

Procedural guide

Community and other relations

Australian Defence Force activities on QPWS managed areas

Procedural guides further define complex decision-making processes or requirements of the Department of National Parks, Sport and Racing (NPSR), incorporating the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service. Procedural guides provide guidance and information to assist staff in the completion of specific tasks or in making certain judgments.

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Purpose

This procedure guides conduct of the Australian Defence Forces (ADF) activities on Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS) managed areas for both QPWS staff and ADF personnel by stating:

- what authorities are required for ADF activities;
- where, how and what types of ADF activities can be undertaken;
- which ADF activities require authorisation, and which activities are exempt; and
- clear administrative and approval procedures incorporating both ADF and QPWS requirements.

Scope

This guide **applies to**:

- All ADF personnel including full time, reserve or cadets, of the Australian Army, Navy or Air Force, conducting any activities on QPWS managed areas, regardless of the activity type, or whether uniforms or insignia are worn;
- Any international defence force personnel conducting any activities on QPWS managed areas with the ADF, regardless of the activity type, or whether uniforms or insignia are worn;
- All ADF activities on QPWS managed areas, which include:
 - Recreation Areas declared under the *Recreation Areas Management Act 2006*;
 - State Forests declared under the *Forestry Act 1959*;
 - Protected Areas (State land) declared under the *Nature Conservation Act 1992* including National Parks (Aboriginal land); National Parks (Torres Strait Islander land); National Parks (Cape York Peninsula Aboriginal land); and Regional Parks; and
 - Marine Parks declared under the *Marine Parks Act 2004*.

This guide **does not apply to** a social or recreational activity undertaken by members of the ADF on QPWS managed areas.

Guidelines

1. QPWS Permits and Authorities

- A permit or authority is required for ADF activities if the activity :
 - disturbs general use of any area by other users;
 - requires temporary exclusive use;
 - disturbs soil, vegetation or animals in any area;
 - includes carrying of firearms, other than exempt firearms;
 - includes use of blank ammunition; or
 - includes construction of temporary infrastructure.

Permits for land activities

- Unless exempt (see section 7), an ADF activity will require an Organised Event Permit under the *Recreation Areas Management Act 2006*, *Forestry Act 1959* and the *Nature Conservation Act 1992* depending on which tenure the proposed activity will be conducted.
- An Organised Event Permit application is assessed in accordance with relevant legislative criteria for the proposed area under this legislation.

Permits for water activities in marine parks

- All State and Commonwealth Marine Park zoning plans:
 - provide for use and entry of Marine Parks for ADF activities without permission;
 - require the ADF to provide notification of any proposed activities; and
 - enable QPWS and the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA) to apply conditions to ADF activities in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park under joint permitting administrative arrangements.
- ADF activities can occur without requiring a permit in the following Marine Parks, however, an online notification to QPWS is required for (see Procedures – Section 2):
 - Moreton Bay Marine Park;
 - Great Sandy Marine Park; and
 - Great Barrier Reef (State only) Marine Park.
- Conditions may be placed on the activity where necessary to manage potential environmental impacts and to ensure the activity is consistent with the objectives of the Marine Park zones.

Camping Permits

- All camping at designated QPWS campsites and camping areas (including bush campsites) require camping permits to be booked and paid on-line at www.npsr.qld.gov.au
- School cadet groups are recognised as an approved educational excursion, tour or camp approved by the chief executive for the purpose of accessing concessional camping fees. If a proposed camping site or area is not currently available on-line this should be stated in the organised event permit application.
- Any proposals for bush camping must be identified on a map with proposed routes and camping areas.

Vehicle Access Permits

- Vehicle Access Permits (VAPs) are not required for Commonwealth, State and local government vehicles in designated Recreation Areas when used for official purposes, including ADF training exercises.
- This includes Minjerribah, Moreton Island, Bribie Island, Cooloolo, Fraser Island, Inskip Point and Green Island Recreation Areas.

ADF Lease Areas

- The ADF currently has lease arrangements under the *Lands Act 1994* for parts of QPWS managed areas for training purposes.
- These currently include areas in or adjacent to Wooroonooran and Paluma Range National Parks.
- No QPWS permits are required for ADF training activities in these areas.

2. ADF Insurance

- The July 2010 Commonwealth Indemnity and Release Agreement in favour of the Department of Environment and Resource Management (DERM) indemnifies the State of Queensland from any liability due to ADF activities in QPWS managed areas.

