lands and waters.

For the purposes of this document HGAWA does not intend permission to hold any *organised activities* as such; however, gliding activities proposed for specific locations in National Parks are both non-commercial and leisure-based. HGAWA seeks permission for HGAWA members to use defined locations within CALM managed lands for activities prescribed by HGAWA as delegated under CAA statutes.

⁴ *Application/Permission to Conduct Organised Non-Commercial Education and Leisure Activities*

Should the need for organised activities arise then in this instance HGAWA would approach the CALM District office as required by the *Organised Activities* application form.

The *Organised Activities* application form gives insight into those issues which are of concern to CALM where organisations intend to use CALM managed land for specific occasions. The information required includes:

- Identification of the organization and its office bearers.
- Activities to be undertaken.
- Safety measures to be observed.
- An indemnity from any actions against CALM in regard to any claims that could arise from the proposed activity.
- Surety of third-party insurance.
- An agreement to abide by the terms of use listed in the form.

A copy of the completed form, with as much information included as is relevant, is attached as Appendix 1 to this document to ensure that all issues which are of concern to CALM have been properly addressed.

3.2.3 Initiative: *Healthy Parks, Healthy People*

The information below is taken from the CALM *NatureBase* website where public use of National Parks is encouraged from the viewpoint of healthy living in accordance with the CALM *Healthy Parks, Healthy People* initiative.

Healthy Parks, Healthy People is a Department of Conservation and Land Management initiative to encourage people to get out and enjoy themselves in parks by promoting the physical, mental and social health benefits of spending time in nature.

Healthy Parks, Healthy People is in response to international research which shows that parks don't just protect biodiversity and other essential life systems, but are fundamental for human health and wellbeing. The evidence for the link between contact with nature and health benefits suggests that people may actually be dependent on nature in order to realise their full health potential.

Parks are a great way to improve your health and well-being. Visiting a park is one of the simplest and cheapest ways of improving your health. Parks provide space for physical recreation and peace for restoration from urban stress.

CALM manages 25 million hectares of national parks, marine parks and reserves, State forests, conservation parks and nature reserves, and is the largest provider of outdoor recreational opportunities in Western Australia.

Parks are the perfect places for picnicking, kayaking, canoeing, cycling, walking, trekking, climbing, abseiling or rafting. Physically active pursuits such as these are known to boost your health.

Foot-launched gliding is an outdoors recreational activity that requires a very small footprint and as such finds a natural home in National Parks where unique locations in areas of natural beauty can be used to enjoy nature at its best; that is, from the air!

The only specific facilities that are required for gliding are launch sites being typically no more than a hundred square metres in area providing the surrounding vegetation is low scrub less than 1m in height, as is typical on most coastal sites. On inland launch sites a larger area of about 400 square metres would be required where surrounding vegetation is typically taller. Inland sites typically experience an instability of wind directions in thermic conditions which requires a larger maneuvering area for the pilot.

HGAWA seeks access to certain sites consistent with the principles of *Healthy Parks, Healthy People*; especially in consideration of the fact that many flying sites within Western Australia are located in National Parks which is particularly relevant to the statement that *CALM-managed lands are the largest provider of outdoor recreational opportunities in Western Australia*.

CALM provides and maintains a network of facilities for the use of public enjoyment within National Parks and Reserves. These include access roads and tracks, parking lots, walking trails and access tracks, public toilets, overnighting camping huts, camping grounds and barbecue facilities. Common activities include sight seeing, picnicking, bathing, surfing, fishing, walking and diving. Those activities that mostly attract large numbers include sight seers, picnicking, surfing and fishing.

Apart from launch sites, glider pilots only require those facilities already available for other Park users such as access roads, parking areas, public toilets and walkways and pathways.

3.2.4 Tenure Descriptions

The following is quoted from the CALM *NatureBase* Website:

National Parks are of national significance for scenic, cultural or biological values. They are managed to conserve wildlife and the landscape, for scientific study and to preserve features of archaeological, historical or scientific interest. National Parks also provide for recreation that does not adversely affect ecosystems.

This document is to provide surety that any sites used by HGAWA members for gliding purposes are managed in a manner consistent with the above Tenure Description for National Parks.

3.2.5 CALM's Development Requirements

Where developments may be required for any activity within National Parks, as for example launching sites for glider pilots, the following development criteria are required by CALM, these being taken from the *Leeuwin-Naturaliste National Park Management Plan (1989-1999)*⁵:

- *Site development should intrude on the landscape as little as possible (visual impact).* The specific requirement for a flying site is a launch site which is usually very limited in area. For example, the Shelley Beach launch consists of

⁵ The MP is presently under review; hence this submission. However the MP provides a basis for discussing those issues which do not change from year to year and which are critical for the sustainable use of National Parks.

two constructed wooden platforms on the edge of the Shelley Beach lookout, the latter consists of a parking area which easily accommodates both sight seers and gliding activities. The Shelley Beach launching platforms have no more intrusion on the landscape than other similar structures provided by CALM - such as viewing platforms or walkways. Viewed from the beach below, the platforms cannot be seen as these angle towards the viewer who may look up from on the beach and also blend with the background cliff face. The launch platform provides an increased level of safety for both pilots and observers and a high degree of stability protection for the substrate. Other launch sites consist of gravel-stabilised areas such as at Sandpatch and Yallingup flying sites or a synthetic surface such as at Mt Bakewell near York, WA.

- *Design should maximise site utility. That is, the least amount of disturbed area should cater for the maximum number of people (the site has adequate capacity to cope with the predicted use and provision of adequate facilities).* Launching areas are very limited in size, say in comparison to the total disturbed areas required for walking or hiking or beach access. The impact of launch sites is minimal and adds minimal disturbance in relation to the potential usage.
- *Materials should complement their surroundings (visual impact).* The Shelley Beach site includes ramps of CCA-treated pine that is similar in overall appearance to constructions used for walkways or stairs built for dune protection. Alternatively, gravel or synthetic turf can be used to stabilise the limited area required for launching.
- *Visitor movement through fragile areas should be controlled.* The Code of Conduct requires all pilots who will use flying sites within National Parks to only use CALM-approved access paths.
- *Facilities should not cater for peak demand as this is a waste of resources.* Launching areas are proposed for long-term low level use with peak usage during long weekends and public holidays; just as for any other outdoor recreational activity such as fishing, hiking, surfing or sightseeing.

The specific site development proposals and management plans will be addressed in the individual site management plans.

An updated version of the above criteria has been provided in consultation with CALM

- Ensuring appropriate visitor safety;
- Protection of the environment;
- The site has adequate capacity to cope with the predicted use;
- Provision of adequate facilities;
- Visual impact of use is minimal; and
- Consistency with other management objectives, including equity of use.