

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND CONSERVATION



TITLE: Hang Gliding and Paragliding Policy

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Hang Gliding and Paragliding

Introduction

Hang-gliding is an appropriate recreational activity in the National Park estate under certain conditions and in certain areas.

The operation of hang gliders and paragliders is a form of aviation and as such is subject to Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) regulations. The Hang Gliding Federation of Australia (the Federation) is a sporting body constituted to administer the sport of hang gliding and paragliding under regulations laid down by CASA.

The use of hang gliders is subject to a Civil Aviation Order, which specifies the conditions to be complied with by hang glider pilots. These conditions cover eligibility to operate a glider, pilot's adherence to the rules and regulations of the Federation, mandatory qualifications for glider pilots and places where, and heights at which, a glider may or may not be flown.

The Civil Aviation Order governing hang gliding requires that a person may not act as a pilot in command of a hang glider unless the person is the holder of a pilot certificate issued by the Federation, or the person is under the supervision of an instructor approved by the Federation.

There are very specific topographical and wind requirements that enable hang gliding and paragliding activities to take place, and therefore the activities are limited to specific locations. Hang gliding and paragliding also require cleared take off and landing sites and sometimes structures. Many of the locations that have the appropriate requirements (cliffs, bluffs etc.) are located within areas reserved under the NPW Act.

Hang gliding and paragliding are considered recreational activities that involve risking a person's safety, and should therefore comply with the general principles of recreational use of NPWS managed lands, with full regard given to safety issues.

All recreational activities, including hang gliding and paragliding, can generate impacts on the park environment and must therefore be managed in accordance with legislative requirements and the objectives for which certain lands are reserved.

The take off requirements for weight shift micro-lights is considerably different to hang gliding and paragliding. Weight shift micro lights are not considered a hang glider and are not covered in this policy.

Scope / Application

This policy applies to all areas reserved under the NPW Act.

Objectives

To ensure that:

- hang gliding and paragliding are satisfactorily accommodated and managed in appropriate areas;
- hang gliding and paragliding facilities and activities are environmentally sustainable, culturally appropriate and consistent with the purpose for which the park was reserved;
- the safety and enjoyment of all park visitors are protected;
- there is a consistent and co-ordinated approach to organised recreational use within appropriate parks.

Policy

General

1. In general, the NPWS will allow appropriate hang gliding and paragliding facilities and activities in selected parks, subject to conditions.
2. Any person undertaking hang gliding or paragliding activities must be authorised to do so by the Federation (i.e. a member of the Federation), or under the supervision of an instructor authorised by the Federation.
3. Should it be identified that pilots are not abiding by the CASA regulations and Federation code of conduct (HGFA Operations Manual), the NPWS reserves the right to close the hang gliding site temporarily or permanently.

Appropriate park categories for hang gliding and paragliding

4. Hang gliding and paragliding are classed as activities that involve risking a person's safety under clause 21 (2) of the National Parks and Wildlife Regulation 2002. An appropriate consent from the Park Authority is therefore required.
5. The NPWS may authorise a person to hang glide and paraglide, in accordance with this policy and procedural guidelines, and where the activity is consistent with a plan of management for that park and the National Parks and Wildlife Regulation (Clause 21), within a:
 - national park;
 - state conservation area;

- regional park; and
- karst conservation area.

Park categories not available for hang gliding and paragliding

6. As hang gliding and paragliding are contrary to the purpose and principles of these areas, they will not be permitted in:
 - nature reserves; or
 - Aboriginal areas.

Wilderness Areas

7. Hang gliding and paragliding facilities and activities will not be permitted in declared wilderness areas, as they are not consistent with the management principles for these areas.

Existing Sites

8. Existing suitable hang gliding sites are sites that are located in an appropriate park category (ie. national park, state conservation area, regional park, or karst conservation area), and are consistent with the plan of management for that park, or the Regulation (ie already have a sign or consent). To effectively authorise these sites a written consent is necessary in accordance with this policy and the procedural guidelines. For these sites, interim consent arrangements will be put in place in order for a formal site assessment to be conducted (as detailed in the procedural guidelines), prior to consideration of a longer-term consent.
9. Existing hang gliding sites that are located in inappropriate park categories (nature reserves, Aboriginal areas, historic sites), and/or are inconsistent with the plan of management for that park, or the Regulation will be closed.

