

# The relationship between landholders and tour operators

An investigation of the areas adjoining  
the Gibb River Road in the North Kimberley

December 2004

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Issues in remote area tourism series:

Report 1:            Benefits and costs of tourism for remote communities: Case study for the Carpentaria Shire in north-west Queensland

Report 2:            The relationship between landholders and tour operators. An investigation of the areas adjoining the Gibb River Road in the North Kimberley

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### **Abbreviations and Acronyms**

CALM	Conservation and Land Management Western Australia
CSIRO	Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation
DOLA	Department of Land Administration Western Australia
DT	Department of Transport Western Australia
GRR	Gibb River Road
ILC	Indigenous Land Corporation
KDC	Kimberley Development Commission
KLC	Kimberley Land Council
KR	Kalumburu Road
KWA	Kimberley Wilderness Adventure (trading name for Wunan Foundation)
NK-LCDC	North Kimberley Land Conservation District Committee
NP	National Park
TS-CRC	Tropical Savannas Cooperative Research Centre
WATC	Western Australia Tourist Commission

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report describes the findings of a research project, which investigated the relationship between landholders along the Gibb River Road (GRR) in Kimberley, Western Australia, and tourism, with specific emphasis on land-based tour operators.

The research was undertaken to answer the question as to whether that relationship had deteriorated in the recent past to the effect that tour operators now have less access to land, sites and services, specifically on pastoral leasehold properties. A possible deterioration of the relationship had been identified in community consultations in the Kimberley, conducted during 2002 (Yuco, 2003).

The research was funded by the Tropical Savannas CRC and CSIRO Sustainable Ecosystems through the project *Community benefits from tourism*.

The methodology adopted for the research included:

- Literature search and review
- Data search and review
- Semi-structured landholder surveys, conducted face-to-face during May 2004
- Search and review of internet sites providing information on tours to the Gibb River Road and adjoining areas
- Survey of (land-based) tour operators, conducted via email during June 2004
- Compilation and analysis of results
- Consultation with government, non-governmental organisations, industry and individual stakeholders.

The report is structured into six sections. Section 1 provides an introduction to the research. It defines the hypothesis and guiding research questions. It also provides geographical context and information on the Gibb River and Kalumburu Roads. It describes relevant aspects

of the tenure system governing land use in the area.

Section 2 describes the research methodology in detail, with specific emphasis on the empirical components of the approach.

Section 3 describes the results of the tour operator survey, which was complemented by a review of tour operator websites. It reveals the extent to which tourist operators visit specific pastoral leases and conservation areas, what activities they offer for their clients and what services they provide and/or purchase (Table 3).

Key focus areas for tour visitation emerge. El Questro Station is the key destination and service centre along the eastern section of the Gibb River Road. Drysdale Station is the service centre along the Kalumburu Road for tours operating to the Mitchell River National Park—which is the key destination in the northern part of the study area. Along the central section of the Gibb River Road Mt Elizabeth Station is a destination in its own right as is Manning Gorge on Mt Barnett Station. Along the western section of the GRR there are the King Leopold Ranges and Winjana Gorge National Parks which offer multiple attractions (gorges, waterfalls) and basic facilities.

In addition, there is a multitude of small-scale tour destinations including stations, homesteads, non-government conservation areas and permanent camps on Aboriginal land, which provide essential elements of the North Kimberley tour product.

The response rate to the tour operator survey was low, with only eight from 35 businesses returning the questionnaires. Responding tour operators generally thought their relationship to landholders in the North Kimberley was good, based on mutual respect and trust. However, some tensions in relationships became evident as a result of the quest by tour operators to take clients to yet more remote and exclusive areas. Some respondents thought they should be given

more access to sites on pastoral leases and/or access through leases to adjoining areas. Resentment was expressed at the need to negotiate access to land with lessees and some operators admitted to using non-negotiated bush camps.

Section 4 provides a description of the tourism product from a landholder perspective (Table 7). Landholders include pastoral lessees, Aboriginal communities and state government. They provide, almost exclusively, the tourist services and facilities available in the region. They also manage the sites and vast savanna landscapes that tourists come to see.

Landholders cater to the tour as well as the self-drive market—the vast majority of visitors being self-drive tourists. The relationship with tour operators is seen as important and generally characterised as good. However, landholders expressed concern about the attitude and behaviour of a few operators.

Landholders have a range of concerns in relation to tourism—both self-drive and tour-based—ranging from the way in which increasing tourist demands may impact on leasehold renewal in the year 2015 to land management problems (litter, weeds, fire) to disruption of business and additional costs (needing to assist tourists, liability insurance, etc). Table 8 provides a summary.

A longitudinal comparison of the tourism product (1997–2004) reveals a high degree of continuity of provision of tourist facilities and services by pastoral lessees. In net terms, the research did not find deterioration in the relationship between pastoral lessees and tour operators or in the options, facilities and services available to the tour industry.

However, important qualitative changes have occurred. On some pastoral leases arrangements providing access to tour operators have discontinued these for various reasons, including change in ownership, re-focus on the pastoral enterprise and loss of facilities in flood

events. On the other hand, other pastoral lessees have started to diversify into tourism or diversified their operations or increased existing capacity. Notably, over the five-year period since 1999 an additional 90 beds in permanent safari tents have been provided at Imintji, Marunbabidi and Ungolan with significant Aboriginal involvement.

Section 5 substantiates a rejection of the research hypothesis and provides important qualifiers. It highlights that while the relationship between landholders and tour operators is generally good, there are tensions which stem from the different aspirations, motivations and responsibilities both parties have. It stresses the need for negotiated access solutions and improved mutual understanding.

The section offers discussion and interpretation of the information presented in the previous sections of the report and specifically identifies and reviews emerging opportunities, highlighting possibilities for new collaborative arrangements between tour operators and landholders on at least two Aboriginal-held pastoral leases.

Section 6 offers concluding comments.

The report includes many photographs taken by the research team during the field trip to the region in May 2004. The intention is to provide illustrations and visual context for the benefits of those readers who may not be familiar with the study region.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Research context

Across Australia's tropical savannas, tourism is an increasingly important source of income and employment for regional and remote communities. Tourism is seen to be complementary to the traditional primary industries such as grazing, mining and fishing (in coastal areas).

However, the benefits of tourism to the regional communities can be questionable if visitors spend little money while making heavy use of the region's natural resources, its infrastructure and community services. A recent case study for the Carpentaria Shire in north-west Queensland highlights this dilemma (Greiner et al., 2004) and concludes that tourism needs to be well planned and managed to ensure maximum benefits for host communities in savanna destinations.

The research presented here is funded by the Tropical Savannas Management Cooperative Research Centre (TS-CRC) and the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) Sustainable Ecosystems. It is part of a suite of research projects which seek to support communities, agencies and tourist bodies to promote, plan and manage tourism in a way that:

1. Provides necessary advantages for the people in savanna regions;
2. Promotes ecologically sustainable development; and
3. Complements broader regional development strategies and natural resource planning and management.

This publication reports on an investigation into the relationship between landholders and tourism in parts of Western Australia's Kimberley region.

The geographical focus was the landholdings adjacent to the Gibb River Road and also—but with lesser emphasis—the Kalumbaru Road. The thematic question was on the relationship between landholders and tour operators.

### 1.2 Hypothesis and research questions

A research hypothesis was developed based on concerns by the tourist industry—corroborated by anecdotal evidence gathered in community consultations (Yuco, 2003)—that the relationship between landholders and tourism, in particular land-based tour operators, may have deteriorated in recent years.

The research hypothesis thus stipulated that across the North Kimberley there had been a net decline of access by tour operators to services and sites on landholdings. To test the hypothesis, the investigation aimed to answer the following research question: Has the relationship between the landholders and tour operators changed in recent years? If so, how are changes manifest and what are the reasons?

### 1.3 The study area

The Kimberley region forms the western part of Australia's tropical savannah landscape. It covers an area of approximately 424,000 km<sup>2</sup>. Administratively, it is organised in four local government areas, namely the Shires of Broome, Derby–West Kimberley, Halls Creek and Wyndham–East Kimberley.

The only sealed road traversing the Kimberley is the Great Northern Highway. It skirts the Kimberley, running south from Wyndham to Halls Creek and then west through Fitzroy Crossing and past Derby to Roebuck near Broome before heading south out of the region.

The Gibb River Road (GRR) is an unsealed road which traverses the Kimberley in an east-west direction. It spans some 650 km, from outside Derby to the Great Northern Highway between Wyndham and Kununurra.



**Plate 1. GRR with Cockburn Range**



**Plate 2. Traffic on the GRR: a puff of dust**



**Plate 3. KR, traversing Doongan Station**

‘The Gibb’, as the road is colloquially referred to, was constructed in the 1950s and 60s to facilitate transport of cattle from North Kimberley stations to the abattoirs and ports of Derby, Wyndham and Broome. It is the main arterial road servicing the North Kimberley.

At 400 km from Derby and 250 km from Kununurra, the Kalumburu Road (KR) branches off to the north. It extends for 270 km past Kalumburu to the northern tip of the Kimberley.

There are four major groups of road users:

1. Residents from the stations, communities, and townships;
2. External businesses servicing the residential population and businesses, specifically cattle transport;
3. Service providers from WA state agencies—including telecommunications, health, and others—and Shires;
4. Visitors, local, interstate and international tourists and tour operators.

The Gibb River and Kalumburu Roads provide access to the tourist attractions of the North Kimberley. Geological formations such as Mitchell Falls and Windjana Gorge are two of the main natural features of interest. Aboriginal culture, in particular rock-paintings, is of interest to many visitors. The region’s diverse birdlife, fishing opportunities and scenery add to the tourist interest of the area.

The reputation of the Gibb River Road is as one of the few remaining “great dirt roads” in Australia. It is advertised as an outback experience where the adventure involved in reaching the places is just as important as the destination. Its reputation is inextricably linked to that of the Kimberley as a ‘wild’ and ‘frontier’ place.

Figure 1 is an example of a map provided for the Kimberley visitors, showing the Gibb River and Kalumburu Roads and major tourist attractions.



**Figure 1. Tourist map of the Kimberley**

(Source: <http://www.kimberleywild.com/map.html>)

There are multiple references to areas within the Kimberley and various interpretations of what ‘east’, ‘north’ and ‘west’ Kimberley constitutes.

