



Healthy Parks
Healthy People®

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1 July 2014

Hon Ryan Smith
Minister for Environment and Climate Change
Level 17
8 Nicholson Street
MELBOURNE VIC 3002

Dear Minister

RE: Ministerial Statement of Expectations for the Regulation of Licensed Tour Operators

Thank you for your letter of 30 June 2014 containing your Statement of Expectations (SOE) for the regulation of businesses by Parks Victoria. This response confirms Parks Victoria's commitment to improving regulatory performance and reduce costs faced by Victorian businesses and other regulated parties. When regulating business, the activities of Parks Victoria are enabled by the *Parks Victoria Act 1998* and a number of additional administered Acts and Regulations.

Our commitment to regulate efficiently and effectively

Parks Victoria recognises the impact that regulation and regulatory practice has on regulated businesses active in the environment and climate change portfolio. Parks Victoria is committed to regulating the tour operator licensing system efficiently and effectively.

Since the introduction of Tour Operator licensing regulation in 2011 Parks Victoria has continually improved processes and practices to reduce the regulatory burden on tour operators, some recent improvements include:

- A new email based licence processing procedure that has dramatically decreased licence processing times
- A subsidy program to encourage operator accreditation - an accredited operator is eligible for a multiple year licence thus reducing their regulatory burden
- A revised application form designed to reduce the amount of information required on a yearly basis.

Our plan to meet the SOE improvement priorities

Parks Victoria will meet your priorities for improvement through the actions outlined below.

Consistent stakeholder experience

1. Parks Victoria will examine a variety of online surveying tools. A preferred survey tool will be chosen and an online survey of Licensed Tour Operators conducted. The outcomes of the survey will be incorporated into Parks Victoria's annual business planning.
This will be delivered by 30 June 2015.

Compliance policy framework

2. Parks Victoria will identify the high-risk areas that it regulates and develop a cross regulator compliance plan. Together with Victoria Police, Transport Safety Victoria and the Department of Environment and Primary Industries, the cross regulator compliance plan will establish a consistent targeted approach to compliance.
This will be delivered by 30 June 2015.

Role clarity

3. Parks Victoria's administration of land managed by the Department of Environment and Primary Industries (DEPI) and its role as regulator of licensed tour operators is governed by the Management Service Agreement that exists between the two parties. Parks Victoria will carefully examine the Management Service Agreement to ensure it provides sufficient role clarity. Where Parks Victoria believes that additional role clarity is beneficial to licensing of tour operators it will discuss this with DEPI and will seek an appropriate instrument that provides additional clarity and manages any flow-on implications.
This will be done by 30 June 2015.

Timeliness

4. Since the introduction of Tour Operator licensing regulation in 2011 Parks Victoria has continually improved processes to reduce red tape to operators. Parks Victoria will continue to make minor improvements to licensing but major efficiencies will only be possible with the introduction of technological improvements or changes in the legal framework. Parks Victoria will identify potential systematic improvements. Where substantial improvements can be identified, Parks Victoria will identify the steps and flow-on implications associated with these improvements and will be incorporated into Parks Victoria's annual business planning.
This will be delivered by 30 June 2015.

Accountability and transparency

5. In line with the accountability and transparency principles underpinning effective public sector regulation, I confirm that Parks Victoria will report on the achievement of these SOE performance targets in its 2014-15 and 2015-16 Annual Reports.

Thank you again for your direction in the future governance and regulatory performance of Victoria's environment and climate change portfolio.

Yours sincerely



Bill Jackson
Chief Executive