New Sites – Site Assessment

10. A formal site assessment will be required for all new sites.
11. New sites will not be considered unless the impacts of establishment will be minimal.

Consent Conditions

12. The Park Authority may set such conditions for the use of hang gliders and paragliders within parks as it may consider appropriate to ensure

park property, flora, fauna, ecosystems, infrastructure, landscape/scenic values and cultural heritage are protected and that the safety and enjoyment of other park visitors are maintained.

13. The Park Authority may also specify general conditions when granting consent for members of the Federation to hang glide and paraglide at authorised sites.
14. Any consent for hang gliding and paragliding, whether for existing or proposed sites, will require a site assessment of the hang gliding site by the Park Authority in accordance with the procedural guidelines.
15. Federation Clubs are required to have minimum mandatory public liability insurance of \$10 million. The Federation is required to provide to the Park Authority a copy of the Federation's certificate of currency.

Site Inspection

16. The Park Authority will conduct an annual inspection of each hang gliding site to assess impacts (if any) associated with the use of the site.
17. The NPWS reserves the right to close a hang gliding site within a park, temporarily or permanently, where unacceptable impacts are identified, or for other safety reasons (e.g. fire closures). Clause 21 (4) of the NPW Regulation allows for a notice to be erected for the purpose of prohibiting an activity, even where a plan of management continues to permit this activity.

Site Management Plan

18. A site management plan for each authorised hang gliding site will be prepared and implemented by the Park Authority in consultation with the relevant Federation Club.
19. The site management plan may impose conditions or restrictions upon the use of a particular hang gliding site in addition to consent conditions, consistent with any relevant provisions in a plan of management, and in accordance with the procedural guidelines.

Access

20. Access to hang gliding sites may be permitted on public roads, park roads, and approved walking tracks and management trails as specified

in the plan of management, or as authorised by the Park Authority where there is no plan of management.

Launch Sites

21. At all sites, a grassed run will be preferred over a ramp launch structure. A ramp launch structure will only be consented to when a grass run is impracticable for hang gliding take-off or where the construction and use of a ramp would, relative to a grassed run, have less impact on the natural and cultural significance of the area.

Landing Sites

22. Each launch site must have an identified and available landing site(s) to ensure pilot safety, including emergency landing site(s), in accordance with the procedural guidelines and site management plan.
23. Landing sites must be, as far as practicable, outside the park. Where landing sites are within the park, they must conform with the relevant site management plan.
24. Should a neighboring land owner, who provides hang gliding and paragliding landing or emergency landing sites, or clears and maintains vegetation below a launch site, withdraw their permission for the use of that site by Federation members or ceases to maintain the site, the Park Authority will reassess landing provisions, and may close any hang gliding sites within a park temporarily or until alternate landing arrangements are put in place.

Parking and Unloading of Vehicles

25. Appropriate parking and unloading provisions for vehicles are required for each site. If adequate facilities are not available and cannot be provided for at the site, NPWS reserves the right to close the site temporarily or permanently.

Signage

26. Appropriate signage will be required at each hang gliding site for instructional and public safety purposes, in accordance with the procedural guidelines and site management plan.
27. Standardised signage for each hang gliding site will be designed by the Federation in consultation with NPWS, and provided and installed at

hang gliding sites in accordance with the procedural guidelines, and as detailed in the site management plan.

28. The relevant Federation Club for each hang gliding site will nominate a name for the site and this will be included in the signage at the hang gliding site. Preference will be given to using names that are known throughout the community or prominent natural feature of the landscape.
29. Signs must be affixed to structures or their own free-standing posts. It is not permitted to paint or make any permanent marking upon any tree, plant or rock in the park or affix any signs of any type to any tree, plant or rock in the park.

Responsibility for Provision of Infrastructure and Site Maintenance

30. Responsibility for the provision of infrastructure and site maintenance may vary between sites, as negotiated between the relevant Federation Club and the Park Authority, and detailed in each individual site management plan.
31. Generally, the Federation, after gaining consent from the Park Authority, will be responsible for the provision (including design, construction and installation) and maintenance of hang gliding and paragliding specific infrastructure such as launch structures, platforms, and related signage that is in place for the purpose of hang gliding and paragliding.
32. Generally, the Park Authority will be responsible for the provision and maintenance of ancillary (park management) infrastructure, such as access tracks, grassed areas, parking, gates and fencing.
33. Any works required for the maintenance and upkeep of hang gliding sites, and any upgrade or reconfiguration of sites, must have the consent of the Park Authority.

