

QPWS Campgrounds COVID Safe Industry Plan (revised – Stage 3)

Business name: Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Environment and Science	
Date completed: 02 July 2020	
Date distributed: 03 July 2020	
Acknowledged by staff:	
Name: Roland Dowling AWU Richard Orchard AIMPE Jim Davies Together	Signed:
Manager approval	
Manager name: Ben Klaassen Deputy Director-General QPWSP	Manager signed:
Revision date:	
Review - Manager approval	
Manager name:	Manager signed:

Checklist of MANDATORY requirements:

Workplace Health & Safety

- QPWS has extensive Workplace Health and Safety Plans and guidelines that aspect with managing COVID-19 in accordance with mandatory guidelines enforced by Workplace Health and Safety Queensland. These documents will be made available as requested by the appropriate authorities.

Mandatory COVID Safe Checklists

I have completed all mandatory COVID Safe Checklists where they apply and displayed them on my premises:

- COVID Safe Checklist for dining in restaurants, cafes, pubs, clubs, RSL clubs and hotels.
[\[https://www.covid19.qld.gov.au/ data/assets/pdf file/0020/127235/COVID-Safe-Checklist-RestCafes.pdf\]](https://www.covid19.qld.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0020/127235/COVID-Safe-Checklist-RestCafes.pdf)
- Not applicable.
- COVID Safe Checklist for beauty therapists and nail salons.
[\[https://www.covid19.qld.gov.au/ data/assets/pdf file/0021/127236/COVID-Safe-Checklist-Beauty-Salons.pdf\]](https://www.covid19.qld.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0021/127236/COVID-Safe-Checklist-Beauty-Salons.pdf)
- Not applicable.

Staff training

- ALL staff have completed Mandatory COVID Safe training as required by law, or as enforced by the business. As detailed here:
[\[https://www.covid19.qld.gov.au/government-actions/roadmap-to-easing-queenslands-restrictions\]](https://www.covid19.qld.gov.au/government-actions/roadmap-to-easing-queenslands-restrictions)

COVID SAFE training is mandatory for high risk industries (dining in restaurants, cafes, pubs, clubs, RSL clubs and hotels, and beauty therapists and nail salons) and must be undertaken within two weeks of re-opening.

Compliance statement

- I have printed and signed a Compliance Statement for the business and it is displayed on the premises. A Compliance Statement template can be found at the end of this document.

COVID Risk Register (RECOMMENDED):

- I have developed a COVID Risk Register for my business.
[\[https://www.covid19.qld.gov.au/ data/assets/pdf file/0020/127235/COVID-Safe-Checklist-RestCafes.pdf\]](https://www.covid19.qld.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0020/127235/COVID-Safe-Checklist-RestCafes.pdf)
- The above have been signed off by management:

Name: Ben Klaassen

Signed:

Date: 3 July 2020

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic and response has created an exceptional set of circumstances however, the safety of our visitors, staff, volunteers, suppliers, wildlife and the communities in which we operate remains our number one priority. The nature of our business means we are obligated to plan responsibly and in accordance with the guidance provided by Public Health Authorities - specifically Queensland Health and Queensland Workplace Health and Safety - to ensure our strategies and response are appropriate for minimising the risk of exposure and spread of COVID-19. The Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS) is implementing a number of measures to support visitors having a COVID safe camping experience on QPWS managed campgrounds.

Principles

Actions supporting the phased return of camping to QPWS campgrounds considers expert health advice and is based on the following principles:

- Outdoor recreational activities can contribute many health, economic, social and cultural benefits to society, particularly one that is emerging from the unique isolation and the restrictive environment created by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Visitation to a QPWS campground should not compromise the health of our workforce, individual visitors, volunteers, contractors or the broader community.
- COVID-19 camping strategies will be based on objective health information to ensure activities are conducted safely and do not risk increased COVID-19 local transmission rates.
- International evidence to date is suggestive that outdoor activities are a lower risk setting for COVID-19 transmission and there is no evidence that transmission to or from wildlife is of a greater risk.
- Enhanced risk mitigation (e.g. social distancing) needs to still be applied with specific attention given to points of entry/exit and connecting pathways that may reduce spacing available to visitors regardless of being outdoors.