3. Use of Firearms, Live Ball Ammunition and Live Blank Ammunition

- The term 'ammunition' encompasses all munitions, explosives and inert versions of the following live ordnance:
 - Live ammunition is ammunition that contains an energetic chemical composition (propellant, explosive, etc.) and includes both live ball ammunition and live blank ammunition;
 - Live ball ammunition fires a projectile;
 - Live blank ammunition simulates noise. Both blank and practice natures are classified as live ammunition.
- Activities involving live ball ammunition and live explosives are not generally permitted on QPWS managed areas as they pose significant risks of impact on the environment and other park users.
- The carriage and discharge of live ball ammunition may be approved by the QPWS Regional Director for use in specific life threatening safety situations.
- The majority of ADF training on lands not managed by the Commonwealth Department of Defence (DOD) does not involve the use of live blank ammunition, however, in certain situations firearms and live blank ammunition and ordnance may be carried or utilised for training purposes by the ADF on QPWS managed areas.
- Risks associated with live blank ammunition use on QPWS managed areas include:
 - potential conflict with other park users,
 - potential risks from discarded, undischarged blank rounds, and
 - disturbance of wildlife.
- These risks can be managed through:
 - public notices;
 - appropriate training and locations; and
 - by adopting sound environmental management practices.
- It is current ADF policy that all reasonable effort is taken to collect and remove discharged cartridges at the end of each activity.
- Carrying of firearms with or without live blank ammunition is only permitted for ADF outdoor training activities on QPWS managed areas that have been assessed and approved by QPWS upon application for an Organised Event Permit.
- Firearms stored in a boat or vessel that will not be used as part of an ADF activity may be transported into QPWS managed area during an ADF activity without prior approval.
- Live blank ammunition may be used:
 - in all Designated QPWS Blank Ammunition Training Areas indicated in TABLE 1 below with an approved Organised Event Permit, or

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- in other QPWS managed areas subject to QPWS assessments and approvals upon application for an Organised Event Permit.

TABLE 1 **Designed QPWS Blank Ammunition Areas**

QPWS Region	QPWS managed area
Western	Barakula State Forest
	Crows Nest National Park
	Wongai State Forest
	Dunmore State Forest
	Duraki State Forest
South East	Lockyer National Park
	Lockyer State Forest
Sunshine Coast Burnett	Beerburrum National Park
	Imbil National Park
	Jimna State Forest
	St Mary State Forest
	Thinoomba State Forest
Northern	Paluma Range National Park

4. Use of Pyrotechnics in Emergency and Safety situations

- Pyrotechnics are not to be used for training purposes on any QPWS managed area however ADF Units may be required to carry certain pyrotechnics for emergency and safety purposes during the conduct of activities.
- ADF use of pyrotechnics in an emergency and safety situation is limited to the following types:
 - a) Distress Flares.
 - b) Hand Smoke grenades.
- Should a pyrotechnic malfunction during an emergency or a safety incident, it is the ADF Unit's responsibility to have it safely removed. Under no circumstances is the pyrotechnic to be blown in place or left in the training area.

5. Use of Defence Vehicles, Hardware and Infrastructure

- Activities involving the use of armoured tracked vehicles, tanks and artillery will not be permitted on QPWS managed areas.
- ADF vehicles and vessels approved for access to QPWS managed areas are identified in TABLE 2 below.
- Any application for vehicle access off established public access roads, QPWS management roads and QPWS tracks will require a detailed map identifying all proposed routes and use patterns to be provided with the environmental compliance certificate.
- Any infrastructure, other than temporary camping equipment, will require QPWS assessment and approval upon application for an Organised Event Permit

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TABLE 2 Approved ADF Vehicles for QPWS Managed Areas

Vehicle Classification	Vehicle or Vessel Type	Description	Uses (e.g. equipment/supplies transport, personnel transport)	Gross Vehicle Mass (GVM)	Personnel Capacity
Protected Mobility Vehicle	4x4	Armoured vehicle	Recon / Troop Carrier	15 Tonne	10
Australian Light Armoured Vehicle	8x8	Armoured Vehicle	Recon /Troop Carrier	12 T	up to 10
Mercedes G Wagon	4x4 / 6x6	General Service Vehicle	Transport	3 ^o - 4.5 ^o T	up to 12
Land Rover 110	4x4 / 6x6	General Service Vehicle	Transport	2.5 – 3 T	Up to 8
Unimog	4x4	Truck Medium	Troop and Logistics	6 T unloaded 12 T loaded	20
Scania	6x6	Truck Medium	Logistics	10 T unloaded	2
Mack	6x6	Truck Heavy	Logistics / Recovery	12 T unloaded 24 ^o loaded	2

ADF Activities

Table 3 identifies four types of activities able to be undertaken on QPWS managed areas.