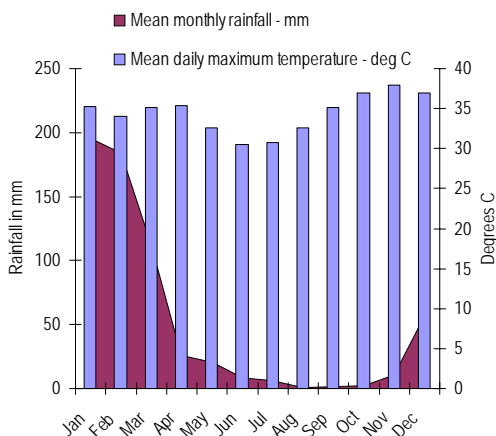
For the purpose of this report, areas accessed by the Gibb River and Kalumburu Roads are referred to as “North Kimberley”. The area between the turn-off of the GRR from the Kununurra-to-Wyndham road to the intersection with the KR is referred to as the ‘eastern section’ of the GRR, and the remainder as ‘western section’.

The northern perimeter of the study area stretches as far as Theda Station and Mitchell River National Park. It does not extend to Kalumburu itself or the coastal areas beyond.

#### 1.4 Climatic conditions

The climate in the Kimberley is tropical monsoonal. There is a dry season from May to October and a wet season from November to April. In a typical wet season, Derby receives 622 millimetres of rain (Figure 2).

The climate has profound impacts on life and commerce. In particular, it dictates seasonality in tourism activity as tourism is a dry-season industry. The combination of high temperatures and high humidity during the wet are unpleasant, specifically to those not used to tropical conditions. Furthermore, road access is unpredictable as roads may be impassable due to flooding. The Great Northern (from Wyndham to Broome) and Victoria (from Kununurra to Katherine) Highways may be closed for extended periods of time.



**Figure 2. Mean rainfall and temperature for Derby**

(source: Australian Government Bureau of Meteorology; [http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/averages/tables/cw\\_003032.shtml](http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/averages/tables/cw_003032.shtml))

The GRR and KR are closed to all non-residential traffic during the wet season. Most tourist operations in the North Kimberley cease at the end of October and recommence after the wet.

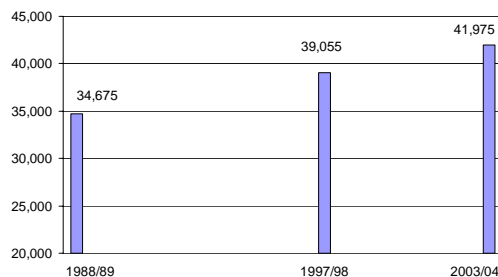
**1.5 Traffic and road conditions**

Road transport is the main mode of transport inside the North Kimberley area. Annual traffic counts are available for some years. The three observations between 1988 and 2004 (Figure 3) indicate a gradual increase in traffic over that period of time to a current traffic volume of about 42,000 vehicles per year.

According to the *North Kimberley Road Users Study* in 1999, average annual daily traffic for the Gibb River Road showed a 13% increase over the 11-year period from 1988–89 to 1997–98 (Kimberley Development Commission (KDC) and Department of Transport (DT), 1999). Since then the annual growth of traffic is estimated to be 2.3% (Main Roads WA, 2004).

The reason for infrequent annual data relates to the reliability of counting equipment, which is frequently vandalised. The sporadic nature of the observations does not necessarily provide an accurate reflection of traffic trends. Anecdotal

evidence suggests that traffic may now only just be reaching levels observed during 1998–99 and 1999–2000.



**Figure 3. Traffic on the Gibb River Road (number of vehicles per year) 1988 - 2004**

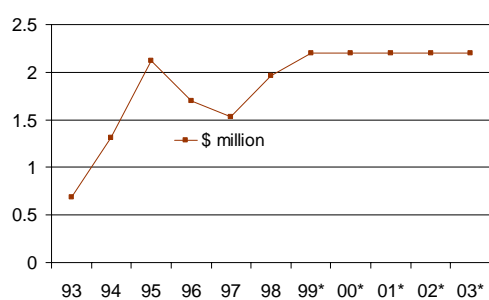
(source: KCD and DT, 1991; Main Roads WA, 2004)

The *North Kimberley Road Users Study* (KDC and DT, 1999) indicates that there is more traffic on the western (Derby) end of the road compared to the eastern (Kununurra/Wyndham) end.

It establishes a ratio of traffic volume for the Great Northern Highway and Gibb River Road traffic of 10:3, meaning that for every 10 vehicles travelling the main highway three travel the Gibb River Road.

Main Roads WA spends, on average, more than \$2 million per year to improve and maintain the GRR. Figure 4 presents the estimated annual expenses from 1993 to 2003. A total of \$6.26 million and \$4.76 million were spent on road improvements and maintenance, respectively, between 1999 and 2003 (Main Roads WA, 2004).

Major improvements performed included improving safety of some critical sections of the road and improved drainage allowing extended use of the road in the wet season. During 2004 dry season, the road was graded five to six times.



**Figure 4. Annual funding (\$million) for upgrade and maintenance of the Gibb River Road, 1993 - 2003**

(source: KCD and DT, 1999; Main Roads, 2004;  
\*based on of 5-year average spending)



**Plate 4. Grading of the GRR in progress**

An average of 8.6 accidents a year was reported over the period 1988 to 1998 (Main Roads WA, 2004). The number of accidents reported between 1999 and 2003 was 48, an average of 9.6 accidents per annum. Anecdotal evidence provided by landholders suggests that the number of accidents may be much higher than the official numbers indicate.

Air transport is important for the connection of the region to the other parts of Australia. Inside the North Kimberley itself, commercial air transport is limited to weekly mail-plane and scenic tourist flights. There is an increasing number of tourists who tour the region by airplane. Some stations specifically cater to the growing market—which is not considered here.

## 1.6 Institutions governing land use

All land use activities in the Kimberley are governed by legislation that defines the property rights of people in relation to access to and use and commercialisation of land and other natural resources. An appreciation of property rights is fundamental to understanding tourism as part of the regional fabric. Key legislation, acts and policies include state pastoral leasehold conditions, state and commonwealth native title, conservation and land management legislation (Productivity Commission, 2002).

Across most of northern Australia, pastoral lease is the form of land tenure governing pastoral land use. Stocking conditions prescribe the level and type of stock that must be grazed on the land. An annual rent is payable to the state.

In Western Australia the Land Administration Act 1997 provides the relevant land management legislation. The Pastoral Lands Board makes determinations in relation to minimum and maximum numbers and the distribution of stock to be carried on a pastoral lease. It is a requirement for pastoral lessees to comply with these determinations. Permits can be applied for and granted for a range of specified uses not within the existing terms of a lease. Pastoral lessees can operate tourist enterprises after obtaining the relevant diversification permit. Continued operation is subject to meeting permit conditions.

Also in Western Australia, lease renewal provisions include clauses that may allow part or all of an expiring term lease to be resumed for public purposes. Renewal of leases—and possible exclusions—will next happen in 2015.

Detailed information is available on the State Law Publisher website <[www.dpi.wa.gov.au/pastoral](http://www.dpi.wa.gov.au/pastoral)>.

Legislative requirements governing tourism include state Acts including the Caravan and

Camping Act, Aboriginal Heritage Act and others <[www.slp.wa.gov.au](http://www.slp.wa.gov.au)>.

In areas where Native Title has been granted, both landholders and tourist operators are required to consult and negotiate with Traditional Owners if they want to expand tourism operations.

## **1.7 Report structure**

This report is organised into six sections.

Section 2 describes the methods used for the collection of the data presented in this report.

Sections 3 and 4 provide, respectively, tour operator and landholder perspectives on tourism in the North Kimberley.

Section 5 provides discussion of data presented. It reviews the findings in the context of the research hypothesis.

Section 6 offers conclusions and summarises the key lessons from the research. It raises further important questions which warrant future investigation.

The reader is advised that large figures, maps and tables are provided at the end of each section to minimise interference with the optical format of the report.

## 2 METHODOLOGY AND DATA COLLECTION

This study was undertaken between May and September 2004. It commenced with a desk-top collection of information available on various socio-economic aspects of the North Kimberley, in particular on tourism and landholding arrangements.

During May 2004 the researchers conducted semi-structured interviews with landholders. During June 2004, a survey of tour operators to the region was conducted via email-questionnaire. Key methodological aspects of both surveys are summarised in Table 1.

Survey results were digitised, analysed and interpreted and summarised into this report.

### 2.1 Tour operator survey

A detailed internet search identified 35 tour companies, which conduct tours along the Gibb River Road and in the North Kimberley region. All of those companies were invited by telephone and email to participate in the survey.

Company offices were initially contacted by phone and the background and the purpose of the study were explained to the operator representative. A survey questionnaire was then e-mailed to all tour companies.

The listing of tour companies contacted for the survey is presented in [Appendix 1](#).

Eight of the 35 tour companies returned completed survey forms, resulting in a response rate of 23%. Efforts were made to boost the response rate—through follow-up by phone and email. A detailed web-search was conducted of the internet sites of those operators who did not respond to the survey (Figure 5).

While the rate of reply is low, it is twice as high as the return rate obtained for the 1999 tour operators' survey conducted by the Kimberley Development Commission and the Department of Transport.

### 2.2 Landholder survey

During 18–28 May 2004, the research team visited the case study area and spoke to a majority of landholders along the Gibb River and Kalumburu Roads. The top end of the Kalumburu Road was not open for general traffic and therefore prevented visits to Carson River Station, Mitchell Plateau and Kalumburu. Additional landholders were contacted afterwards by email and telephone.

A large number of Kimberley pastoral leases are held in absentee ownership and managed by employees. The views expressed by the managers who live on the land were taken to represent the views of the lessees.

The list of stations and the persons interviewed for the purpose of the landholder survey is presented in [Appendix 2](#).

The findings of this investigation are contrasted with a review of the tourist product conducted in 1997 by Pam Masters. This *Travellers Guide—Gibb River and Kalumburu Roads* still provides the most comprehensive and detailed guide to the tourist product of the North Kimberley.

A review was also conducted of minutes of the Northern Kimberley Land Conservation District Committee meetings (NK-LCDC) between 1996 and 2004.