QPWS Camping Context and COVID-19 Safety Adaptations

- QPWS manages 569 campgrounds ranging from small discreet remote bush camps and expansive beach camping areas with no facilities accommodating self-sufficient campers, to medium sized remote and serviced campsites to larger high-density locations with multiple facilities. Some of these are managed by third parties under separate arrangements for example on Minjerribah (North Stradbroke Island) and Mulgumpin (Moreton Island).
- All campgrounds have been individually reviewed for COVID safe capacities based on current Chief Health Officer directions, including optimum hygiene, social distancing and safe gathering numbers.
- High visitor capacity campsites will be managed to approximately 60 – 70% of pre-COVID camper capacities to ensure safety directions are achieved.
- All campgrounds have been reconfigured and notices are in place to ensure a minimum of 15 to 20 metres between campsites.
- No groups of more than 20 are able to book camp sites.
- Campsites have been configured in such a way that persons at specific campsites serviced by toilet facilities will be limited to a maximum of 100 persons per toilet block facility with the aim to have these facilities reserved for use by the 100 persons at a particular camp site.

- All persons booking campsites are registered with email addresses and phone numbers for tracing purposes. QPWS has digitally enabled software for emergency SMS and email notifications to campers on site or before/ after visits in real time. QPWS will inform visitors at the time of booking that they must not attend the campground if they have been to a declared COVID-19 hotspot in the previous 14 days, have been in close contact with a known COVID-19 case, or have symptoms related to COVID-19. The list of declared hotspots may be found at: <https://www.qld.gov.au/health/conditions/health-alerts/coronavirus-covid-19/current-status/hotspots-covid-19>
- Signage will be posted at campgrounds to reflect the requirement for visitors not to enter the campgrounds if they have been to a declared COVID-19 hotspot in the previous 14 days, have been in close contact with a known COVID-19 case, or have symptoms related to COVID-19.
- All campers will be advised prior to their visit to be self-sufficient and vigilant in regard to personal hygiene.
- While showers are open, visitors will be advised to carry their own soap or hand sanitiser and towels both prior to their visit and within signage at each facility.
- Higher use campgrounds will have a supply of hand soap or hand sanitiser available for campers to use/ keep with them for personal use.
- All amenities blocks will display signage of the maximum permitted number of people to enter at any one time based on CHO directions of a minimum of 4 square metres per person outdoors and in larger facilities, and 1 person per 2 square metres in facilities under 200 square metres; social distancing of 1.5 metres; and personal hygiene reminders.
- Campgrounds have various toilet configurations for both sexes ranging from one pedestal in a semi remote environment to 6 or more pedestals for males and females at high visitation locations which can accommodate the proposed camper numbers safely due to the design and minimal touch points required for access. This has been factored in to safe capacities across all campgrounds.
- Amenities cleaning regimes have increased in line with the facility design, and daily usage at each facility. Cleaning regimes where sites are at their COVID-19 capacity will comprise of full cleans morning and afternoon (noting most campers are active and undertaking activities like bushwalks, fishing, sightseeing and are away from the campsites through the day), with intermittent inspections and cleans through the day where there is high use as required.
- Campers will be reminded to exercise appropriate hygiene with regard to washing hands with soap, use of sanitisers, and will be requested to clean up after themselves through on- line messaging and site signage.

These COVID-19 adaptations will apply to the campsite types below through Stage 3 of the 'Roadmap to easing Queensland's restrictions'.

Small natural and remote setting campgrounds – serviced and un-serviced

- All campsites accommodating 100 people or less are open.

Medium to large remote setting campgrounds – un-serviced self-sufficient campers

- These sites have minimal to no services and are open for self-sufficient campers
- Available areas provide for up to 1000sq metres per person
- Remote self-sufficient natural areas accommodating from 101 to 2200 persons have been capped to ensure adequate open space/ bushland experiences are retained, including exceeding 15 to 20 metres between camps for maintaining social distancing, providing opportunities for self-exclusion, privacy, and where not provided by natural landscape values, sites may be demarcated to mitigate gatherings of more than 20 persons.

- Self-sufficient sites like beach front camping areas will be managed at 60-70% of normal pre-COVID capacity.
- For example, Cooloola Recreation Area pre-COVID Restrictions has a capacity of 2200 self sufficient campers. Under Stage 2 this was reduced to 600 campers and under Stage 3 1540 campers can be safely accommodated along a beach front 7kms long, providing an area of over 700, 000 square metres for camping. This means one person per 4 square metres is achieved by over 100 times and densities remain well below those prescribed by the CHO Directions for outdoor venues.

Medium - large natural setting campgrounds with services available

- These sites are generally more hardened higher density camping park settings with dedicated/ internal campground amenities.
- Built up campgrounds with on-site amenities and services normally accommodating between 101 to 2300 in these higher density settings have persons capped on the principle of a maximum of 100 persons per toilet facility.
- Example: the normal capacity of the combined Inskip Point campgrounds is 2300 per night. It has 15 separate campground toilet facilities with circa 60 toilet cubicles. Each toilet block facility was capped under Stage 2 to a maximum of 20 persons and under Stage 3 will be capped at 100 persons dedicated to a particular camping zone to support effective allocation and use of the facility. This provides an allowance of up to 1540 persons at this expansive camping area or 65% of its normal pre-COVID Capacity.

