



QRA Queensland Ranger Association Inc IA15585

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4/2/09

Hon. Anna Bligh MP
Premier of Queensland
PO Box 15185
City East
Queensland 4002

Dear Ms Bligh

I am writing on behalf of our members and executive.

I enclose copies of the Queensland Ranger Association's recent newsletter, *Ranger Rambler*, and *EPA Work Voices*, a newsletter prepared by QPSU delegates in the Environmental Protection Agency.

In particular I wish to highlight the articles in both newsletters relating to the decision to abolish use of the name and government entity "Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service" (see front page of *Ranger Rambler* and page 11 *EPA Work Voices*).

In the centenary year of National Parks in Queensland, this decision was particularly devastating to employees. Staff were instructed that they must not answer phones saying "Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service" and that the identity will be progressively replaced on signage and uniforms.

Ranger staff also strenuously believe that the name change will prove vastly expensive in terms of long term signage costs. We will be writing to the Treasurer separately in relation to the financial impact, but it is pertinent to point out that there are millions of dollars of signage assets on Fraser Island alone. The total cost of QPWS signage across the State could well be greater than \$20m. The proposition that signage can be progressively replaced is quite incorrect, since this would take decades, during which time dual signage would cause great public confusion. This is further highlighted by the current situation where there are six different agencies on QPW signage (DPIForestry; Qld Forest Service; DNR; Forestry; EPA; QPWS).

The decision is a cause of significant morale problems in the "Service" because most of its staff are proud of the QPWS identity and its 33 years of development, and are fiercely loyal to it. Having another factor detrimentally affecting morale is particularly concerning at a time when staff recruitment and retention in the EPA is becoming a significant problem.

Finally, I highlight that the establishment of the QPWS as a government entity was approved in 1998 by Executive Council (see attached copy of gazettal notice). However, it appears that the decision to abolish it in 2008 was an administrative decision. The QRA therefore questions the legality of the decision.

There is strong feeling on this issue by most QPWS staff, especially long term staff, and we wish to request that you intervene to ensure the continuation of the government entity "Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service".

This decision would be greatly appreciated not only by QPWS staff, but also, we believe, by the majority of conservation stakeholder groups.

Thank you for your consideration.

Yours sincerely

Neil Parker
Chairperson QRA