**Plate 5. Conducting an interview**

(Silva Larson (left) interviewing Annabelle Abbott, Mt Hart)

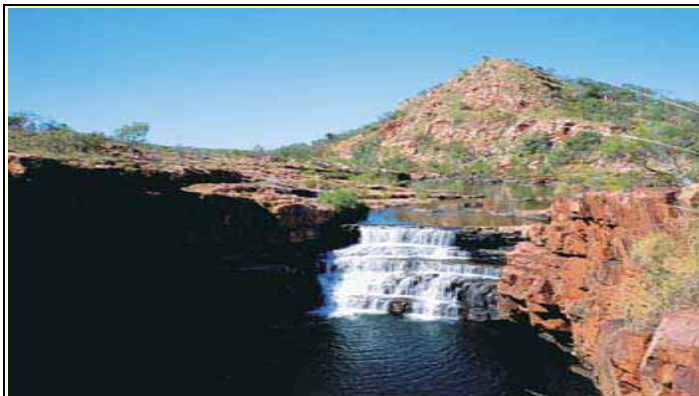
### 2.3 Stakeholder consultation

A consultative approach was adopted for gleaning additional insights from other tourism stakeholders in the study area. The stakeholders included state government departments and

agencies, non-governmental organisations and members of the community who the team was referred to because of their relevant knowledge. A listing of the stakeholders consulted during the investigation is presented in [Appendix 3](#).

**Table 1. Summary description of surveys conducted**

Target	Landholders	Tour operators
Time conducted	May 18–28, 2004	June 7–23, 2004
Sample size	18 station managers / owner representatives	35 tour operating companies
Response rate	100%	23%
Scope	Relationship with Tour Operators; Product offered; Trends, observations, issues	Relationship with landholders and CALM; Tourist product; Trends, observations, issues
Design and collection method	Semi-structured Face-to-face interviews	E-mail questionnaire containing rating questions and open questions; Telephone conversation
Stratification criteria	All landholders or their representative employees	All tour operators or their representatives
Duration	~45 minutes	~10 minutes followed by ~15minutes



**Gibb River Road Gorges**

The Gibb River Road is a famous old Kimberley cattle route, renowned today as the access road to many stunning hidden gorges and waterholes. Bell Gorge, pictured here, is approximately 500 km inland from Broome and one of the many beautiful river gorges sought after by nature lovers. Experience Bell Gorge and the Gibb River Road Gorges on tours listed below:

**Figure 5. Example of advertisement of tours to the Gibb River Road on the internet**

### 3 TOUR OPERATOR PERSPECTIVE

#### 3.1 Tour businesses

The first tour operations along the Gibb River Road appear to have started in early to mid 1980s.

A total of 35 tour operators were identified as providing tours in the North Kimberley area today. Table 2 shows (a) where the tour businesses are based and (b) how they market their product.

**Table 2. Kimberley tour operators; break-down by location of head office and main product offered**

a) Tour operators by State

State	No	%
WA	18	52
NT	5	14
VIC	5	14
QLD	4	11
NSW	2	6
SA	1	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>100</b>

b) Tour operators by main product category

Product	No	%
Adventure	23	65.6
Wildlife	3	8.6
Youth	3	8.6
Tag-along	2	5.7
Cultural	2	5.7
Walking	1	2.9
Cycling	1	2.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>100</b>

Eight operators completed the survey. Although small, the survey sample is reasonably representative of the tour market, capturing both local and national operators, small and large operators, as well as a number of different tour concepts (adventure, safari, tag-along, cycling, bushwalking, birdwatching, youth).

The market size of the operators who participated in the survey varies substantially. One respondent operator runs one tour with less than 10 guests every two years. Another respondent takes more than 4000 visitors to the North Kimberley every year.



**Plate 6. Interstate tour bus operating to the Kimberley**



**Plate 7. Tour operator vehicle and tour guides (GBB and KR junction)**



**Plate 8. Unmarked tour bus, Mt Elizabeth Station**

For those operators who did not respond, a detailed review of the information contained on company websites and in print brochures was conducted.

### 3.2 North Kimberley tour product

Table 3 (at the end of this section) summarises the tour products which operators offer their clients in the study area. It details how many tours use what facilities and services tours where and undertake what activities.

In the eastern section of the study area, El Questro Station emerges as the principal tour destination with two-thirds of all tour operators visiting. Most operators camp there—either in the main camping ground or in negotiated bush camps. Some also use the cabins, rooms and fixed tent accommodation. All offer land-based tours, mostly conducted by themselves or in some cases run by El Questro. The majority of survey respondents indicated that they use the restaurant facilities and some tours also refuel there. The other stations along the eastern section of the GRR receive visitation by very few tours.

Mitchell River National Park is the key destination in the northern section of the study area and is visited by half the tour operators. All offer tours of the area and a majority of itineraries include scenic flights. All visitors on the tours camp out. Drysdale River Station is an important stop-over point for tour operators on the way to the Mitchell Plateau. It features as an overnight stop (using either the facilities provided at the homestead or camping at Miners Pool) and most responding tour operators indicated that they purchase fuel at Drysdale and use the restaurant. Few operators visit any other locations in the area or include Kalumburu in their itineraries.

The western section of the study area has a more diversified tour product. There are several key destinations, which include Manning Gorge at Mount Barnett Station, Bell Gorge and Silent

Grove in the King Leopold Ranges Conservation Park and Windjana Gorge National Park.

The majority of tours to those national parks camp there. However, many tours also visit stations along the western GRR. Mt Elizabeth and Mornington stations and Mt Hart conservation area have camp and/or accommodation facilities and the majority of respondents also purchase meals there. A small number of tours (only one or two of the respondents) also visit Beverley Springs Station and Birdwood Downs.

Tours refuel at Imintji Store and/or Mt Barnett Roadhouse.

Table 3 reveals a desire by many tour operators not to be using the main campsites provided by the landholders (CALM or pastoral lessees) at the various locations. Many have negotiated bush camps, which they build and operate themselves. Among the responding tour businesses there is self-reporting of use of unlicensed bush camps in various locations, including within national parks and on stations.

### 3.3 Tour operators perspective of pastoral lessees

One part of the tour operator survey was dedicated to exploring the relationship between tour operators and landholders, specifically pastoral lessees.

The majority of respondents characterise their relationship with pastoral lessees along the GRR and KR as very good to excellent. They describe the relationships as being based on trust, understanding of issues and patience.

Tour operators rely heavily on access to sites on pastoral leases and on the facilities and services that pastoral lessees provide. The extent of that association can be described, on the basis of the data shown in Table 3, as ‘major’ for El Questro, Drysdale River and Mt Barnett stations, ‘important’ for Mt Elizabeth and

Mornington Stations and Mt Hart, and ‘relevant to some’ for Beverley Springs, Birdwood Downs, Ellenbrae and Home Valley Stations.

Asked about the continuity of tour access to land and sites on pastoral leases along the GRR and in North Kimberley, most respondents indicated that in general they had not experienced a decline in the options available to them.

One operator, however, rated as significant to his business the loss of access to a camp site, which the company had established and operated, and significant rock art sites on one station. This development is the consequence of the sale of the pastoral lease on Theda Station in 1999.

Several respondents noted that some pastoral lessees had removed signage and general access to gorges, but tour access could still be negotiated. The key example is Adcock Gorge on Mt House Station.

Respondents also noted the loss of facilities at Jack’s Waterhole (Durack River Station) due to a severe flooding event in 2001. There is however evidence that the area that used to be known as Jack’s Waterhole is still being utilized by tours (Table 3).

### **3.4 Observations by tour operators in relation to the GRR**

Respondents noted a significant improvement of the GRR road surface through increased frequency of grading and sealing in some places.

Respondents reported an increase in traffic on the road, which was attributed to an increasing number of self-drive tourists. That traffic increase was of concern to operators from a perspective of road safety as many tourists “do not know how to handle the conditions”.

There was little concern from respondents that increased traffic might reflect adversely on the

‘wilderness’ image of the Kimberley that they wanted to portray to their customers.

However, the increase in the self-drive tourism was seen to constitute a major issue at sites, which were becoming “overcrowded”. Self-drive tourists were also seen as competing for accommodation facilities.

Self-drive tourists, specifically ‘free campers’, are regarded by respondents as major offenders in terms of littering.

The relationships among various tour operators were described as generally good to excellent. However, some friction was noted between local and large national operators. Specifically, local and long-standing operators perceive a lack of knowledge of the area by some guides employed by large interstate companies and perceive that some tour vehicles are ill-prepared for the conditions in the Kimberley.

### **3.5 Tour operator suggestions for changes to the tourist product**

Respondents identified a series of possible improvement to the facilities and services in the North Kimberley. The following provides a listing of items identified (in no particular order).

- All-weather road surface
- Improved directional and interpretive signage
- An Aboriginal art interpretation centre (similar to the one in the Pilbara)
- More accommodation of high standard
- Accommodation other than camping at King Edward River and on the Mitchell Plateau
- More and better toilets and showers
- Camp sites at remote and peaceful places
- Better/more fuel stations and food outlets
- More parking bays at popular sites

- Rubbish bins or rubbish collection points and toilet facilities at the entrance to the gorges.

Respondents provided additional suggestions as to what could be done to improve the North Kimberley tourist product provided by tours. The following suggestions were made (in no particular order).

- More access provided by pastoral lessees to 'off-the-beaten-track' attractions
- Access allowed by pastoral lessees through stations to adjoining conservation areas and National Parks
- CALM opening more areas for visitation by tours
- Developing industry processes for access negotiation with Traditional Owners
- Collaboration with Traditional Owners in development of Aboriginal guided tours.

One respondent expressed the opinion that tour operators should be able to access land without consent by landholders or land owners.

### **3.6 Potential for tour growth and challenges**

On a scale from one to five, most respondents rated the growth potential for tours along the GRR as high to very high. They based this assessment on an observed increase in the number of inquiries and bookings over recent years.

The following limiting factors for growth and challenges for managing change in the North Kimberley were identified.

- Aggressive marketing of the Kimberley by the WA Tourism Commission and others, resulting in increased visitation, which in turn causes a change of the nature of the destination

- Lack of integrated planning and policy for the region, resulting *inter alia* in a lack of adequate security for tour/tourist access
- Landholders (pastoral lessees, Traditional Owners, CALM) denying/restricting access to sites of natural beauty and cultural interest
- Increase in competition in tour industry
- Visitor management (litter, human waste) in context of increasing visitation
- Availability and pricing of accommodation and other tourist facilities/services.

Overall, access to sites was seen as the key determining factor of tour/tourism growth. There was a perception that additional sites/areas needed to be opened up in the North Kimberley to accommodate for growth in the tour industry.