TABLE 3 ADF Activities on QPWS Managed Areas

Activity Type	Description	Locations	QPWS Permit Requirements
Training without ammunition	Units undertaking activities without firearms. Activities may include climbing, canoeing/rafting, orienteering, navigation and bushwalking.	All QPWS managed areas and infrastructure with public access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land based activities require an organised event permit for State Forests, National Parks and Regional Parks unless exempt under Section 7. • Land based activities that do not require a permit must notify QPWS prior to commencing the activity (see Procedures) • Water based activities in Marine Parks don't require a permit but do require notification and conditions may be placed on the activity if necessary to protect natural, cultural and use values.
Training with live blank ammunition	Units undertaking combat exercises using blank ammunition . Activities may include climbing, canoeing/rafting, orienteering, navigation and patrolling.	Any identified QPWS managed area or site, subject to QPWS assessments and approvals upon application. All designated QPWS Blank	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land based activities require an Organised Event Permit • Water based activities in Marine Parks require notification and conditions may be placed on the activity if necessary to protect natural, cultural and use values.

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		Ammunition Areas as identified in Table 1.	
Specialist training	Specialist units undertaking combat exercises using live blank ammunition, occasionally carrying live ball ammunition for safety purposes. Activities may include climbing, canoeing/rafting, orienteering, navigation, patrolling, bushwalking and airborne insertions.	All QPWS managed areas where public access is allowed Designated areas as per Attachment 1 Other specified areas upon application – subject to individual assessment and approval.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Land based activities require an Organised Event Permit Water based activities in Marine Parks require notification and conditions may be placed on the activity if necessary to protect natural, cultural and use values. Note: Carrying of live ammunition requires QPWS Regional Director Approval
QPWS infrastructure and emergency support activities	ADF volunteer activities involving park management works for the purposes of training. Activities include infrastructure construction or demolition; and support in disaster management and State emergencies.	All QPWS managed areas.	QPWS Regional written approvals or contractual arrangements, as required under relevant Delegations.

7. QPWS Landscape Settings

- QPWS manages visitor use and facilities for State Forests, National Parks and Regional Parks using the QPWS Landscape Classification System which scores landscapes on a continuum of “settings” ranging from the least to the most impacted by current and previous patterns of human use.
- The “landscape settings” are on a spectrum scale from one to nine where 1 is unmodified, remote and wild sites and 9 is highly developed and modified sites.
- QPWS managed areas occur in landscape settings from 1 to 7.
- A description of the Landscape Settings, including facilities and access, is illustrated in Appendix 1.

8. Exempt ADF Activities

- All ADF activities in Marine Parks are exempt, with a requirement for notification and conditions as required (e.g. potential disturbance or damage to marine wildlife).
- The following activities in TABLE 4 below are exempt from requiring a QPWS assessment or authority:

TABLE 4 ADF Land Based Activities Exempt from Requiring a Permit

ADF Activity Type	Locations	Conditions for Exemption
Training without firearms or ammunition	All public access QPWS managed areas including established public access areas for bushwalking, abseiling or rock climbing, rafting	<p><i>All exempt activities require QPWS to be notified prior to commencing the activity (refer to Procedures).</i></p> <p><u>Land Based Activities</u></p> <p><i>(National Parks, Regional Parks, State Forests and Recreation Areas)</i></p>

	and canyoning sites.	<p>40 ADF personnel or less in Landscape Setting 4 to 7 (refer Appendix 1)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The group must be split into smaller groups of 15 persons or less when utilising QPWS walking track systems. <p>15 ADF personnel or less in Landscape Setting 1 to 3 (refer Appendix 1)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The group must be split into smaller groups of 7 persons or less when remote bushwalking and camping off the established QPWS walking track systems. <p>Activities include camping, canoeing/rafting, orienteering, navigating, rock climbing, canyoning, and bushwalking.</p> <p>All camping must be in established QPWS campsites or camping areas (including bush campsites) and booked on-line at www.npsr.qld.gov.au</p> <p>All activities must adhere to minimal impact use guidelines (refer Appendix 2)</p> <p>No motorised vehicles or vessels are to be utilised in the training activity except to transport ADF personnel on public access roads to access an area.</p> <p>No earthworks or temporary structures, other than camping equipment, are allowed</p> <p>Taking of wildlife (flora and fauna) is prohibited.</p>
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Procedures

1. ADF Environmental Compliance Certificate and Booking

- Training activities in QPWS managed areas are managed within the ADF by the Qld Deputy Director of Training Area Management (DDOTAM).
- All ADF units proposing training activities on lands not owned by the Commonwealth Department of Defence, or Non-Defence Training Areas (NDTA), must:
 - have an Environmental Compliance Certificate (ECC) approval from the relevant Defence Regional Environmental Officer in Brisbane or Townsville;
 - book their activity through DOTAM as follows:
 - NDTA's south of the Tropic Of Capricorn book through DOTAM in Brisbane on
 - Phone 0409 887 926; and
 - NDTA's north of the Tropic Of Capricorn book through DOTAM in Townsville.
 - Phone 0417 401 252.
- The ADF requires this **procedure to be followed for any activity on an NDTA** even if it is exempt from a QPWS Authority.