Many visitors to Queensland's protected areas and forests are self-reliant campers and do not use public facilities, in fact public facilities are not available in many campgrounds, and many visitors bring their own portable toilets and washing facilities, so the risk of transmission in these cases is next to non-existent. In these cases, some exceptions to camper numbers may apply on a site by site basis based on all the principles above.

Dump-ezy facilities are provided at popular locations for disposal of portable toilet waste.

Other camping facilities managed by third party entities are not covered by the QPWS plans.

It should be noted that the winter camping season in Queensland's most popular camping grounds rarely if ever achieves full capacities, however with the expected increase in domestic visitation from the absence of overseas travel options, and the observed desire for Queenslanders to get back to nature following isolation, the Department is attempting to balance community health and wellbeing needs, essential tourism industry recovery and visitor safety within the CHO Directions, which will always remain the highest priority.

Progressive Easing of camping restrictions

This plan will be regularly monitored in line with all Chief Health Officer Directions and the evolving COVID-19 situation. Risks will be reviewed and management responses adjusted on an ongoing basis. The following checks and preparation have been completed to ensure this plan covers strategies for infection prevention, control procedures and implementation of a safe environment consistent with health directives and information:

- Risk assessment of business areas against COVID-19 restrictions set for Stage 3;
- Information technology systems have been updated and customer booking details are collected for each site booked.
- Checks and preparation for reopening to manage COVID related risks (i.e.

equipment/ facilities) have been completed, and risk management measures have been put in place to address COVID risks, including online and on-site messaging covering the following:

- Social distancing through online and on-site messaging
- Personal and hand hygiene through on-line and on-site messaging
- Workplace cleaning – frequently touched areas and routine cleaning through instructions to staff and contractors see the following link:
https://www.worksafe.qld.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0005/191678/covid-19-overview-and-guide.pdf
- Appropriate use of personal protective equipment (PPE) through instructions to staff and contractors
- Managing psychosocial risks, including customer/patron aggression through compliance plans
- Communication, consultation, instruction, training and supervision of workers and their representatives (HSRs, union representatives). See following link:
https://www.worksafe.qld.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0005/191678/covid-19-overview-and-guide.pdf
- Consideration of deliveries, contractors and visitors attending the premises – see link:
<https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/covid-19-information-workplaces/industry-information/general-industry-information/physical?tab=tab-toc-employer>
- Web materials and signage
- Record keeping

Compliance measures

Based on the above preparations the measures that will be in place to address the following COVID-19 restrictions, are further outlined in the following pages.

COVID-19 Restrictions

- Visitation capacity – adhering to the minimum 4 sqm per person outdoors and large facilities, and 2 sqm per person in facilities under 200 sqm
- Hygiene standards – promoted before and during visit

Response requirements (Contact Tracing is available through booking registrations. SMS and email contacts are available to alert for any emergencies.)

Visitation Measures

To accommodate public expectations and minimise potential risks, QPWS has conducted an evaluation of all 569 camp sites and will implement the following measures based on the COVID-19 Safety Adaptations outlined above to support the ongoing safety of campers and 4WD recreational users to our parks, forests and recreation areas:

- Small natural and remote setting campgrounds with capacities of 100 or less persons continue to remain open.
- Medium to large remote and natural setting un-serviced campgrounds and beach camping areas are open with reduced capacities (60-70% of normal capacity) to maximise the spacing between individual groups with a minimum of 15 to 20 metres between campsites.
- For other areas, the appropriate numbers per campsite have been calculated on a

site by site basis. Factors considered historic popularity, the carrying capacity of local attractions and likely number of touch points, the amenities and services available including the number of toilet cubicles at each area, and the ability for people to effectively social distance.

- We have developed new COVID-safe and educational messaging on our web and booking sites. Additionally, we have developed consistent COVID specific signage for use at entry points, carparks, campsites, amenities blocks, walking trails, lookouts and swimming areas.
- This signage includes regulatory notices that are enforceable by both rangers and police requiring persons to only park in marked carparks or established parking areas when visiting popular locations, signage reminding visitors to adhere to health directives such as social distancing.
- We have signage applying the health directives in amenities such as the 2 sq metres per person rule for facilities less than 200 sqm – with maximum numbers, signage reminding of hygiene requirements, increased cleaning regimes of amenities and touch points, and signs at camping nodes requiring camps to maintain a distance of 15 to 20 metres apart.
- We have established and introduced comprehensive restrictions at the most popular recreation areas, the Cooloola and Bribie Island Recreation Areas, through declaring them Restricted Access Areas under Recreation Areas legislation with daily numbers reduced to ensure social distancing requirements can be met.
- Payment is made at the time of booking with no requirements for collection of cash.
- Contact details are being kept for all campers as part of the department's permit booking system to enable contact tracing.