**Table 3. Extent of utilisation by tour operators of sites, facilities and services along Gibb River and Kalumburu Roads**

(each ‘✓’ indicates one tour operator visiting the site)

Eastern GRR	Cabins/ rooms	Main campsite	Negotiated bush-camp	Unlicensed bush-camp	Meals	Fuel	Tours organised by tour operator	Tours organised by property	Scenic flights	Other activities
El Questro (incl. Emma Gorge)	✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓		✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓	✓	Fishing
Home Valley	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓✓			
Jacks Waterhole-Durack		✓					✓			
Pentecost Downs										
Ellenbrae	✓✓	✓	✓		✓		✓			
Kalumburu Rd / Mitchell Plateau	Cabins/ rooms	Main campsite	Negotiated bush-camp	Unlicensed bush-camp	Meals	Fuel	Tours organised by tour operator	Tours organised by property	Scenic flights	Other activities
Drysdale (Miners Pool)	✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓		✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓		✓	
Doongan										
Theda										
Marunbabidi	✓	✓			✓		✓			
Mitchell Plateau NP		✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓	✓	✓		✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓		✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓	
Ungolan	✓	✓			✓		✓		✓	
Carson River										
Kalumburu Community		✓	✓✓			✓	✓	✓		Fishing
Drysdale River NP				✓			✓			
Western GRR	Cabins/ rooms	Main campsite	Negotiated bush-camp	Unlicensed bush-camp	Meals	Fuel	Tours organised by tour operator	Tours organised by property	Scenic flights	Other activities
Gibb River										
Mt Elisabeth	✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓	✓✓✓✓✓		✓✓✓	✓✓✓		
Galvin's Gorge			✓✓				✓✓✓✓✓			
Mt Barnett (Manning Gorge)		✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓		✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓	✓		Provisions
Beverley Springs	✓✓	✓	✓		✓✓		✓			
Walcott Inlet		✓	✓				✓			
Mt House (Adcock Gorge/ Moll Gorge)			✓	✓			✓✓			
Mornington	✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓✓✓✓✓		✓✓✓	✓✓		Canoeing✓✓
Imintji	✓	✓			✓✓	✓✓✓	✓			Provisions
King Leopold Ranges (Bell, Silent Grove)		✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓	✓	✓		✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓	✓		Bushwalking
Mt Hart	✓✓✓✓✓✓			✓	✓✓✓✓✓		✓✓✓			
Napier Downs										
Kimberley Downs										
Winjana Gorge NP		✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓		✓		✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓		
Meda (May River)		✓✓✓✓✓					✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓✓			
Birdwood Downs	✓	✓	✓		✓					
Mowanjun Community							✓			
Yeeda										
Lennard River Gorge			✓				✓			
Barnett River Gorge		✓					✓			

✓ survey result  
 ☑ internet search result

## 4 LANDHOLDER PERSPECTIVE OF TOURISM

### 4.1 Land-use system

The land in the North Kimberley is almost exclusively Crown Land. There are three distinct types of landholders: pastoral lessees, traditional owners and state government (through CALM). A majority of government-managed land is used for conservation, through declared National or Conservation Parks. Some is used for defence. There is also unallocated Crown Land.

Figure 6 (at the end of this section) provides a land use map of the region.

Table 4 provides a listing of land holdings in the region with land uses and size.

Pastoral leases in the North Kimberley are large, averaging over 300,000 hectares. Most stations encompass areas of natural beauty or cultural heritage and are therefore of (potential) interest to tour operators and self-drive tourists.

The pastoral stations are operated by one of the following groups:

- Non-indigenous owner operated
- Manager operated for absentee owner (a majority of the North Kimberley pastoral leases are in the absentee ownership)
- Indigenous owned (and operated)

As outlined in Section 1.6, the WA Land Administration Act 1997 provides the relevant land management legislation. Pastoral lessees can operate tourist enterprises after obtaining the relevant diversification permit.

**Table 4. North Kimberley land holdings**

Note: Based on data from Socio-economic Profile of the Natural Resource Based Industries in the East Kimberley (CSIRO, 2001) and Kimberley Pastoral and General Land Use Map (Department of Agriculture, 2001)

Land / Station	Land use	Area Ha
El Questro	T/P	274,149
Home Valley	P/AL	247,288
Forest Aboriginal Reserve	AL	
Oombulgurri		
Durack River	P/AL	380,183
Pentecost Downs	P/AL	274,751
Ellenbrae	P/T	381,288
Drysdale River	P/T	271,400
Doongan	P/T	309,182
Theda	P/T	303,107
Drysdale NP	C	435,900
Prince Regent Reserve/ Mitchell Plateau NP	C/T	2,716,400
Mitchell Plateau	UCL	
Carson River	AL	307,701
Cape Londonderry	UCL	
Gibb River	P/AL	380,433
Mt Elizabeth	P/T	196,723
Mt Barnett	P/AL	125,303
Beverley Springs	P/T	297,903
Chamley River	C	35,600
Pantijan	P/AL	174,400
Kunmunya	AL	500,000
Mt House	P	371,017
Glenroy	P	128,800
Mornington	P/T	312,319
Mt Hart	R	368,800
Napier Downs	P	403,900
Kimberley Downs	P	239,600
Meda	P	369,514
Yampi Training Area	DEF	500,000
Mowanjun	AL	53,200

P = pastoral  
T = tourism  
DEF = defence  
AL = Aboriginal land  
C = conservation  
UCL = unallocated Crown Land

## 4.2 Tourist facilities and services

Table 7 (at the end of this Section) profiles the tourist facilities and services offered by landholders along the Gibb River and Kalumburu Roads at the time of this investigation (May 2004). Facilities and services for tourists and tour operators are provided at 18 points along the Gibb and Kalumburu Roads.

### Station-based tourism

Approximately half of the stations in the case study region have diversified into tourism.

The flagship station in the region is El Questro Station, right at the eastern end of the GRR. It is a highly sophisticated tourist business. There are two principal tourist nodes on the station, the ‘Township’ and Emma Gorge. Accommodation ranges from camping facilities to permanent tents and five-star accommodation in the homestead. It features restaurants and shops. Fuel can be purchased. And a diversity of tours is on offer. A daily visitor charge applies.

One other station that classifies as a destination in its own right is Mt Elizabeth (340km from Derby). It offers camping and rooms as well as meals and safari (guided natural and cultural history) tours. The facilities have gradually grown to their current extent.

Drysdale River Station (60km on KR from GRR junction) provides a service hub and gateway for travellers to the Mitchell Plateau. It offers camping, cabin and homestead stays, meals, scenic flights to the Mitchell Plateau and other areas, fuel and other supplies, and basic repairs. Its growth has been steady and demand driven.

Other stations that are offering camping, station-based accommodation and meals, but operate at smaller scale and with a lesser focus on income from tourism, include Beverley Springs Station and Birdwood Downs. Table 3 provides the detail.

On Home Valley and Ellenbrae Stations there are tourist businesses—operated by a sub-lessee or caretaker, respectively—which are separate from the grazing side of the stations.

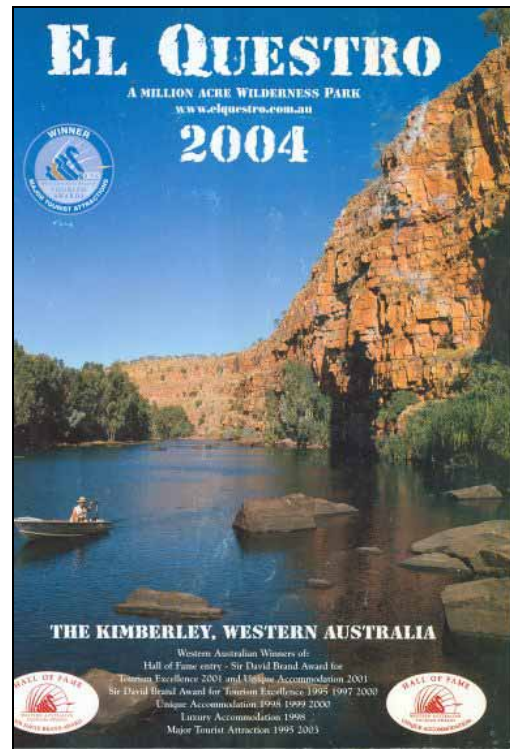


Plate 9. El Questro 2004 tourist brochure



Plate 10. Pat and Peter Lacey (Mt Elizabeth station)



Plate 11. Drysdale turn-off sign



Plate 12. Imintji store



Plate 13. Permanent camp at Imintji



Plate 14. Mornington turn-off sign

### Aboriginal-owned stations

The only Aboriginal communities directly involved in tourism are Mowanjum and Kalumburu. They operate an arts centre and accommodation facilities, respectively.

Several communities, specifically those at Mount Barnett, Imintji, Marunbabidi, Kandiwal and Home Valley, receive indirect income from tourism by sub-leasing infrastructure to non-community entrepreneurs for tourism purposes.

Aspirations for tourism involvement by the community are particularly strong at the Gibb River Station. At the time of visitation by the research team (May 2004) a petrol pump had just been installed to enable fuel sale to tourists. The community sees this as a starting point for involvement in tourism with the purpose of self-generating income and employment. There are plans for a gradual increase in the range of services provided to the travelling public, including purpose-built tourist accommodation, station tours and supply of fresh produce from market gardens.

### National and conservation parks and reserves managed by CALM and private non-profit conservation organisations

National parks provide many destinations in the along the western section of the GRR and along the Kimberley coastline. National parks are very popular with the tourists and typically present focal attractions. Facilities provided include camp sites at Mitchell River, King Leopold Ranges (at Bell Gorge and Silent Grove) and Windjana Gorge.

Mount Hart (turnoff 200 km from Derby +50 km) caters to the top-end traveller and fly-tourism market. It features homestead-based accommodation and gourmet cuisine. The business consists of a former station homestead, landing strip and some adjacent land. The former Mount Hart Station has been integrated into conservation estate as a conservation park.

Mornington Station (turnoff 240km from Derby +95km) is owned and operated by the Australian Wildlife Conservancy (AWC). A former station, it is now called a wildlife sanctuary. It features nature-based and adventure tourism and offers camping and permanent camps, meals and tours.

#### Tourist capacity

Total accommodation supply of the North Kimberley was estimated in 1999 (*The North Kimberley Road Users Study*, KDC and DT). ‘Vehicle per day carrying capacity’ was extrapolated from the accommodation supply based on a ratio of one vehicle per camp-site and two beds per vehicle, as follows.

