

SUBMISSION FROM THE HOBART WALKING CLUB TO THE PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS ON THE THREE CAPES TRACK

The Tasman Peninsula (including also the Forestier Peninsula) is one of the premier walking destinations for the Hobart walking club. It is a year round destination for day walks and for some overnight walks and is frequently used as a short notice alternative destination when there is bad weather in the Southwest or elsewhere.

The Hobart Walking Club has also had a pre-eminent role in the development of walking tracks and campsites on the Tasman Peninsula, having established many of the tracks through the volunteer labour of club members over many years.

A survey of our members at a general meeting of the Club back in 2008 established clear agreement of our membership with the following principles: -

- All year access to all currently used areas;
- No added costs after park entry fees;
- Day to long weekend walking and camping to continue where it currently occurs;
- Start of walks maintained where they are (or only mutually agreed changes);
- Current directions of walks maintained for locals;
- No number limits for Tasmanians;
- Proper and formal recognition of our Club input.

The HWC support the Three Capes Track with caveats that we Tasmanians may continue to have access at no extra cost all year around. We built the extensive original track infrastructure which now attracts tourists to the area. We walkers also do a lot of track work free of charge with / for Government Land Managers and the public which is of significant community benefit.

Our Club does not support reduced access for our members as has occurred for the Overland Track where access without fees and permits is reduced to the worst four months of the year for weather contrary to prior agreements and discussions with Tasmanian walkers. Our Club would suggest that at the Three Capes Track should be available for local Tasmanians to walk the track without additional fees other than standard park fees.

Extra fees and restrictions are unfairly biased against Tasmanians who on average have a much lower average income than mainlanders. In addition, we would advocate for unrestricted access for day walks using parts of the Track as access so that our traditional popular club walks can continue to be provided to members.

There are health benefits in maintaining ease of access for Tasmanian to walk the Three Capes Track and especially in allowing unrestricted access for day walks using parts of the Track.

In addition HWC members are keen that we keep at least the recently agreed three designated camping areas (Retakuna Creek, near Lunchtime Creek and behind the Blade) for Cape Pillar area walks, and this needs to be permanently assured.

Many of our members have suggested the Three Capes Track could be less obvious / narrower, especially where one-way and low use. The current upgrade to Cape Haury seems to be built to a standard in excess of what may be required.

The Club would wish to be consulted on the development of tracks and camping areas associated with the further development of the Three Capes Track. In particular we would wish to have input on any proposed track relocations or closures or changes to access and on the closure of any current campsites.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.