Social Distancing Measures

Social distancing requirements have been determined at popular congregation points where necessary such as at some lookouts and high use visitor attractions with appropriate signage.

Restrictions on high contact point destinations such as climbing ladders may continue.

Signage will be used to reflect health directives reminding visitors to practice social distancing such as 1 person per 4 square metres when outdoors or in facilities larger than 200 square metres; and 2 sq metres per person rule in amenities in less than 200 square metres – with maximum numbers, signage reminding of hygiene requirements, increased cleaning regimes of amenities and touch points, and signs at camping nodes requiring camps to maintain a distance of 15 to 20 metres apart.

Hygiene measures

Showers, toilets and wash basins will be open for use with appropriate signage advising of maximum numbers in each amenities area calculated on social distancing health directives such as 1 person per 2 sq metre rule in facilities less than 200 square metres, and 1 person per 4 square metres for facilities larger than 200 square metres.

Web materials and on-site signage will be highly visible in campgrounds advising of QHealth hygiene measures and all social distancing requirements.

Amenities cleaning regimes will be intensified on a scaled-up approach to match their daily usage requirements – noting that some remote campsites have very low use and others in more popular campgrounds will be regularly cleaned and touch points wiped down.

Campers in many beach camping areas camp on a self-sustaining basis i.e., they take porta potties and their own water, and are not reliant on public toilets. Cooloola Recreation Area is an example where campers are largely self-sufficient camping along a 7km beach front area, and utilise specially installed dump easy facilities to dispose of their toilet waste on departing their camps.

QPWS provides toilet paper for visitors who use park facilities, and fresh water only for hygiene purposes. Hand soaps or hand sanitiser will also be provided at high use campgrounds. It is not practical to install sanitisers at all locations due to the high incidence of theft in remote campgrounds.

Garbage disposal facilities are in large beach front compound areas in the open environment and are not high points of concentration.

Lookout handrails, picnic tables, and BBQs will be regularly cleaned and sanitised and signage is in place to inform maximum numbers at all built infrastructure.

Compliance is being managed with an educative approach and alleged breaches managed in a non-contact manner (i.e. licences and permits are not being handed from person to person).

Compliance with Bribie Island access requirements is managed via a new number plate recognition system with records of all registered vehicles maintained by the department.

Workforce specific measures

We are ensuring rangers and other staff responsible for campground management are aware of the requirements and have the necessary training, PPE and tools to help minimise risks;

Rangers will be on the ground engaging with campers to provide briefings on keeping to small groups and adherence to social distancing rules;

There will be no ranger presentations that would encourage gatherings through Stage 3.

Gateway Visitor centres with wildlife displays will open in stage 3 to the maximum allowable numbers permitted by the CHO Directives. These facilities have soap or hand sanitiser and towels in the amenities and hand sanitisers will be offered for visitors to information and gateway visitor centres;

Amenities in popular locations will be cleaned by a mix of private contractors and rangers depending on location and local arrangements.

Rangers and police will work together to monitor behaviours in response to these measures.

Rangers are trained to manage interactions with members of the public with a focus on ensuring situations do not escalate to violence or abuse. However, situations do arise where customers can be aggressive and the department training equips staff with the skills to manage these situations. This includes patrols with a minimum of two staff, exiting where situations are a risk to safety and engaging with Police on significant breaches.

Non-essential visits to the workplace should be cancelled or postponed.

QPWS will minimise the number of workers attending to deliveries and contractors as much as possible.

Contractors who need to attend the workplace, to provide maintenance or repair services or perform other essential activities, will be given clear instructions of QPWS requirements while they are on site.

QPWS will ensure handwashing facilities, or if not possible, alcohol-based hand sanitiser, is

readily available for workers after physically handling deliveries.

QPWS will direct visiting contractors to remain in vehicles and use contactless methods such as mobile phones to communicate with your workers wherever possible.

QPWS will direct visiting contractors to use alcohol-based hand sanitiser before handling products being delivered.

QPWS will seek to use, and ask contractors to use, electronic paperwork where possible, to minimise physical interaction. Where possible, set up alternatives to requiring signatures.