- Gibb River Road, including Windjana Gorge camp site: 360 campsites and 220 beds (150 of which on El Questro Station), total estimated capacity of 470 vehicles per day
- Kalumburu Road: 90 campsites and 40 beds, total estimated capacity of 110 vehicles per day
- Mitchell Plateau Road: 45 campsites, total estimated capacity of 45 vehicles per day
- Tablelands Track (Mornington Station): 25 campsites and 25 beds, total estimated capacity of 50 vehicles per day

The total North Kimberley capacity was therefore estimated at 675 vehicles along the road at any given point in time (KDC and DT, 1999).

In addition to these nominated and managed areas, there are some 20 popular informal ‘bush’ camping sites along the Gibb River and Kalumburu Roads. The total capacity of those sites was not estimated (KDC and DT, 1999).



**Plate 15. Ellenbrae Station turn-off sign**



**Plate 16. Home Valley turn-off sign**



**Plate 17. Beverly Springs Station turn-off sign**



**Plate 18. ‘Savannah Huts’, Birdwood Downs**

### 4.3 Changes to tourist facilities and services during past seven years

Table 5 provides a comparison between the present state of involvement in tourism by stations—as elicited by this study—and the situation in 1997 (Masters, 1997 and Derby Visitor Centre, 2004). The table demonstrates (1) the large extent to which landholders are involved in tourism and (2) a large degree of continuity of tourist operations in the North Kimberley.

**Table 5. Involvement of stations in tourism, comparison between 1997 and 2004**

Note: ✓ indicates principal involvement in tourism. 0 indicates tourist access allowed but no tourist product provided

Name of the Land / Station	1997	2004
<b>Eastern GRR</b>		
El Questro (incl. Emma Gorge)	✓	✓
Home Valley	✓	✓
Durack (Jacks Waterhole)	✓	
Pentecost Downs		
Ellenbrae	✓	✓
<b>Kalumburu / Michael Plateau</b>		
Drysdale (Miners Pool)	✓	✓
Doongan		
Theda		
Marunbabidi		✓
Mitchell Plateau		✓
Carson River		
Kalumburu Community	✓	✓
<b>Western GRR</b>		
Gibb River		
Mt Elisabeth	✓	✓
Mt Barnett (Manning Gorge)	✓	✓
Beverley Springs	✓	✓
Walcott Inlet	✓	✓
Mt House (Adcock Gorge)	✓	
Mornington	✓	✓
Imintji	✓	✓
King Leopold Ranges NP (Bell Gorge, Silent Grove)	✓	✓
Mt Hart	✓	✓
Napier Downs		
Kimberley Downs		
Winjana Gorge NP	✓	✓
Meda (May River)		0
Birdwood Downs		✓
Mowanjun Community		✓
Yeeda		0

However, there have been some notable changes in involvement by individual stations. Specifically, two stations are no longer providing tourist services.

Jacks Waterhole on Durack River Station used to be a key camping site and tourist attraction on the Eastern Gibb. Since its destruction by floods in 2000 the facilities have not been re-built and no services are offered today. However, some tour operators still visit the site (Table 3).

Mt House Station no longer provides general access and services to tourists or tour operators. Based on business considerations (specifically returns on time and capital investment, competing demands for limited staff resources) the pastoral lessee has decided to re-focus effort on the cattle enterprise. Some attractions on Mount House, such as Adcock Gorge, are still listed in tourist guides and shown on tourist maps while the lessee is seeking to minimise visitation to these unmanaged attractions so as to minimise effort required to meet land management responsibilities.

On the other hand, new facilities and services have been established at four locations, namely Marunbabidi, Mitchell Plateau, Birdwood Downs and Mowanjun Community.

Birdwood Downs has begun offering services and facilities, which are affiliated with its savanna-style impact-minimising set-up and philosophy.

Table 7 describes the change in tourist product more comprehensively, with focus on qualitative aspects for those locations that have remained in tourism. Some stations with pre-existing tourist activity have improved their facilities, increased the range of services offered, and/or expanded their capacity.

Mornington Station lease was purchased by the Australian Wildlife Conservancy with the specific aim to ensure conservation and provide sustainable tourism activity. The tourism set-up has been improved as a consequence.

The most significant change is the addition since 1999 of 90 beds in safari tents to the accommodation capacity of the North Kimberley. They are distributed over three permanent camps set up by Wunan Foundation /Kimberley Wilderness Adventures in collaboration with the landholders:

- Imintji Camp, 2000, 40 beds;
- Marunbabidi (King Edward River) Camp, 2001, 28 beds; and
- Ungolan (Mitchell Plateau) Camp, 2001, 32 beds.

In 1998 CALM started managing campsites at the Mitchell Plateau as well as access to the Drysdale River National Park.

It is important to note that the information contained in Table 7 is based on self-reporting. In terms of a trend analysis, it is further important to consider that the observations cover only two points in time and do not capture trends leading up to 1997 or changes that have occurred but were reversed over the seven-year period.

**Table 6. Issues raised by the North Kimberley community in relation to tourism**

Compiled from Yuco (2003)

- Lack of infrastructure for visitors in face of increasing tourist numbers
- Poor management of the region in general and of tourism specifically
- Lack of Indigenous involvement in tourism
- Relationship between pastoral lessees and tourist businesses—with specific reference to tour operators, some of whom have a lack of respect for private property, use private infrastructure without authority, and lack ethics and protocols.
- Uncertainty in relation to lease renewal 2015, specifically with respect to proposed exclusions
- Uncertainty about native title developments
- Competing interests within the community

#### 4.4 Landholder perspective of tourism

##### Past research

Landholders were consulted in 2003 as part of extensive community consultations conducted by Sarah and Peter Yu. Their report provides a comprehensive overview of the community and its history, and reports the issues raised by the community (Yuco, 2003). The main issues raised in the report are summarised in Table 6.

##### Results from this investigation

This research investigated more systematically the issues and concerns of landholders, both landholders ‘in’ tourism and those ‘not in tourism’. A summary of the results is provided in Table 8 (at the end of this section). These concerns relate to tourism in general and may not apply to tour operators. Key concerns are:

- Proposed exclusions of areas of land from pastoral leases: The WA state government engaged in a consultation process, which provided the opportunity to propose areas of land for exclusion from the pastoral estate when current leases expire in 2015. The then Planner of the Shire of Derby West Kimberley proposed a series of known scenic sites for exclusion from the pastoral leasehold estate within the Shire.
- Introduction and spread of weeds, though unintentional translocation by vehicles (tyres and car body), tourist boots and clothing, swags and tents.
- Litter and (unburied) faeces left by campers and travellers: This constitutes a management problem for landholders. Exposure to human faeces constitutes a public health hazard. Both are an eyesore to landholders and the travelling public alike.
- Interference with operation of grazing businesses: Graziers reported incidences where gates had been left open, fences cut, cattle shot, and where tourists had interfered with mustering in various ways.



**Plate 19. Weeds spread along roadside**



**Plate 20. Unburied human waste, colloquially referred to as “brown-and-white butterflies”**



**Plate 21. Litter: discarded beer can**



**Plate 22. Fire awareness sign, Great Northern Highway**

- Costs incurred by landholders as a consequence of tourism, both direct costs and opportunity costs through time spent, include:
  - High cattle transport costs (quoted cost by one grazier was \$2.40/km/deck) and additional wear and tear on vehicles due to poor road condition exacerbated by tourist traffic—this impact increases with distance from Derby or Wyndham
  - Time spent on and risk incurred while fighting bushfires which started from campfires, and loss of grass cover and infrastructure damage caused by fires
  - Providing assistance to tourists after accidents and breakdowns
  - Collecting rubbish, cleaning up toilet paper, and managing weeds spread by tourists and vehicles

Those businesses that are diversified into tourism face additional challenges and specific costs associated with providing tourist facilities and services:

- Lack of availability of debt financing to invest into tourist facilities due to leasehold character of ownership
- Soaring cost of public liability insurance
- Cost of supplies, specifically building materials and fuel due to remoteness

Despite these challenges and issues, all landholders displayed a remarkable ‘get on with life’ attitude. Landholders wanted the existence of these issues to be acknowledged as a first step towards the definition and implementation of a management strategy, which would need to involve a number of tourist stakeholders.

The North Kimberley Land Conservation District Committee (NK-LCDC)

The issues documented as part of the landholder survey are not new. Landholders have been voicing the concerns and suggestions for management of tourism for some time.

All of the following points that relate to tourism management were discussed during at least one NK-LCDC meeting between 1996 and 2004:

- installation of public toilets along the roads
- fire management
- rubbish disposal and clean up
- spread of weeds
- environmental code of conduct for Gibb River Road
- environmental management fund-raising
- “Leave no traces” flyer
- road side amenities and rest areas
- traffic counters
- information boards
- fire signage
- tourist access permits
- erosion control
- visitor education
- cut fences
- shooting
- uncontrolled overnight camping areas (which can lead to fires)
- health hazards.

The North Kimberley LCDC committee meeting in May 2003 suggested the following steps for the mitigation of the tourist-related issues:

- Rehabilitate campsites along the road
- Shires establish rubbish pits at those properties that deal with tourists

- Information be made available to people travelling the road as to what their obligations are, specifically visitors to be made aware that they need permission to access properties—pass on information through shops, shows, magazines and signs on the roads
- Shires provide a ranger to patrol the road and issue fines for misconduct

The landholders are pro-active in implementing their recommendations. A significant contribution by the NK-LCDC is through the printing and distribution of the “Leave no traces” leaflet, which contains recommendations for low impact travel on the Kalumburu and Gibb River Roads (eg. [www.lnt.org](http://www.lnt.org)).

They also support the publication of a road safety guide, which outlines the ethics of driving in the Kimberley and provides safety tips (Government of Western Australia and Main Roads Western Australia, 2003).

Finally, landholders are instrumental in conducting the annual Kimberley Kleanup. The event is organised by Jake Zahl, a former tour operator to the region and Mt Elizabeth Station hosts participants for the night—among them many other people from stations and communities along the GRR.