Alternative Usage of Hang Gliding Sites

34. For safety reasons, other park users will not be permitted on the hang gliding site while it is in use by hang gliders or paragliders.
35. Alternative usage of hang gliding sites (e.g. as a picnic area) may be permitted at the site when it is not in use by hang gliders and paragliders, in accordance with the procedural guidelines and as specified in the site management plan.

Database

Activity Records

36. Commercial operators are required to keep records of all hang gliding and paragliding activities undertaken within parks, to be made available to the Park Authority on request in accordance with the procedural guidelines and site management plan.

Site Register

37. The Federation will maintain a database of all known hang gliding sites within parks, including site specific information detailed in the procedural guidelines and site management plan.

Fees

38. No fee will be charged for recreational hang gliding and paragliding activities (other than standard fees and charges, such as park entry fees, which apply generally to the park and its use, and appropriate fees when specific infrastructure has been provided, such as parking areas).
39. For commercial activities, a one-off non-refundable processing fee is to be received by the Park Authority with an application for commercial hang gliding and paragliding activities. If the application is approved, an annual licence fee will be paid in advance on signing the licence, and fees will also apply on a 'number of participant' basis for all commercial activities undertaken, in accordance with the procedural guidelines.
40. Costs incurred by the Park Authority for the design, construction and maintenance of infrastructure (including materials and labour), that are required in the site management plan may be recouped, or requested prior to undertaking any works, from the relevant Federation Club.

Procedural Guidelines

Consents

Interim Consent Arrangements

41. Upon the commencement of this policy the Federation (or relevant Federation Club) will be given a one-year interim written consent to hang glide and paraglide at those sites which conform with this policy. This written consent will effectively authorise these sites for the interim period, subject to the consent conditions. A consent will be required for each individual hang gliding site. A template for consents is provided at Attachment B.
42. The Park Authority may issue one-year interim written consents for a maximum total of three years.
43. Renewal of consent after this interim period will be conditional upon the completion of a Review of Environmental Factors (REF) for each authorised hang gliding site within parks.

Subsequent Consent Arrangements

44. Upon the expiration of the Federation's interim consent for each site (and subject to the conditions placed on the renewal of that consent), the Park Authority may grant the Federation (or Federation Club) a three-year written consent for each site under clause 21 of the NPW Regulation for members of the Federation to hang glide and paraglide at these authorised sites (see template at Attachment B).
45. Subsequent renewal of a three-year consent will be subject to conditions outlined in the policy, including an annual site inspection of each hang gliding site to assess impacts (if any) associated with the use of the site.

General Consent Conditions

46. In granting a consent to the Federation, general conditions that the Park Authority may impose upon the Federation include (but are not limited to):
 - hang gliders and paragliders are to obey lawful directions of Park Authority staff;
 - Federation Clubs are to notify the Park Authority when they intend to use a site where use is infrequent or a special event is scheduled;

- no modification of the environment, permanent or temporary, will be permitted without Park Authority approval;
- operators are responsible for removing their rubbish and litter; and
- NPWS site consent may be withdrawn if pilots do not conduct themselves in accordance with CASA's regulations and the Federation's Operations Manual.

Site Assessment – Existing Sites Review of Environmental Factors (REF)

47. A REF (use standard NPWS REF) will be conducted for each authorised site within the period of the interim consent (maximum 3 years). The purpose of this REF is to identify any impacts resulting from the activity, and determine whether a subsequent consent will be given at each site.
48. Generally, the REF will be prepared by the Park Authority with assistance from the relevant Hang Gliding Clubs. A fee for staff time may be charged by the Park Authority where substantial staff time and resources are required.
49. Where consultants are required for specific work or other external costs are evident, these will be met by the relevant Hang Gliding Club.
50. Any required cost-sharing arrangements will be agreed to prior to the preparation of the REF by the Park Authority.
51. The REF must analyse the ecological, cultural and social impacts and risks associated with hang gliding and paragliding activities.
52. Possible impacts of hang gliding and paragliding include:
- the maintenance of clearings for set-up, launching and landing;
 - unauthorised clearing of vegetation;
 - trampling of vegetation and other damage to vegetation that is associated with set-up, launch, landing and pack-up sites;
 - habitat disturbance (e.g. nesting birds etc.);
 - creation of tracks to and from set-up, launch and landing sites;
 - compaction or erosion of soil;
 - construction and maintenance of launch platforms;
 - intrusion on the visual amenity of a park;

- conflicts with other park users;
- parking congestion;
- the risks and environmental impacts associated with rescuing accident victims;
- disturbance to culturally significant areas; and
- litter.

