

<i>Applicability:</i>	PWS Policy and Procedures	<i>Issue Date:</i> 15 May 2014
Parks and Wildlife Service	PWS Cave Access Policy PWS P- 034	<i>Revision Date:</i>
<i>Status: Final</i>		<i>Revision No:</i>

**DEPARTMENT OF PRIMARY INDUSTRIES, PARKS,  
WATER and ENVIRONMENT  
Parks and Wildlife Service**



## Cave Access Policy

### **Acknowledgement of Country**

*The Parks and Wildlife Service pays respect to the Tasmanian Aboriginal people as the traditional and original owners and continuing custodians of this land; and acknowledge the Elders – past and present.*

As traditional and ongoing owners of Country, it is acknowledged that caves may be of special significance to Aboriginal people. This policy would only apply to caves on reserved land managed by the Parks and Wildlife Service and would not affect Aboriginal people's access to caves for cultural purposes. The intention is to provide suitable access controls over caves subject to high levels of recreational use.

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## 1. Purpose of this Policy

To provide a classification and cave zoning system and define a process to classify caves managed under the *National Parks and Reserves Management Act 2002 (NPRMA)* in order to protect karst values and guide the appropriate use and management of those caves.

## 2. Statement of Intent

To respect country so that Tasmanian Aboriginal cultural heritage is not disturbed.

To manage cave-based activities to ensure that unacceptable impacts to natural and cultural values are avoided.

To identify caves or sections of caves suitable for cave-based activities across a spectrum of skills and experience levels.

To identify caves where access needs to be highly regulated or restricted for the protection of values present.

To establish consistent standards and practices for cave management in all areas managed by the PWS.

To develop a strategic context for responding to commercial applications and enquiries about recreational and training uses of caves.

To use best knowledge management practices to achieve this.

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### 3. Definitions

<b>AQF</b>	Australian Qualifications Framework
<b>ASF covers or equivalent</b>	See Appendix 4.
<b>Cave</b>	A natural cavity of sufficient size for a person to enter. The most extensive caves are solutional features in limestone and dolomite; however, caves also form through other processes (e.g. sandstone caves, sea caves, boulder caves, fissure caves, etc.).
<b>Cave Class</b>	Upper level category within the Cave Access Zoning System established by this policy. Cave class specifies the broad intent for managing whole caves.
<b>Cave Zone</b>	Spatial unit within the Cave Access Zoning System established by this policy. Cave zones specify objectives, prescriptions and conditions for managing specific areas within caves or, in some cases, whole caves.
<b>Cave-based Activity</b>	Any human activity within a cave, including but not limited to recreation, exploration, mapping, diving, working bee, training, education, professional development, cultural event, commercial tour, research, management or rescue.
<b>Cave guide</b>	An employee of the PWS or cave lessee who conducts tours in show caves.
<b>Established Caving Club</b>	A group dedicated primarily to caving, as reflected in the group's constitution and activities at all levels, which has existed for a period of at least 5 years. Including but not limited to groups which are corporate members of the Australian Speleological Federation or, in the case of overseas cavers, a similar national or international peak body.
<b>Experienced cave leader</b>	A person with demonstrable skills and experience in safely managing groups in caves in accordance with accepted minimal impact caving practices. Experienced cave leaders will have practical experience in caving and group management gained over a period of years. They will have first-hand knowledge of the cave(s) they are operating in. When leading groups of inexperienced cavers, they will be familiar with minimal impact caving guidelines and their practical application to cave-based activities. They may hold qualifications relevant to caving and group management from an accredited training provider.
<b>Interested Parties</b>	Interested Parties may have a general interest in caves and cave management and include but are not limited to individuals, Tasmanian Aboriginal people, Karstcare, caving clubs, commercial operators, outdoor education providers,

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	outdoor experience programs and school groups.
<b>Karst</b>	Distinctive landforms and terrain formed by the greater solubility of certain rock types in natural waters. Karstic rock types in Tasmania are limestone, dolomite and magnesite.
<b>Karst Reserves Management Group</b>	Internal PWS/DPIPWE committee to oversee development and implementation of policy, provide advice and policy direction concerning cave and karst management, and to facilitate State-wide communication and consistency on cave and karst matters. Further detail provided below.
<b>Key Stakeholders</b>	A sub-set of Interested Parties comprising of any or all of the listed Interested Parties (see above) who have a strong interest in, or are a group which regularly uses a particular cave or cave system.
<b>Limited access</b>	As defined under Regulation 17 of the National Parks and Reserved Land Regulations 2009 access to certain areas may be limited. That is: Unless a person holds a permit, they must not enter or remain in or on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a restricted area as declared in a management plan; or</li> <li>• in a cave on reserved land if access is prohibited by a sign displayed near the entrance of the cave or by a public notice published in a newspaper.</li> </ul>
<b>Minimal impact caving</b>	Practices specified in (1) the ASF Minimal Impact Caving Code ( <a href="http://www.caves.org.au/s_minimal.htm">http://www.caves.org.au/s_minimal.htm</a> ) and (2) general or site-specific procedures established by the PWS, as communicated via signs, brochures, permit conditions, written or verbal instructions or other means.
<b>NPRMA</b>	<i>National Parks and Reserves Management Act 2002</i>
<b>Permit</b>	An authority to enter a Limited Access area or Restricted Area, issued in accordance with Regulation 26 and 28 of the National Parks and Reserved Land Regulations 2009
<b>PRM</b>	Parks and Reserves Manager
<b>PRMA</b>	Parks and Reserves Management Area
<b>RAA</b>	Reserve Activity Assessment (see Reserve Activity Assessment Policy).
<b>Restricted Area</b>	As defined in Section 37 of the NPRMA. i.e. A management plan for any reserved land may declare that the reserved land, or any part of the reserved land, is a restricted area to which the public does not have a general right of access.
<b>RSF</b>	Reserve Standards Framework (see Reserve Standards Framework Policy).
<b>Special</b>	These zones protect cave values at sites which are