**Plate 23. “Free” camping, Lennard River**



**Table 7. Tourist facilities and services properties by Stations/communities along the Gibb River and Kalumburu Roads, 1997 – 2004 comparison**

Name of the Land / Station	1997*								2004**								Planned	Aspirations
	CS	CRTH	GT	SGT	M	F	S	Other	CS	CRTH	GT	SGT	M	F	S	Other		
<b>Eastern GRR</b>																		
El Questro (incl. Emma Gorge)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	HR, R, S, SF	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	HR, R, S, SF	
Home Valley	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	AH, S	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	S		4WD
Durack (Jacks Waterhole)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	R, S										
Pentecost Downs																		
Ellenbrae	✓	✓						C, R	✓	✓			✓			R		4WD
<b>Kalumburu / Michael Plateau</b>	MC	CRTH	GT	SGT	M	F	S	Other	MC	CRTH	GT	SGT	M	F	S	Other	Planned	Aspirations
Drysdale (Miners Pool)	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	AH, R, S, SF	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	AH, R, S, SF		
Doongan																		
Theda																BA		
Marunbabidi										✓			✓			S		
Mitchell Plateau										✓			✓			S		
Carson River																		
Kalumburu Community	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	R	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
<b>Western GRR</b>	MC	CRTH	GT	SGT	M	F	S	Other	MC	CRTH	GT	SGT	M	F	S	Other	Planned	Aspirations
Gibb River																	F	MC, S
Mt Elisabeth	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	AH, R, S, SF	✓	✓	✓		✓			AH, R		
Mt Barnett (Manning Gorge)	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	R, S	✓			✓		✓	✓	R, S		
Beverley Springs	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			AH	✓	✓		✓	✓			AH, S		
Walcott Inlet								BA								BA		
Mt House (Adcock Gorge)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓											
Mornington	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			AH, R, S, SF	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	R, S, SF		
Imintji						✓	✓		✓				✓	✓	✓			
King Leopold Ranges NP (Bell Gorge, Silent Grove)	✓			✓				AH, R, S	✓			✓				AH, R, S		
Mt Hart		✓		✓	✓			AH, S		✓		✓	✓			AH, S, SF		
Napier Downs																		
Kimberley Downs																		
Winjana Gorge NP	✓			✓				AH, R	✓			✓				AH, R		
Meda (May River)												□						
Birdwood Downs									✓	✓	✓		✓			HR		
Mowanjun Community																C		
Yeeda													□					

\* Source: Pam Masters: 1997 GRR Tourism Survey and 1997 Derby Tourist Bureau "Travellers Guide to Gibb River and Kulumburu Roads"

\*\* Source: Personal Observations, Interviews and 2004 Derby Tourist Bureau "Travellers Guide to Gibb River and Kulumburu Roads"

□ tourist access allowed but no tourist product provided

**Accommodation types:**

- CS camping site
- CRTH cabin, room, permanent tent or homestead

**Services:**

- GT guided tours
- SGT self-guided tours
- M meals
- F fuel
- S store

**Other services:**

- AH aerial highway destination
- BA by arrangement
- C crafts
- HR horse riding
- R rubbish disposal point
- S swimming
- SF scenic flights
- 4WD self-drive 4 WD safaris

**Table 8. Issues concerning landholders in relation to tourism; by type and significance**

(\*√ indicates that the issue was raised by the lessee/manager during the consultation)

Name of the Land / Station	GENERAL ISSUES									CATTLE - RELATED ISSUES			TOURISM - RELATED ISSUES				
	Excisions 2015	Rubbish in the landscape	Fires	Road condition /traffic	Red-tape, tax, lack of Shire support	Free camping on property	Lack of respect for property	Introduction and spread of weeds	Mores signs, shelters, phones etc on the road	Open gates / cutting fences	Shooting	Interference with mustering	Insurance: liability and workers compensation	Funds to improve infrastructure / marketing	Cost of supplies, fuel, building materials etc	Rubbish disposal	Cost of power
El Questro	✓		✓									✓					✓
Home Valley	✓												✓		✓		
Ellenbrae		✓					✓										
Drysdale	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Doongan	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓				✓						
Theda	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓				✓						
Gibb River																	
Mt Elisabeth	✓	✓	✓		✓							✓		✓			
Beverley Springs	✓					✓							✓				
Mt House	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓			✓		✓				
Mornington	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Imintji				✓													
Bell/ Silent G																	
Mt Hart					✓								✓	✓	✓		
Napier Downs		✓	✓	✓					✓								
Kimberley Downs				✓		✓	✓		✓	✓							
Winjana Gorge																	
Meda (May River)		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					✓						
Birdwood Downs					✓			✓									
Yeeda	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓					✓				✓		
Totals	✓✓✓✓✓ ✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓ ✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓ ✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓ ✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓ ✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓ ✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓ ✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓ ✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓		✓✓✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓

## 5 DISCUSSION

### 5.1 Responding to the research hypothesis

The project commenced with the hypothesis, based on anecdotal evidence—conveyed by stakeholders to the Tropical Savannas CRC—and research published by Yuco (2003), that the relationship between landholders and tour operators had deteriorated over recent years as demonstrated in reduced access by tour operators to sites of interest and facilities and services on grazing leases.

This research found the existence of extensive business relationships between landholders in the North Kimberley and tour operators. The extent is determined by the fact that landholders are the principal providers of tourist facilities and services in the region and a high degree of diversification by pastoral lessees into tourism.

The research also found a high degree of continuity in the relationship.

There have been, however, some notable changes. Specifically, access to some areas and services/facilities have been ‘lost’ while, on the other hand, new sites, services and facilities have become available on various properties between 1997 and 2004.

The research therefore concludes that there is no evidence that the overall number of options available to tour operators across the North Kimberley has decreased. On that basis, the hypothesis is rejected.

However, important qualifications need to be made in relation to qualitative aspects of change, which are not easily captured and which affect specifically the more small-scale specialist and adventure market.

- Access by tour operators to sites and bush camps on some pastoral leases has ended as a result of various developments:

- The longitudinal analysis established that one pastoral leaseholder along the western section of the GRR has withdrawn previously existing arrangements with tour operators as part of a re-focus of business affairs on the grazing enterprise.
- It also found that the facilities on one key site on pastoral land had been destroyed by floods and had not been rebuilt, thus reducing options for operators.
- Based on information provided by responding tour operators it can be concluded that negotiated access and permission for camp facilities on one pastoral lease along the KR have been withdrawn following change of ownership of the pastoral lease. Granting of access by the previous lessee and withdrawal of access by the new lessee fell between the two data points for the longitudinal comparison of landholding involvement in tourism.
- Some leaseholders are scrutinising arrangements with tour operators as a result of increased awareness and perceived risk of liability and associated insurance and tenure implications.
- Increasing effort by the land managing authorities and some pastoral lessees in pursuit of unlicensed activities and camps may contribute to a general perception—which is particularly strongly held by the community—of reduced ‘freedom’ and access options.
- On the other hand, there is anecdotal evidence which suggests that access may be available to areas and sites on some pastoral leases, which do not see themselves as offering a tourist product, for visitor groups from overseas. Such relationships are not captured by this research because they are outside the traditional tour market and pastoral lessees may not want to disclose such arrangements.

## 5.2 Improving the relationship between pastoral lessees and tour operators

The contribution by pastoral lessees to the tourism product of the Kimberley is extensive. In effect, landholders provide the vast majority of tourist facilities and services in the region, while also managing the sites and extensive savanna landscapes that visitors come to see and experience. While there may be more areas/sites of interest on CALM-managed Crown Land, it is clearly the pastoral lessees who provide the majority of accommodation and other facilities and services. Some facilities/services, specifically along the western section of the GRR are also provided by private enterprise (shops) which principally service local communities.

Tour operators visit a majority of pastoral stations and purchase a diversity of tourist services on those stations. Many operators have agreements with lessees, which enable them to have their private bush camps and run their own tours on pastoral properties. Such arrangements are built on mutual respect, understanding and trust.

Pastoral lessees are providing a suite of services and facilities that are not commonly provided by graziers in other parts of the country. It seems that, with the exception of El Questro Station, pastoral lessees have slowly built up their tourist operations based on increasing demand for services by tourists and tour operators and encouraged by income variability and decreasing viability of pastoral enterprises (due to declining terms of trade and specifically for those properties whose cattle are not suitable for the live export market).

The growth of involvement by pastoral lessees in tourism is principally constrained, however, by the lease conditions. Lessees can obtain diversification permits, but it is a requirement that the priority enterprise remains grazing. The constraints which the current land tenure system

imposes are now clearly recognised. <[www.dpi.gov.au/pastoral/info.html#acts](http://www.dpi.gov.au/pastoral/info.html#acts)>.

Indications are that even under current tenure arrangements there is increasing flexibility in the administration of leases by the Pastoral Lease Board with respect to diversification into tourism and conservation. There are some recent examples to support this claim, namely El Questro and Mornington Stations. While cattle remain on both stations, it is unlikely that a majority of income is derived from cattle production in either case.

The lease conditions not only stipulate the use rights of lessees, they also contain a series of responsibilities, which the landholder has to meet in relation to the land. Leases are inspected regularly to monitor environmental condition (Dalton and Bright, 2003). Pastoral lessees are thus the principal stewards of leasehold land. Their stewardship is complemented by Aboriginal stewardship in areas where Native Title has been determined. In those areas, tour operators need to consult with Traditional Owners—who may or may not live on that land—in relation to proposed tourist activity.

The tour operators who participated in the survey identified a significant potential for growth of tours to the North Kimberley. They expressed a desire to be purchasing more services in the future and to be accessing more parts of the pastoral leasehold estate. Specifically, they express a desire for access to ‘new’ areas and sites, on pastoral leases and adjoining areas, so as to offer their clients more remote and/or different and/or exclusive experiences. Some operators regard the necessity to negotiate those aspirations with landholders and landowners as a ‘constraint’.

There has been a distinct growth in tourist facilities in recent years. Since the *North Kimberley Road User Study* was conducted (KDC and DT, 1999), accommodation capacity increased by 90 beds in the permanent camps operated by Wunan Foundation. Some stations, including Drysdale River and Mornington, have

recently improved their facilities and possibly increased capacity in the process.

Of those tour operators who responded to the survey a majority stated that they have a good to very good relationship with grazing lessees. Landholders confirm that from their perspective, too, the relationship with tour operators is predominantly good and rewarding. A possible expansion of the commercial relationships between tour operators and pastoral lessees thus starts from a generally sound basis.

However, the study found clear evidence that the parties may not fully understand and appreciate the aspirations, conditions and risks under which both partners operate.

Some tour operators may not appreciate the responsibilities of lessees in relation to land management (e.g. in relation to the control of weeds) and the liability involved with having tourist enter leasehold land. Local tour operators, specifically, note that some large interstate operators may not conduct themselves within the standards—ethical and operational—that are appropriate for the region. (On a side note, interpreting the low response rate of tour operators to the survey is speculative—it may indicate that the subject of the survey was not of real concern/interest to them; or it may be an expression of just how busy tour operators are during peak tourist season).