Site Assessment – New Sites/Upgrade Works

53. Any proposed new hang gliding site within a park, or significant alterations to an existing site, will require the preparation of a REF by the proponent prior to granting consent to carry out such works.
54. All construction works for the purpose of hang gliding and paragliding must comply with the requirements (including building standards and codes) established in the NPWS 'Construction Assessment and Approvals Procedure'.
55. Launch structures are to be certified by an engineer and include a maintenance schedule. The Federation will be responsible for arranging this, including costs incurred.

Important Elements for REF of Hang Gliding Sites

56. When preparing a REF for a hang gliding site, as well as the usual information required in the REF, the following elements must be included:

Site Assessment (REF Section 4. The Existing Environment)

- **Latitude:** the latitude of the site read off a topographical map or Geographic Positioning Unit. This information may be required during rescues.
- **Longitude:** the longitude of the site read off a topographical map or Geographic Positioning Unit. This information may be required during rescues.
- **UTM Grid Reference:** The location of the site on the relevant 1:25000 topographical map. Provide the map name, serial number and six-digit positioning code.
- **Height of launch above sea mean level:** the height above sea level can be read off a topographical map or a Geographic Positioning Unit.
- **Launch Direction:** Direction of the launch to the nearest thirty (30) degrees from magnetic north.
- **Launch Description:** describe the type of mechanism used by the pilots to become airborne. Generally there are three different

mechanisms: grass run, slot take-off, or platform launch. Detail the approximate length, width and height of the structure and indicate any other infrastructure, such as small walls or extended foundations that assist in the launch.

- **Predominant seasonal wind direction:** indicate the predominant wind direction for the seasons of the year and the most suitable period of the year for hang gliding from this site. Indicate whether a site may only be used for a short period throughout the year when the wind conditions match the site conditions. An alternative site may offer a longer period of hang gliding opportunities. This must be considered in the final determination of the site.
- **Level of hang gliding:** Is the site currently used for non-commercial, commercial, novice, intermediate, advanced, competition, tandem, teaching, or paragliding etc.
- **Years the site has been in use:** total amount of years including pre NPWS estate that the site has been used for hang gliding activities. The public use of long-term facilities must be appreciated in granting consent for the use of the site.

Available Infrastructure of the site (REF Section 4. The Existing Environment)

- **Describe the vehicle access to the site:** determine if the vehicle access to the site is via a public road and what the restrictions are for travelling on this road. Should access be granted in all weather conditions at all times throughout the year to all sizes of vehicles (2WD, 4WD, mini buses and larger buses), or should there be some restrictions due to weather conditions (black frost, fire seasons), to vehicle size and times of year.
- **Is there an area set aside for non-participating (viewing) public:** how many people can this area safely accommodate and are infrastructure improvements required. Is there an adequate path past the set-up site for the public to walk or do the public have to walk through the set-up site to the viewing area.
- **Approved landing and pick-up sites:** how many landing sites are available, and how many have been approved. Are the landing sites visible, is there a requirement for mapping the area, and are there emergency landing sites (i.e. helicopter rescue sites).
- **Size of set-up area:** measure in both metres squared (m²) and the number of gliders this area can accommodate at a single point in time. This information is necessary for the safety of the pilots and the viewing public. Site capacity should be defined by the safe number of hang gliders in the air at any one time.
- **Describe the user/public access from the unloading area to the set-up area:** describe the public and user access to the set-up area from the unloading and parking zones. Is there a requirement for facility upgrade and what upgrade would be required. Is there

evidence of erosion, exposed plant roots, overgrowth of vegetation and trampling on the access. What is the requirement for trimming of vegetation.

Sketch/Photo:

- Inclusion of a hang gliding site sketch or photo in the REF. This is done to indicate flight-area, clean-air and flight path. Photo points can be used to define the area for each site. This assessment may need to be done in consultation with the relevant club of the Federation.