2. QPWS Notification of all Marine Park Activities and Exempt Terrestrial Activities

- All Marine Park activities and exempt terrestrial ADF activities must provide on-line notification to QPWS.**
- Notifications at <https://recreation.npsr.qld.gov.au/forms/defence-force-activity/> are required a minimum of **15 working days prior to the activity commencing.**

- Provide details of any potentially high-impact activity in the 'Additional Information' text box on the notification form. Note that QPWS may request supporting documents after the notification has been submitted.

3. QPWS Permit Applications

Organised Event Permits

- All ADF activities that require an Organised Event Permit from QPWS must be booked through the relevant Regional DOTAM Office.
- Application forms for organised event permits are available on-line.
- All Organised Event Permit applications for an ADF activity **must include the following**:
 - A completed organised event application form and relevant fee;
 - A detailed statement outlining whether any of the following are to be used or undertaken:
 - firearms or weapons (even if not discharged);
 - live blank ammunition;
 - taking of wildlife (fauna and flora);
 - construction of temporary structures and other infrastructure;
 - digging, excavating (e.g. waste disposal, fox holes) or earthworks;
 - the number, type and carrying capacity of vehicles and/or vessels.
For example:
 - 2 x 11 person 4WD Troop carriers;
 - 10 x 1 person kayaks;
 - the number and type of aircraft to be used;
 - any other specialised type of equipment, including any application to carry live ball ammunition;
 - a statement as to why a QPWS managed area is required as opposed to any alternative sites;
 - an Environmental Compliance Certificate (ECC) issued by the Defence Regional Environmental Officer; and
 - any map details of route and activities as appropriate.
- All applications must be submitted by email to Parkaccess@npsr.qld.gov.au
- QPWS **has a maximum of 40 business days to consider an application** under current Queensland Legislation.

4. QPWS Permit Assessment

- The Nature Conservation (Administration) Regulation 2017, *Recreation Areas Management Act 2006*, *Forestry Act 1959*, *Marine Parks Act 2004* and relevant zoning plans provide guidelines for the Chief Executive when considering and deciding an application for a relevant authority or permission for any proposed ADF activity on QPWS managed areas.
- Any application for an ADF activity must:
 - avoid or minimise any impact on cultural heritage, natural and marine resources;

- align with the management principles or tenure objectives of QPWS managed areas;
- meet provisions of any zoning plan, management plan or other management statement;
- not cause undue disturbance to other park users;
- identify why the QPWS managed area is required for this activity;
- outline safety arrangements to protect other users, visitors and QPWS staff including any firearms management.

6. QPWS Permit Conditions

Standard Permit conditions

- Standard conditions may include any of the following considerations:
 - Live ball ammunition must not be carried without prior approval from the relevant QPWS Regional Director.
 - Live blank ammunition may be carried and used in training activities within all QPWS managed areas only with prior QPWS approval.
 - Signs must be erected advising members of the public that ADF training activities are being undertaken, including an ADF contact person to deal with any questions or concerns as required.
 - All sites used must be fully reinstated on completion of the activity. This includes the collection and removal of all rubbish and discharged cartridges.
 - The ADF authority holders and any ADF personnel and contractors must take all reasonable steps to ensure that all vehicles, plant or equipment, vessels, shoes and clothing are clean and free of pest plant and pathogen reproductive material prior to entering and leaving QPWS managed areas.
 - Conditions relating to the use of different types of public moorings in various marine parks.

Additional Conditions

- Additional general and site specific conditions may be applied depending on the activity. These may include any of the following:
 - **Seasonal restrictions** - The time of an activity may be restricted due to park closures, management activities or peak visitor use times (e.g. infrastructure construction activity closure, public and school holidays, fire season closures, emergency closures, turtle and seabird breeding closures).
 - **Notification of other users** - If the activity is likely to interfere with the general public's use of all or part of a QPWS managed area, the applicant may be required to notify the public in advance (i.e. publishing the date and location of the activity in local papers, in addition to erecting on-site signage notifying park users of a ADF presence).
 - **Site inspections** - The exercise commander, DDOTAM staff and ADF environmental managers may be required to participate in joint inspections of the permit area before and after the exercise to review any potential impacts, or requirements for site repatriation.

Disclaimer

While this document has been prepared with care, it contains general information and does not profess to offer legal, professional or commercial advice. The Queensland Government accepts no liability for any external decisions or actions taken on the basis of this document. Persons external to the Department of National Parks, Sport and Racing should satisfy themselves independently and by consulting their own professional advisors before embarking on any proposed course of action.

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11 December 2014

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