Some responding tour operators display impatience in relation to the provision of more and more diverse facilities and services on pastoral stations. It is important to understand that pastoral lessees are constrained in growing tourist operations firstly by the conditions associated with their diversification permit and secondly by a lack of access to capital. Since diversification permits are not transferable and grazing leases are bound to expire in the near futures, lessees find it difficult to borrow money and most have grown their tourist enterprise to the current extent solely by re-investing profits. In addition, income from tourism is subject to

variability and investment into tourist-related facilities is risky.

On the other hand it is important for grazing lessees to recognise the significance of their contribution to the tourist and tour market. Some attractions and features on pastoral land are unique. Tour operators who have successfully negotiated access to a specific area, invested in infrastructure and customised their tour product have a reasonable expectation for this arrangement to be continued as long as they conduct themselves in the expected manner. Withdrawing access—which is a legitimate penalty for operators who do not do the right thing—may have serious implications for the operator's tour product and viability in a highly competitive market.

Landholders are concerned about free camping on their land and what they regard as a lack of respect for property. While this concern is in regard to tourists generally, this research provides evidence that tour operators are among the offenders. The extent of the issue could not be established due to the low response rate by tour operators to the survey. Also, some respondents may 'free camp' without wanting to self-report this.

This research found examples of opportunities for tour operators to establish new partnerships with leaseholders. There are some stations which have plans and aspirations for tourism, which align very well with the expressed wishes of tour operators for more access to land and diversification of their tour products.

Two examples are Gibb River and Home Valley Stations. At Gibb River Station the Aboriginal community is looking towards tourism to help generate income and employment for community members. There is no shortage of ideas but a shortage of human and financial capacity. Tour operators may be able to offer both. At Home Valley Station, the sub-lessees are seeking to expand their economic base through increased tourist activity and at the time of investigation no tour operators were visiting.

### 5.3 Aboriginal participation in tourism

There is a view that the level of current engagement of Aboriginal people and communities in the North Kimberley in tourism is very limited (Yuco, 2003). This situation is not atypical for tropical savanna destinations with a majority Aboriginal population (e.g. Greiner et al., 2004).

However, there are several examples in the North Kimberley of successful engagement, direct and indirect, by the Aboriginal Community in tourism. The shops at Imintji, Mt Barnett and Kalumburu benefit from tourist trade, thereby providing rents to the communities. Manning Gorge is a major tourist and tour destination and generates indirect revenue for the Mt Barnett community.

Most importantly, the Kimberley Wilderness Adventure (KWA) safari camps at Imintji, Muranbabidi and Ungolan generate revenue for these communities. KWA is 40% owned by the Wunan Foundation, a regional Aboriginal development organization. KWA is a significant player in the North Kimberley tour market (Ralph Addis, personal communication, July 2004).

In 1996 the Kimberley Aboriginal and Cultural Tourism Strategy was developed which outlined various ideas for future indigenous involvement (Global Tourism and Leisure, 1996). Eight years later there is little evidence of implementation of that strategy while Aboriginal communities in the North Kimberley continue to have aspirations for involvement in tourism and sharing in the economic benefits from tourism (Yuco, 2003).

A comprehensive discussion of Indigenous aspirations and potential avenues for involvement in tourism is presented by Coombs et al, (1988). The stations owned by Traditional Owners and consulted as part of this study articulated various ideas, which are in different stages of planning and realisation as to how such involvement may happen. For example, the

community on Gibb River Station intends to gradually build its involvement in tourism from initial fuel sales to providing accommodation to selling fresh produce from their market gardens to tourists.

Yuco (2003) see Indigenous involvement in Kimberley evolving specifically through the fostering and development of art and craft production. They comment on the apparent lack of a strategy or plan to promote eco-cultural tourism.

An important step in realising the involvement through the production of Indigenous art and craft is the realisation of the plans for the proposed Mowanjun Arts and Tourist Centre outside Derby.

Other communities may choose to explore different avenues for indigenous involvement in tourism. Such involvement will start to address the uneven distribution of benefits from tourism.



**Plate 24. Aerial view of the proposed Mowanjun Arts and Tourist Centre**

(Source: Monsoon Architects proposal, courtesy of Mowanjun Centre)

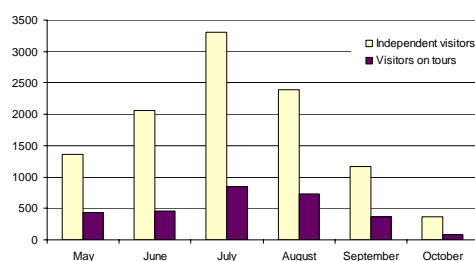
#### 5.4 The North Kimberley tourist market

The current understanding of the North Kimberley tourist market is limited to few statistics. The *North Kimberley Road User Study* (KDC and DT, 1999) is the prime source of information.

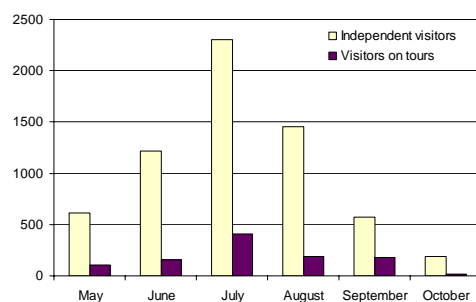
The data from that study suggest that the North Kimberley is a self-drive destination. Only 5.5% of the survey respondents were travelling in 4WD tour vehicles and an additional 2% travelling on bus or a coach (KDC and DT, 1999).

The degree of prevalence of self-drive tourists is reflected in the visitor statistics collected at major camping areas in national parks. Figure 7 shows usage by self-drive tourists (independent visitors) and people on tours for (a) Windjana Gorge and (b) Silent Grove in 1996.

##### (a) Windjana Gorge National Park



##### (b) Silent Grove



**Figure 7. Monthly visitation to (a) Windjana Gorge NP and (b) Silent Grove (1996)**

(Source: KDC and DT, 1999)

For Windjana Gorge, 79% of campers were self-drive travellers and 21% were customers on (4WD) tours. For Silent Grove the ratio was 86% self-drive tourists to 14% on tours.

Figure 7 also demonstrates the high degree of seasonality of tourism in the Kimberley, with July being the peak month during the tourist season and both parks being unattended for the wet season, which officially goes from November to April.

The visitor capacity of the region was estimated in 1999 (KDC and DT, 1999) and expressed as equivalent to ‘vehicles’ in the region at any given point in time. The capacity was estimated to be 470 vehicles along the GRR and 675 vehicles for the total North Kimberley, including Gibb River, Kalumburu, Mitchell Plateau and Tablelands (Mornington) roads.

That estimate was based on the camping and accommodation facilities provided in the region. The calculation was based on a car-to-camp site ratio and did not consider tours. It is unknown whether and to what degree usage exceeds capacity.

#### 5.5 Context for interpretation: community benefits from tourism

Tourism involves many players including tourists, tour operators, other tourist businesses, tourism managers, host communities and society. Tour operators and landholders represent a small but important spectrum of the stakeholder fabric. All players need to derive benefits from tourism for tourism to be truly successful.

Tourism success is often measured in tourist numbers. This measure is useful when assessing tourism at a national scale since economic activity generated can be assumed to be linear to tourist numbers. Thus, from a national—or even state perspective—it is useful to pursue an increase in tourist numbers, both international as well as inter- and intra-state.

However, as Greiner et al. (2004) demonstrated for the Carpentaria Shire in North-West Queensland, equalling tourist numbers to tourist success is a flawed concept because the destination attracts a highly diverse mix of tourists, some of who stay for extensive periods but spend little money and others that are heavy resource users. In such cases, measures such as yield and net benefit are more appropriate.

‘Yield’ is about the financial bottom line of tourism. An important indicator for yield is ‘leakage’, i.e. the amount of money that is spent in the region but not re-invested locally for labour or locally provided inputs. Purchases of fuel, for example, have very high leakage, while purchase of services generates (local) employment and means that money is retained in the local economy.

‘Net benefit’ assesses yield in the context of social, cultural and environmental impacts—and looks at the distribution of benefits and costs across different segments of the host community. It can be conceptualised as the triple bottom line of tourist impacts. A model measuring ‘net benefit’ was developed by Greiner et al., (2004; Figure 8)



**Figure 8. Conceptual model of tourism development and community benefits**

(Source: Greiner et al, 2004)

Tourists who visit by tour bus are one type of visitor and their net benefits, too, depend on how much money they spend—or the tour company spends on their behalf—on what and where, and on how the tours interact with the host region, specifically on what natural resources, facilities and services they ‘consume’.

One indicator assessing yield for the regional community—taken here to mean the Kimberley region more broadly—is the proportion of tour companies that operate from within the region. It can be assumed that their profits are re-invested locally and that they have a high propensity for employing people from the region as tour guides and in their offices. Given that there are few local operators it can be concluded that much of the yield generated by tours operating to the North Kimberley is not re-invested in the region and taxes (e.g. local government rates) help fund infrastructure and services in areas other than the Kimberley.

The research found concerns from within the tour operators about the behaviour of remotely located tour companies—in relation to ethical and operational conduct. It also found evidence that some operators establish bush camps without permission by the landholders. These observations may be taken as indicators that segments of the tour market seek to maximise company profit at the expense of the destination region.

Some tour companies—specifically Kimberley Wilderness Adventure—seeks to generate benefits for local people with particular emphasis on the employment of local Aboriginal people in the business.

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## 6 CONCLUSIONS

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This research focused on a particular aspect of the North Kimberley tourism fabric. There is a particularly close relationship between landholders—who manage the vast savanna landscape in the region and provide the majority of tourist facilities and services—and tour operators.

There are some 35 tour operators offering a variety of tour experiences along the Gibb River Road and Kalumburu Roads in the North Kimberley. Few operators have their headquarters in the Kimberley. About half of the operators conduct their business from within Western Australia, the other half are interstate businesses. The number of tour operators has been relatively constant over the past five years.

The majority of tours classify themselves as adventure tours. They sell a tourist product based on wilderness, remoteness and empty spaces. Few specialise in niche markets such as wildlife, cultural and walking/cycling tours.