Site Management Plan (SMP)

57. A site management plan will be prepared and implemented for each hang gliding site by the Park Authority in consultation with the relevant Federation Club, in accordance with the Hang Gliding Site Management Plan Guidelines (see Attachment A).
58. Relevant information assessed by the REF is to form the basis of the site management plan.
59. A site management plan will conform with the provisions of the plan of management and will address, but not be limited to, the following issues:
- approved access routes;
 - approved launch sites and infrastructure;
 - approved landing and pack-up sites;
 - provisions for unloading and parking of vehicles;
 - site capacity limitations;
 - job safety analysis;
 - general climatic/wind conditions for use;
 - approved signage;
 - approved site maintenance measures and responsibilities;
 - site boundaries and definition;
 - measures to ensure visitor safety;
 - measures to monitor and ameliorate impacts; and
 - measures for record keeping;
 - reporting of accidents (OH&S guidelines);
 - procedures for contacting Emergency Services in case of accident;
 - other issues as below.

Unloading and Parking of Vehicles

60. Adequate unloading zone and parking space provisions for vehicles will be required at each hang gliding site, based on average use rates.
61. If provisions for unloading and parking vehicles is inadequate, additional unloading zones and parking spaces may be constructed

where necessary at the discretion of the Park Authority, as detailed in the site management plan. This must be consistent with the provisions of a plan of management.

Access

62. An access track or route from the unloading zone to the set-up area should be provided at each hang gliding site. If one is not currently in place, then it should be established by the Park Authority, or as detailed in the site management plan.
63. A standardised gate should be provided across the access track to each hang gliding site where necessary. If a gate is not currently provided, and is indicated as necessary in the site management plan, the Park Authority will erect a standardised gate at some point along the access track. Should a gate not be feasible along the access track prior to the set-up area, the gate will be placed before or on the launch site/area.
64. Access arrangements will be detailed in the site management plan, including whether a gate is practical and/or necessary, and the appropriate location. The NPWS may request that expenses incurred by the Park Authority be paid for by the relevant Federation Club, on a cost recovery basis.

Launch Sites and Set-up Area

65. Launch sites (structures etc.) and set-up area at each site should be maintained in an adequate condition to ensure the safety of the activity.
66. Structures for launching will be provided and maintained by the Federation Club with the consent of the Park Authority.
67. Grassed areas (including grassed runs and set-up areas) will be maintained by the Park Authority, or as determined in the site management plan.
68. The dimensions and management of the launch site and set-up area at each site will be detailed in the site management plan.
69. Launch structures that are determined as unsafe in the REF must be either dismantled and removed or upgraded before any further use is made of the structure.

70. Launch sites and set-up areas should be adequately defined so as not to interfere with other park users and to ensure visitor safety.

Landing Sites

71. It is the responsibility of the Federation to supply information on the location of the approved landing sites (and emergency landing sites) to the pilots prior to launch.

72. Precise location and consent arrangements of each landing site (and emergency landing site) will be detailed in the site management plan.

73. For all landing sites (or emergency landing sites) located off-park, the Federation must provide written evidence of the agreement between a landowner/managing authority and the Federation for approved landing and pack-up sites on their land. Such written evidence may be written permission from the landowner/managing authority, or in the case of verbal agreements, may be a document prepared by the Federation which provides assurance that this agreement has been formalised. Such documents must include the name of the landowner/managing authority providing the permission, as well as the location of the land concerned.

74. Should a neighbouring landowner who provides hang gliding landing sites (or emergency landing sites), or clears and maintains vegetation below a launch site, withdraw their consent, the Park Authority reserves the right to close the hang gliding site temporarily or until alternate arrangements are put in place.

Site Capacity and Climatic Limitations

75. Site capacity and climatic limitations to ensure the safety of pilots and the general public for each hang gliding site will be detailed in the site management plan, and may include the following considerations:

- Number of pilots permitted in the air at any one time.
- Number of participants permitted in the set-up area at any one time, dependent on size dimensions.
- Restrictions on the number of people (other than participants) allowed in the set-up area at any one time.