Records

All campgrounds have been individually reviewed for COVID safe capacities based on current Chief Health Officer directions, including optimum hygiene, social distancing and safe gathering numbers, any identified hazards, risks assessed, and control measures are included in this Plan, and will be regularly monitored and reviewed.

Amenities cleaning regimes have increased in line with the facility design, and daily usage at each facility. Cleaning regimes where sites are at their COVID-19 capacity will comprise of full cleans morning and afternoon (noting most campers are active and undertaking activities like bushwalks, fishing, sightseeing and are away from the campsites through the day), with intermittent inspections and cleans through the day where there is high use as required.

The appropriate union representatives have been consulted including AWU, AIMPE and Together, and will continue to be consulted pending any changes to the Plan or progressions from Roadmap stages.

All persons booking campsites are registered with email addresses and phone numbers for tracing purposes, and QPWS has digitally enabled software to do emergency SMS and email notifications to individual campers on site and or before or after they visit in real time.

Day visitors in Recreation Areas require a Vehicle Access permit and permittee names and registration numbers are retained by the department for tracing purposes. This is further enhanced at Bribie Island Recreation Area where number plate recognition is used.

PPE and Safety

PPE is provided for all staff and reminders of the PPE and safety requirements will be regularly discussed including at Health and Safety meetings and tool box talks. The OIR COVID Guide will be distributed to all staff:

https://www.worksafe.qld.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0005/191678/covid-19-overview-and-guide.pdf

Psychological risks, including potential aggression is well understood as most of the 820 rangers are authorised officers under various legislation and trained and/ or experienced in dealing with difficult people and work closely with the Queensland Police Service for support. Rangers undertaking compliance activities do so in accordance with a compliance plan, wear body cameras and are instructed to depart the scene and call police in any threatening situation. Further reference is available in the OIR COVID Guide:

https://www.worksafe.qld.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0005/191678/covid-19-overview-and-guide.pdf

Additional measures include:

- Staff directed to stay home if ill;
- COVID-19 testing required where any symptoms of acute respiratory (cough, sore throat, shortness of breath) or fever are evident;
- Operating at 1 person per 4 square metres; or 1 person per 2 square metres for facilities less than 200 square metres, while on site, where practical and safe;

Risk Management

The department has a risk management framework that ensures risks are identified, documented, treated and monitored. COVID-19 specific risks have been considered and steps taken to implement work safe practices to mitigate risk.

QPWS requires work units to also develop workplace specific risk registers that are monitored and reviewed regularly.

The department and QPWS have systems in place to ensure risk registers are updated should new hazards be identified, or additional information be provided that require a risk to be reassessed.

QPWS also employs a network of safety officers that are responsible for ensuring practices comply and identifying any improvements that are required.

Confirmed COVID-19 diagnosis or personal contact with a known case

Any staff member who has a confirmed case of COVID-19, whether asymptomatic or not, must immediately advise their supervisor or manager and self-isolate in accordance with government regulations for the time period stipulated.

Staff must also notify their supervisor or manager if;

- They have been in direct contact with someone who has been diagnosed with COVID-19, and/or
- They have been in regular contact with someone (partner, friend or family member) who has been overseas recently or who is showing signs of illness.

If QPWS is notified of a confirmed case of COVID-19, risk mitigation measures will be actioned as appropriate following Queensland Health advice.

If a staff member has been tested for COVID-19 and is awaiting test results, they are instructed not to attend work until they have been confirmed as having a negative result. In the interim period, they must self-isolate, but may work from home in circumstances that allow.

In the event of a confirmed COVID-19 case on business premises

1. The staff member who has been diagnosed must quarantine in accordance with health advice and can return to work only when they have fully recovered and met the criteria for clearance from isolation. Clearance may be given by the public health authority or by the staff member's treating clinician and provided for the employer.
2. QPWS will work with public health to inform all staff members that a case has been confirmed and request that those who have been in contact with the staff member immediately disclose their contact.

3. QPWS will work with public health to consult with staff members who are identified as having had contact with the infected staff member and will continue to share information with the relevant state health authority and take any additional measures recommended by that authority.
4. A deep clean will be conducted in accordance with advice received from the relevant health authority.

If there is a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19 infection at a QPWS workplace, Queensland Health will be notified by the usual government processes which in the first instance should be the medical professional who confirms the diagnosis and the relevant testing laboratory.

Upon being informed, a person in control of the business or undertaking must notify Workplace Health and Safety Queensland that the case has been confirmed.

QPWS understands its obligation to keeping a record of each notifiable incident for at least 5 years from the day that notice of the incident is given to the regulator.