

NATIONAL PARKS — CAMPGROUND FEES

976. Hon RICK MAZZA to the Minister for Environment:

I refer to today's article in *The West Australian* headed "Campers to pay more as fees surge", which says that entry fees for 32 national parks across WA have risen between 14 and 30 per cent.

- (1) What is the new category of campground that has been established as part of the recent fee review?

Hon Darren West interjected.

Hon RICK MAZZA: Did I ask you this question, honourable member?

- (2) Has patronage to WA national parks increased or declined since the last fee review in 2017?
- (3) How do WA's new national park entry fees compare with other Australian states and territories?
- (4) Is the minister aware of the Victorian government initiative of reducing camping fees across state and national parks by 50 per cent from 1 July 2019?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question.

- (1) Two new categories of camping fees have been established where there are additional facilities, such as ablutions, showers or shelters. The first category applies to two campgrounds in the Kimberley where the new camping fee is \$17 per adult per night and reflects the higher management costs of operating in this region. The second category applies to 14 campgrounds where the new camping fee is \$15 per adult per night. Camping fees at the remaining 250 campgrounds managed by the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions have not changed and remain at \$11 per adult per night.
- (2) Visits to national parks have increased since 2017.
- (3) Although each jurisdiction has a different fee structure, park entry, park pass and camping fees charged in Western Australia are comparable with those of other states and remain good value for money when compared with other recreation activities.
- (4) I am aware of the Victorian government's initiative to reduce camping fees; however, Western Australia remains committed to providing and maintaining the places and facilities that campers enjoy, to which the collection of camp fees makes a valuable contribution. I am advised that reducing camping fees in Victoria was a state election commitment. Victoria has a complex camping fee schedule that varies from park to park and includes some quite high fees compared with WA. Some of the new fee reductions in Victoria will bring fees more into alignment with those charged in Western Australia.