Signage

76. Signage requirements and location will be detailed in the site management plan for each site.

77. The following signage requirements may be included at each site (as detailed in the site management plan):
- Unloading zone (e.g. 'hang glider unloading zone only, no parking, stopping permitted up to 15 minutes');
 - Access track/access gate to site – safety and warning advice (e.g. DANGER: only authorised access permitted beyond this point');
 - Hang gliding launch site – name of site, NPWS logo, Federation logo, warning/safety advice, Federation site rating.
78. The Federation will be responsible for the design (in consultation with the Park Authority), construction and maintenance of this signage, unless otherwise stated in the site management plan.
79. Approved temporary signs may be used where the site is rarely used.

Site Maintenance

80. Approved site maintenance measures and responsibilities will be detailed in the site management plan and include:
- Maintenance of grassed areas by brush cutter or mowing, and rehabilitation of any damaged areas;
 - Application of appropriate paint and rust protection and any repairs to launch structures, signage and access gates;
 - Maintenance of access track – rehabilitating eroded areas, removal of overgrowth etc.;
 - Trimming of vegetation (as approved in accordance with clause 17 of the Regulation).
81. Generally, it will be the responsibility of the Federation (or relevant Federation Club) after attaining consent from the Park Authority to maintain the hang gliding launch structures, signage and other hang gliding specific infrastructure. This will be in accordance with the site management plan.
82. Generally, it will be the responsibility of the Park Authority to maintain ancillary (park management) infrastructure such as grassed areas, access tracks, fences and gates. This will be in accordance with the site management plan.
83. Responsibility for site maintenance may vary between sites, as negotiated between the Federation Club and the Park Authority, and site maintenance arrangements will be detailed in the site management plan.

Alternative Usage of Hang Gliding Sites

84. When the site is in use by hang gliders and paragliders, pilots must act responsibly towards the viewing public and other park users to minimise their interference with the hang gliding site.
85. Alternative usage of the site must be subject to public safety considerations and sustainability of impacts to the site.

Keeping of records

86. Commercial operators are required to duly enter and keep in suitable books and registers to be kept for that purpose, true particulars and complete accounts relating to the licensed activity. Such books and registers shall be at all times open to inspection by NPWS. Records should include, but not be limited to:
 - Dates of flights;
 - Names and contact details of all persons participating in the activity;
 - Names of instructors;
 - Location of flights; and
 - Any incidents which occur in the course of such activity.
87. Commercial operators are required to provide an Activity Report on the use of the site to the Park Authority, at an appropriate interval (according to the level site use) as determined in the site management plan. Generally a month would be an appropriate interval. Activity Reports will include information on the following:
 - dates, location and number of flights;
 - names of clients, instructors and pilots (may only be necessary for commercial operations).
 - any activity inconsistent with the Plan of Management or Site Management Plan;
 - requirements for vegetation removal/trimming;
 - damage to infrastructure, including through vandalism; and
 - apparent environmental and ecological damage, including erosion or compaction, exposed roots, weed invasion, litter etc.
88. Reporting procedure for commercial operators will be consistent with the Commercial Recreation Activities policy.

89. Reporting on accidents will be done at the time of the accident or as near after as possible. Reporting on accidents will be in accordance with the HGFA Operations Manual, and finalised through the General Manager of the HGFA.

Fees

90. The following fee structure will apply to commercial hang gliding and paragliding activities:

- Licence application fee
- Annual Licence fee
- Per Client Fee
- Concessional fee for school groups

91. The fees will be consistent with the Commercial Recreational Activities policy.

Database

92. The database should include the following information:

- Site Name.
- Park Category, Region, Directorate.
- Coordinates, height of launch, wind direction.
- Type of consent (interim, permanent, covered in PoM).
- NPWS and Federation contact officers.
- Any further information specified in the site management plan.

Definitions

CASA refers to the Civil Aviation Safety Authority of Australia. CASA was established as an independent statutory authority by the *Civil Aviation Act 1988*. CASA's main function is to deliver aviation safety to the Australian public.

Federation means the Hang Gliding Federation of Australia (HGFA) and any other organisation/club insured by the HGFA.

Federation Club means any organisation that is financially covered by insurance by the Federation.

Hang glider means a foot launchable glider or paraglider having an empty weight not exceeding 70 kg. Hang gliders are separated into three Classes. Class 1 is a conventional hang glider. Class 2 is similar to Class 1 but has some structural differences (these classes are separated because of performance issues for competition). A paraglider is considered to be a Class 3 hang glider.