The land in the North Kimberley is Crown Land. Of the approximately 30 landholdings identified within the case study region, 17 are grazing leases. Other tenure types include Aboriginal land, national parks and nature reserves, conservation parks or defence land. Grazing leases are typically large, with an average area of more than 3000 km<sup>2</sup>. The majority of grazing leases is owned by absentee owners with managers overseeing on-ground operations.

Landholders, particularly pastoral lessees, provide the vast majority of tourist facilities and services available in the case study region. To legitimately diversify into tourism, grazing lessees require a diversification permit. Standout pastoral destinations include El Questro and Mt Elizabeth Station. Others have set themselves up as service centres, for example Drysdale River Station. Geographically, these stations are located

mostly along the eastern and central sections of the Gibb River Road.

CALM is the key management agency for national and conservation parks and nature reserves. The geographical focus of these areas is in the western section of the GRR and along parts of Kimberley coastline.

Aboriginal stations do not provide tourist facilities and services other than those provided by sub-lessees of shops, petrol stations and homesteads located on that land.

Extensive business relationships exist between landholders and tour operators. Tour operators purchase use facilities and services provided by land holders and land managers in the North Kimberley. Many operators have arrangements with land holders that enable them to offer non main-stream tour elements to their clients, for example through special access arrangements and their own negotiated bush camps.

The research has been able to conduct a comparison between the years 1997 and 2004 of the tourist product offered by landholders in the areas adjoining the Gibb River and Kalumburu Roads in the North Kimberley. This information was triangulated by a survey of tour operators.

There has been a high degree of continuity of pastoral lessees in tourism over that period of time. This provides a certain level of security for both parties: tour operators can plan their tours in the knowledge that they will have access to sites and use of facilities and services; pastoral lessees are assured a certain level of demand for their tourist product.

In net terms, the research did not find a deterioration in the relationship between pastoral lessees and tour operators, which had been suggested anecdotally and in a research report by Yuco (2003).

However, there have been important changes can be observed over time. On some pastoral leases access for tours has been discontinued for

various reasons including change in ownership, re-focus on the pastoral enterprise and loss of facilities in floods. These changes have affected tour operators. Of particular concern is the loss of negotiated access to certain areas and sites for those tours that operate in niche markets.

On the other hand, other pastoral lessees have started to diversify into tourism or diversified existing tourist operations or increased existing capacity. Notably, over the five-year period since 1999 an additional 90 beds in permanent safari tents have been provided at Imintji, Marunbabidi and Ungolan, with significant Aboriginal involvement.

The relationship between land holders and tour operators is generally seen as good, based on trust and mutual understanding. However, the research found evidence to suggest that some tour businesses and their tour guides may not fully appreciate the land tenure situation in the North Kimberley nor understand the conditions and responsibilities under which land holders operate—including lease conditions and the realities of running a pastoral enterprise in a remote and variable environment.

Landholders are concerned about a variety of aspects of tourism that relate to their land management obligations and ability to successfully run cattle enterprises. Possible changes to leasehold tenure with the impending expiry of current leases are a prime concern. Exclusions have been proposed on the basis of possible tourist values of scenic sites and areas currently contained in pastoral leases.

Landholders are concerned about free camping on their land and what they regard as a lack of respect for property. While this concern is in regard to tourists generally, this research provides evidence that tour operators are among the offenders.

The research identified opportunities for new collaborative arrangements on at least two pastoral leases. These opportunities rely to a large extent on the capacity of Aboriginal

communities to establish and maintain involvement in tourism, or on sub-lessees to do so—with associated revenue streams for Aboriginal communities. New business partnerships could play a key role in harnessing the growing opportunities that tour operators see for increasing tour activity along the Gibb River and Kalumburu Roads.

In summary, there are issues in the relationship between tour operators and landholders which require improvement. Integrated planning can facilitate a better understanding of aspirations, business environments and responsibilities – as long as remote parties are willing to participate and cooperate.

To increase net benefits from tourism for host communities it is critical to have a fact-based understanding of tourism in the region, including tourist numbers, profiles and activities. The visitor market at any specific location across the savannas may differ from other locations. The quest for more tourists without consideration of yield and net benefit is a hazardous concept.

The key pressure on the North Kimberley—and landholders within the region—is from the growth in the majority self-drive tourist market. Tourism growth has the potential of exacerbating problems including spread of weeds, disposal of litter and human waste, and fires. And there is a real possibility that tourism growth may not yield the economic and net benefits that are sought by participants in the industry and the community in general.

Further research is required to establish an inclusive and fact-based understanding of tourism and its impacts in the North Kimberley. The ultimate objective must be the development and implementation of an integrated tourism management plan for the region, which maps out clear objectives and strategies and allocates roles and responsibilities for all stakeholders.

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## **8 APPENDICES**

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- Appendix 1 List of tour companies contacted
- Appendix 2 List of Stations and landholders interviewed
- Appendix 3 List of stakeholders consulted

Appendix 1 KIMBERLEY TOUR OPERATORS CONTACTED FOR THE SURVEY

Company	Location	State					
Aberkrombie & Kent	St Kilda						VIC
Active Safaris	Coma	WA					
Adventure Tours Australia	Norwood					SA	
All Terrain Safaris	Mundaring	WA					
APT-Kimberley Wilderness	Hampton						VIC
Australian Adventure Travel	Malaga	WA					
Australian Pinnacle Tours	Broome office	WA					
Bushtrack Safaris	Derby	WA					
Christian Fellowship Tours	Mooroolbark						VIC
Coates Wildlife Tours	Bullcreek	WA					
Contiki	Sydney						NSW
Discover West Holidays	Perth	WA					
Doug Beattie's Creative Safaris	Barron						QLD
Heritage Tours	Smithfield						QLD
Big River Wilderness Adventures	Derby	WA					
Kimberley Adventure Tours	Kununurra	WA					
Kimberley Birdwatching	Broome	WA					
Kimberley Dreams	Winnellie					NT	
Kimberley Dreamtime	Wyndham	WA					
Kimberley Getaway Safaris	Broome	WA					
Kimberley Wild Outback Tours	Broome	WA					
Kirrama Wildlife Tours	Innisfail						QLD
NOLS Australia	Broome / USA	WA					
Northern Gateway	Darwin					NT	
Odyssey Tours and Safaris	Darwin					NT	
Over the top Adventure Tours	Broome	WA					
Red Centre Adventures	VIC						VIC
Road Cycling Experience	Bassendean	WA					
Swagman Outback Safaris	Geelong						VIC
Tag-Along Adventure 4WD Tours	Batemans Bay						NSW
Travelabout Outback Adventures	Perth	WA					
West Kimberley Tours	Derby	WA					
Wilderness 4WD Adventures	Palmerston					NT	
Wilderness Challenge	Cairns						QLD
Willis's Walkabouts	Milner					NT	
			18	5	4	1	5
							2

Appendix 2 LIST OF STATIONS AND LANDHOLDERS INTERVIEWED

<b>Name of the Land / Station</b>	<b>Person/s Interviewed</b>	<b>Position</b>
<b>Eastern GRR</b>		
El Questro (incl. Emma Gorge)	Eric Stewart	Manager
Home Valley	Nick and Sarah Bradley	Manager
Durack (Jacks Waterhole)		
Pentecost Downs		
Ellenbrae	Tony Stanley	Manager
<b>Kalumburu / Michael Plateau</b>		
Drysdale (Miners Pool)	Anne Koeyers	Owner
Doongan	Suzanne Bradley	Manager
Theda	(Suzanne Bradley)	(Manager)
Marunbabidi	(Ralph Addis)	CEO, Wunana Fondation
Mitchell Plateau		
Carson River		
Kalumburu Community		
<b>Western GRR</b>		
Gibb River	Dorothy Marshall, Margaret Fernandez, Wayne Cobley, Stanley Nyandi, Alfie White	Community representatives
Mt Elisabeth	Peter Lacy	Owner
Mt Barnett (Manning Gorge)	Cracker	Community representative
Beverley Springs	Cheryl Camp	Owner
Walcott Inlet		
Mt House (Adcock Gorge)	Cait McAllary	Owner
Mornington		
Imintji	Tammy Moloney Teddy Bolton	KWA camp host Community representative
King Leopold Ranges NP (Bell Gorge, Silent Grove)		
Mt Hart	Annabelle Abbott	Manager
Napier Downs	Peter Leutinigen	Owner
Kimberley Downs	Bill Forester	Manager
Winjana Gorge NP		
Meda (May River)	Laurasson	Manager
Birdwood Downs	Mark Nelson, Ellen Male and Robin Tredwell	Managers / representatives
Mowanjum Community	John Oster	Community representative
Yeeda	Jack Burton	Owner

Appendix 3 LIST OF STAKEHOLDERS CONSULTED

<b>Department / Organisation</b>	<b>Person Contacted</b>	<b>Contact mode</b>
Derby West Kimberley Shire	Noel Mayers, Derby	In person and by e-mail
Kununurra East Kimberley Shire	Barbara Johnson, Kununurra	By telephone and e-mail
Department of Planning and Infrastructure	Phil Palmer, Derby Amanda Stainthorpe, Broome	In person and by telephone
CALM	[Alan Gross] –attempted	In person
	Rod Quartermaine	By telephone and e-mail
	Luisa Liddicoat	By e-mail
Dept of Agriculture	[Peter Price], Derby - attempted	In person
Office of Aboriginal Economic Development	Peter Grundy	By telephone and e-mail
Dept of Industry and Resources	Sam Lovell	By telephone
Kimberley Development Commission	John Silver, Derby	In person
	Jeff Gooding, Kununurra	In person
Dept of Main Roads	Andrew Duffy, Derby	In person
	Bryan Bannon, Derby	By telephone and e-mail
	Joanna Hyde	In person and my e-mail
Aust North-West ATO	[Grant Smart] – attempted	In person and by telephone
Kimberley Land Council	Attley Sullivan, Derby	In person
	Tom Vigillante, Derby	In person
WA Tourism Commission	Nerida Hillier, Kununurra	In person
Indigenous Land Council	Rick Merrideth, Perth	By telephone and e-mail
Kununurra Visitors Centre	Peter Grigg	In person
Derby Visitors Centre	Pam Masters	In person
Mowijan Community	John Oster	In person
Environs Kimberley	Maria Mann, Broome	In person
Kimberley Kleanup	Jake Zahl, Derby	In person
Leave No Trace Australia	Cameron Crowe, Broome	By telephone and e-mail
WasteWater Gardens	Mark Nelson [Derby]	In person
Private consultant (ex CALM)	Chris Done	In person and via e-mail