

# CUSTODIAN NEWSLETTER

## Welcome to 2024 Volume 2 Edition 2

### In this edition we look at two topics, **Extended Park Bookings and Park Maintenance**

#### **Extended Bookings**

For those new custodians who may not be aware, or who missed the information in our training packages or previous newsletters, there is a maximum stay length at all CMCA RV Parks.

The actual stay length does vary across the park network depending on the lease arrangements we have with the landowners. Ingham has a 5-night maximum; Innisfail has 7-night maximum, and the rest have 14-night maximum stays. At the end of each stay, guests are required to leave the park for at least a week before returning to the park.

The reason for this maximum stay length is that we are only providing short term sites for travellers, we do not have consent to operate parks with long term or permanent sites.

In exceptional circumstances we MAY allow an extension to an existing guest. This requires approval through NHQ and will only be granted in situations where the guest has significant health issues or mechanical issues that prevent the vehicle from being driven out of the park.

Custodians are reminded that they do not have the authority to extend stays beyond the prescribed stay length for that park. Please advise guests that they must contact NHQ and ask for approval.

Our booking system does allow guests to make new bookings to create stays beyond what they are allowed. This is something we cannot prevent at present and will be included in the new booking system build. If you are aware of a guest staying longer than allowed, please contact NHQ.

Be aware that our staff cannot keep tabs on all guests across all parks, so we rely on our Custodians to keep track of guests and how long they are in our parks.

CMCA managed caravan parks are different because they operate under approvals that allow longer stays. In these cases, we allow up to 3 month stays, as long as NHQ is informed of the arrangement and the reasons for the longer stay. Guests will still need to book sites in 14 night lots though.

#### **Park Maintenance**

This is a topic that has been mentioned in previous emails, and we focus on this important aspect of the Park Custodian role.

You will note that each Custodian (solo or couple) is asked to complete a declaration when registering to undertake the role in our network. This declaration includes questions about your health and fitness levels that may impact on your ability to undertake certain tasks at our parks. We are not discriminating against anyone, but it is important that our Custodians have a minimum level of mobility, and we also need to be aware of any possible health conditions so that this can be managed whilst you are undertaking custodian duties.

Our duty of care is to ensure that you are safe whilst undertaking your volunteer duties, but we also need to be aware of any health issues you may have that could impact on your said duties.

#### **Grass**

Grass maintenance is important. We do not ask that the parks be kept like bowling greens, and it has been mentioned in previous newsletters that we do not want mowing on the lowest levels, but the park should always look tidy.

When parks are busy, it can be difficult to maintain grass around and under guest vehicles. Guests are generally understanding though when it comes to managing grass around their site, especially if they are in the park for an extended period. It does not hurt to ask!

If it is dry and the grass is struggling to stay alive, don't be afraid to water some areas. It may be that you need to target specific areas of the park to ensure it has ground cover (around the happy hour shelter, near the dump point, areas that may get particularly dusty). You can use the traffic cones to block areas from campers to allow this grass to get established or to protect it whilst being watered.

#### **Weeds**

Many travel with pets, and these are the ones that can suffer the most when weeds are left unmanaged within the park. Burrs are a particular concern for humans and pets, and they can even impact equipment and vehicles if bad enough.

There are several options available to custodians when looking to manage weeds:

- Spot them early and use a targeted chemical spray to kill the plants when young.
- When the plant is larger and setting seeds, spraying may not be an option, and in this case the plants will need to be chipped or pulled and thrown in the waste bins.

If you are not sure what weeds species you are looking for, contact NHQ, talk to one of our local CMCA members, or even contact your local weed authority for advice.

Weeds that are left unmanaged create long term problems, with seed that lasts up to 10 years in the ground, and burrs which impact on guests.

DO NOT leave the problem for the next Custodians to deal with, because it could be too late by then, and it is not fair for them to have to deal with complaints from guests about something that they did not create.

### Issues Raised by Custodians and Guests

It clearly states on our park rules that washing of vehicles is not allowed. We do not provide dedicated wash bays at our parks, which would require a concrete pad, screen, wastewater sump and connection to a stormwater system.

Our Custodians are representing CMCA whilst volunteering. For this reason, we ask that you be polite and appropriately dressed at all times.

### Staff Profiles

Welcome to all from your friendly RV Park staff at NHQ! Below is a brief profile of Emily King and Sean Constable, those whom you deal with regularly when in your Custodian roles.

#### Emily King

Emily has been with CMCA nearly 10 years. She is the friendly voice when you want to book time as Custodians, have issue with guests or questions about your roles.

Emily has dedicated her entire career to the administration field. She's worked with a wide variety of companies, gaining an invaluable skill set across almost all administrative areas.

She also has two sons still living at home, who it appears, are not moving out anytime soon 😊

#### Sean Constable

Sean has been with CMCA for the past 6 years. His role is to continue to seek out new RV Park sites, undertake the planning, engage contractors to get the construction done

and then ensure smooth operation of each park. He will usually be asked to sort out equipment or grounds issues when they arise.

Sean came from a local government background in Scone NSW, where he was the Manager Economic Development & Tourism for 12 years. He worked in the rural financial field for about 18 years helping farmers remain viable.

He is a farmer at heart, with his parents only retiring from the land at Glen Innes in 2023. He always has a veggie garden on the go and supplies surplus vegies to staff.



Emily King and Sean Constable

### Custodian vacancies for 2024

In order of urgency:

Ingham QLD: 1<sup>st</sup> May – 3<sup>rd</sup> June

Charleville QLD: 1<sup>st</sup> May – 24<sup>th</sup> May

Geeveston TAS: 1<sup>st</sup> May – 31<sup>st</sup> May

Humpty Doo NT: 1<sup>st</sup> May – 30<sup>th</sup> June

Innisfail QLD: 15<sup>th</sup> May – 9<sup>th</sup> August

Temora NSW: 27<sup>th</sup> May – 1<sup>st</sup> July

If you can assist with any part of these vacancies, please contact Emily at [emilyking@cmca.au](mailto:emilyking@cmca.au) or call her on 02 4978 8788.