Hang gliding site means a site used for the purpose of hang gliding or paragliding, including the launch site and set-up area.

NPW Act means the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974*.

NPWS means the National Parks and Wildlife Service.

Park road roads reserved or dedicated as part of a park which are open to the public and are maintained by the NPWS

Public road roads excluded from the reservation area and controlled or vested in an authority other than the NPWS.

Management trail management roads which are vested in and maintained by the NPWS but are not available for use by the public

park for the purposes of this policy, means any area reserved under the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974*.

Park authority is in accordance with the *National Parks and Wildlife Regulation 2002*, with delegates specified in the Schedule NPW Regulation 2002.

Plan of management means a plan of management under Part 5 of the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974* for a park or reserve.

Regulation means the *National Parks and Wildlife Regulation 2002*.

REF means a Review of Environmental Factors developed by the NPWS as the established methodology for undertaking an assessment under part 5 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*.

Site Management Plan means a plan for the management of an individual on-park hang gliding site that has been developed between the Park Authority and the relevant Federation Club. The site management plan may impose restrictions or conditions upon the use of a particular authorised site.

Relevant legislation

Civil Aviation Act 1988

Civil Aviation Regulation 1988

Civil Aviation Order Part 95 Section 95.4 Issue 4 – Exemption from Provisions of the Civil Aviation Regulations 1988 – Hang Gliders

National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974

National Parks and Wildlife Regulation 2002

Relevant policies and other documents

Adventure Activities (5.9)

Commercial Recreation Activities (5.6)

Visitor Safety (5.11)

Contacts

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**NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service
Site Management Plan (SMP)
GUIDELINES**

Introduction

Site Management Plan (SMP) guidelines have been prepared to highlight the issues that require consideration for the management of each hang gliding site. It is intended that the Park Authority and the Federation voluntarily enter into an agreed SMP that indicates the requirements of each organisation for the long-term ecologically sustainable and safe use and management of hang gliding sites.

1. Site Description

A detailed description of the hang gliding site should be provided. This will be based on information assessed in the REF for the site (as outlined in the Hang Gliding Policy procedural guidelines), and will include:

- Latitude, longitude, UTM Grid Reference, elevation of launch, launch direction (and seasonal wind direction).
- Launch description – grass run, slot take-off, platform launch.
- Type of activity – recreational/commercial.
- Federation site rating (novice, intermediate, advanced)
- Number of years the site has been in use.
- Photos to indicate flight area, clean air and flight path.
- Description of surrounding park infrastructure – eg. lookouts, picnic areas, walkways etc.

Management Issues

2. Site Consent Conditions:

Document any site consent conditions that will be imposed by the Park Authority on the Federation for the use of the site. These may include (but are not limited to):

- hang gliders and paragliders are to obey lawful directions of Park Authority staff;
- Federation Clubs are to notify the Park Authority when they intend to use a site (where required);
- no modification of the environment, permanent or temporary will be permitted without Park Authority approval;
- operators are responsible for removing their rubbish and litter; and

- Park Authority site consent may be withdrawn if pilots do not conduct themselves in accordance with CASA's regulations and the Federation's code of conduct (HGFA Operations Manual).

The SMP should also outline the process that should be undertaken prior to hang gliding activities taking place at the site. The process would generally entail the pilots gaining consent from the Federation to use the site, and the Federation notifying the Park Authority and consenting land owners/managers prior to using the site (where required).

3. Unloading and Parking of Vehicles

The SMP should include the following considerations, and must be consistent with the plan of management:

- Unloading zones and parking space provisions – are they adequate to support the site based on average level of use.
- Is there a requirement for additional unloading zones or parking spaces, and if so, what provisions (if any) will be made by the Park Authority.

4. Access and related infrastructure

The SMP will include the following considerations:

- What vehicle access is provided to the site – eg. public roads, park roads, management trails – in accordance with the plan of management.
- What access is available from the unloading zone to the set-up area – is there an access trail in place, and if not, what provisions will be made by the Park Authority for establishing an access trail.
- Is a standardised gate provided on the access trail or before or on the launch site. If not, is a gate necessary to limit access to the site, or for safety or impact reasons. If a gate is necessary/practical, where will it be established, who will be responsible for providing it, and what cost sharing arrangements (if any) are agreed upon. The Park Authority may request that expenses incurred be paid for by the Federation Club on a cost recovery basis.
- What maintenance measures are required for the general upkeep of access tracks/roads and the access gate, to minimise environmental/structural damage and ensure visitor safety.

