



Tourism in Protected Areas

Advice for Tourism Operators Holding Commercial Activity Permits in TIPA Areas

Fact sheet

Transferring from a commercial activity permit to a commercial activity agreement?

All tourism operators currently authorised to conduct guided tours in TIPA areas are eligible to transfer from commercial activity permits to 15-year commercial activity agreements. Operators have a choice to transfer to an agreement prior to expiry of their permit or transfer on expiry of the existing permit. The application fee will be reimbursed for those operators transferring prior to expiry of their permit.

Will all TIPA areas come into affect at the same time?

No. TIPA will be implemented in a staged process, and will first apply to commercial tours at Natural Bridge in Springbrook National Park, in the Fraser Island Recreation Area and the Whitsunday islands. Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS) will work with operators to have commercial activity agreements in place by early 2012.

By late 2013, operators conducting commercial tours in the Cooloola Recreation Area, Moreton Island Recreation Area, Daintree National Park and Cape York (subject to existing and proposed Indigenous Management Agreements for each protected area) will have made the transition to commercial activity agreements.

If the commercial activity permit for a site expires after that site becomes part of a TIPA area, can it continue to be used until the permit expires?

Yes. Operations can continue until the current permit expires. If an operator chooses not to take up an agreement on or before the expiry date of their current permit, future access at TIPA sites will only be authorised by an agreement through an EOI process. If an operator has not applied for a commercial activity agreement on expiry of their permit, they will not be authorised to conduct operations in TIPA areas.

Tour operators with current commercial activity permits have the option to move to a new commercial activity agreement as areas are transferred to TIPA or on expiry of their current permit.

What application fees are incurred when moving to a new commercial activity agreement?

If an operator chooses to transition to a commercial activity agreement prior to expiry of their current commercial activity permit, QPWS will reimburse the application fee. If an operator chooses to transfer to a commercial activity agreement on expiry of their current permit, an application fee will be incurred.

What fees will be paid under a commercial activity agreement?

All existing fees payable under commercial activity permits will apply under commercial activity agreements.

There is no change to daily passenger fees and these will continue to be based on actual use, paid in arrears. Under a commercial activity permit, an operator has been required to lodge returns and pay daily passenger fees on a monthly basis. Under commercial activity agreements, an operator will be required to lodge returns and pay daily passenger fees on a quarterly basis. This will reduce administration and cost involved in managing returns to QPWS.

As a current commercial activity permit holder for a site that will become part of a TIPA area, what happens now?

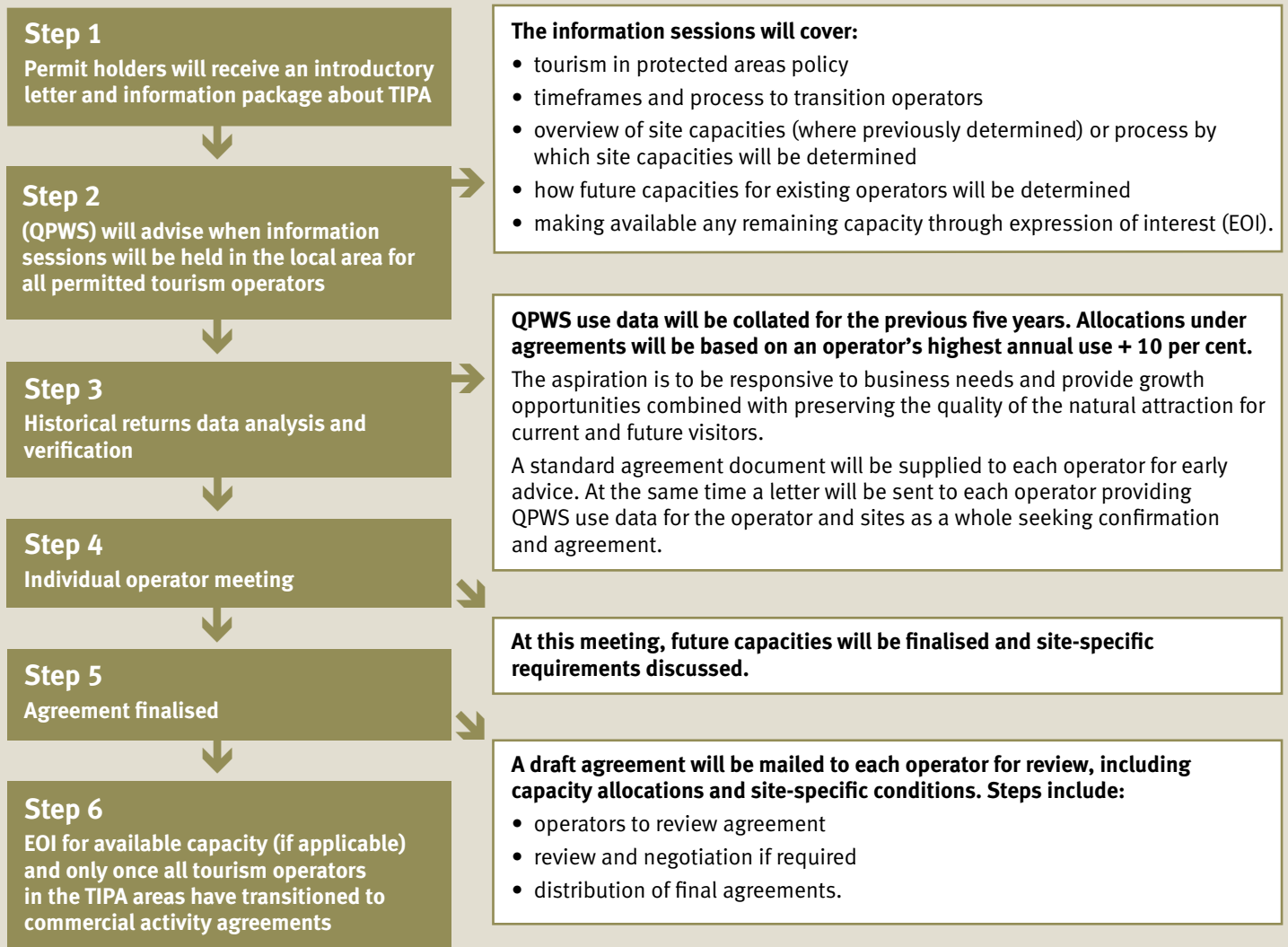


Photo: Miyoko Inagaki

Expression of interest (EOI) for available capacity

Once all tour operators in a TIPA area have transferred to commercial activity agreements QPWS will assess the available commercial capacity at sites, consider prevailing market conditions and determine whether to offer capacity to the market.

What happens once QPWS determines there is additional capacity available at a TIPA area?

Where it is determined that capacity is available within sustainable levels, an EOI process may be conducted. The timeframe for issue of EOI will be determined on a case-by-case basis depending on the amount of available capacity and priority for release.