5. Launch Sites and Set-up Area

The SMP will include the following considerations:

- What are the dimensions of the launch site, and is the site appropriately defined. Are visible site boundaries and definition required to ensure visitor safety and to minimise interference with other park users.
- What structures are in place for launching – have they been certified as safe by an engineer, is there a maintenance schedule for the structure and what maintenance measures are required, what upgrade works are necessary and who will conduct them.
- If a grass run is in place, is it adequately maintained to ensure safety of launch, what measures are required to maintain the site at a safe level including mowing, clearing of vegetation etc.; is permission required from neighbouring landowners/managers for the clearing of vegetation; and is there confirmation of this arrangement.
- What potential environmental/structural impacts are there in relation to the use and maintenance of the launch site.

6. Landing and Pack-up Sites

The SMP will detail the following issues:

- Where are the precise locations of landing sites and emergency landing sites, what provisions are in place to notify all pilots of these locations prior to launch.
- What consent arrangements are in place for each landing site and emergency landing site. Has written evidence of the agreement between a landowner/managing authority and the Federation for approved landing and pack-up sites (and emergency sites) on their land been sighted by the Park Authority.
- What maintenance requirements are there for the landing and pack-up sites and emergency landing sites to ensure safety of these sites, and what arrangements are in place to carry out this maintenance (who is responsible, how often, is permission required etc.)

7. Site Capacity and Climatic Limitations

The SMP will include consideration of what site capacity and climatic limitations there are to ensure the safety of the pilots and the general public, including:

- Number of pilots permitted in the air at any one time.

- Number of participants permitted in the set-up area at any one time.
- Restrictions on the number of people (other than participants) allowed in the set-up area at any one time.
- Appropriate climatic/wind conditions for safe use, including wind direction and speed. Should seasonal limitations be placed on the use of the site due to climatic limitations.

8. Signage

Signage requirements for each site will be documented in the SMP, including:

- The number, type and location of signs required at each site for management and safety reasons
- Will the Federation be responsible for the design, construction and maintenance

9. Site Maintenance

Access trails, launch sites, landing sites and all related infrastructure must be maintained in an adequate condition to ensure the safety of the activity. Sharing responsibility for the maintenance of hang gliding specific infrastructure and ancillary infrastructure is outlined in the policy and procedural guidelines. The following considerations will be included in the SMP:

- Maintenance of grassed areas (including grass runs) – how will this be carried out (eg. brush cutter, mower) who will have responsibility for this maintenance activity (as well as permission arrangements with the Park Authority), and how often will it be required.
- Maintenance of launch structures, signage, access gates, fences and other structures – how will this be carried out (eg. rust protection, painting and any repairs), who has responsibility for this (as well as permission arrangements with the Park Authority, and how often).
- Maintenance of access tracks – what will be required (eg. rehabilitating eroded areas, removal of overgrowth etc.), who will be responsible (including gaining permission from the Park Authority), and how often.
- Trimming of vegetation – what will be required (eg. trimming foliage below launch site), who will be responsible, and how often.

10. Alternative Usage of Hang Gliding Sites

The SMP must identify what (if any) alternative uses are present at the site. Alternative usage of the site must be subject to public safety considerations and sustainability of impacts to the site. The following consideration will be included:

- Specify what alternative usage is permitted at the site (eg. picnic areas, lookouts etc.) based on public safety considerations and sustainability of impacts to the site.

11. Keeping of Records

Keeping of records will be in accordance with the policy and procedural guidelines. The SMP will identify an appropriate time interval for the provision of Activity Reports to the Park Authority.

12. Emergency procedures and reporting of accidents

An emergency procedure plan for the site will be included in the SMP. This will include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Location of emergency landing sites.
- Emergency contact numbers, including the Park Authority.
- Reporting requirements – what information is to be included, and when should it be completed.

13. Fees

The fee structure will be consistent with the policy, and the SMP should identify the fees that will be charged.

14. Measures to monitor and ameliorate impacts

The Park Authority is required in the policy to conduct an annual site inspection. The SMP should detail when this will take place, and any other necessary measures that will be undertaken to monitor and ameliorate negative impacts to the site that have not already been captured by the SMP.