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<b>Management Zones</b>	considered too sensitive for recreational caving activities (see Appendix 2).
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## 4. Responsibilities

This policy is intended for use by senior Parks and Wildlife Service regional staff including Regional Managers, Regional Operation Managers, Parks and Reserves Managers, Senior Rangers, Regional Planners and also by Hobart staff working in Commercial Visitor Services and Planning Services.

### Regional Managers (RMs) & Regional Operations Managers (ROMs)

- RMs can endorse recommended cave classifications and associated zoning system prior to approval from the General Manager PWS
- In accordance with Section 89 of the *National Parks and Reserves Management Act 2002*, RMs and ROMs have been given the delegation to approve the granting of authorities (permits) to enter limited access caves or limited access areas within caves.

### Park and Reserves Managers

- Provide recommendations to the RM regarding the application of the Cave Access Classification and Zoning System for caves in their management area.
- Monitor the effective application of the relevant standards and prescriptions to classified caves in accordance with this policy and zoning system.

### Senior Rangers:

- Provide input to the visitor use, management intent and application of the Cave Access Classification and Zoning System to the caves in their management area.
- Apply the standards and prescriptions to classified caves in accordance with this policy and zoning system.

### Regional Planners:

- Advise and support operational staff with this process.
- Apply the standards and prescriptions to classified caves in accordance with this policy and zoning system in undertaking regional planning for karst areas.

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## 5. Background

The PWS is responsible for the management of a large number of caves located on reserved lands across Tasmania, including some of the most extensive and highly decorated caves in Australia. These caves contain a variety of natural and cultural values, some of which are highly sensitive and susceptible to permanent damage if disturbed.

Cave sites may contain stencils and other forms of Tasmanian Aboriginal culture, such as midden materials and stone tools. Caves may have a combination of cultural heritage materials, but also may have had remains in the past that are no longer visible.

The PWS acknowledges that speleological groups and individual cavers have made significant contributions to the exploration, documentation and management of caves on reserved land in Tasmania. Effective implementation of this policy and conservation of caves generally depend on ongoing support from these groups and individuals.

The principle threat to the integrity of caves on reserved land is the inappropriate behaviour of visitors to these sites. Some impacts are a result of a lack of awareness of minimal impact caving practices, others a result of the cumulative effect of numerous minor impacts over time. This is especially true of 'wild caves', which may receive hundreds of visitors annually but lack protective infrastructure as found within show caves.

Historically, the PWS has managed cave-based activities at highly sensitive caves by restricting access and through licensing of commercial operators to take clients (generally in-experienced users) under supervision into selected wild caves. This approach to karst management is inadequate for addressing the increasing use of caves by different groups.

There are currently a number of significant management issues consistently presenting at many sites around the state including congestion and conflicts at popular caves, evidence of unacceptable rates of environmental degradation, and demand for access to additional caves for commercial purposes by existing and new operators. Accordingly, this policy establishes procedures for zoning caves for different purposes, and for regulating access to these in accordance with conditions appropriate to different levels of cave sensitivity and caving experience of visitors. This will provide a strategic context for balancing conservation objectives with the demand for cave-based activities.

This policy provides a framework for implementing cave zoning prescriptions contained in management plans for the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area, Mt Field National Park and Mole Creek Karst National Park. It will also satisfy a similar requirement under the Tasmanian Reserve Management Code of Practice.

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Relevant legislation, codes and policy documents:

- *National Parks and Reserves Management Act 2002*
- National Parks and Reserves Regulations 2009 (Regulation 17 & 28)
- *Tasmanian Reserve Management Code of Practice 2003*
- *Nature Conservation Act 2002*
- *Threatened Species Protection Act 1995*
- P-004 Reserve Standards Framework (internal PWS policy document)

## 6. Policy

Tasmanian Aboriginal people ask that visitors to caves show respect for and protect Aboriginal heritage. The *Aboriginal Relics Act 1975* defines a person's responsibilities to protect Aboriginal heritage throughout Tasmania. The protocols and practices provided in Appendix 1 are intended to protect Aboriginal heritage in caves.

### **Karst Reserves Management Group**

DPIPWE's Karst Reserves Management Group (KRMG) will oversee the development and implementation of this policy and provide consistency on cave and karst matters. The KRMG membership includes Parks and Reserves Managers with karst management responsibilities, a PWS staff member from the respective PRMA with responsibility for karst management, the PWS State-wide Planner, a PWS Commercial Visitor Services representative and the RMC Karst Officer. The KRMG is chaired by a Parks and Reserve Manager, who is responsible for calling meetings and developing the agenda. The group meets as frequently as required but at least on an annual basis. The KRMG is responsible for ensuring that adequate consultation occurs in relation to this policy and the management of caves.

### **Statutory Provisions for Managing Access**

Access to caves may be formally restricted through the application of

- Regulation 17 of the National Parks and Reserved Land Regulations 2009 to limit access; or
- Section 37 of the *National Parks and Reserves Management Act 2002* to restrict access via a management plan.

Caves may be also gated where significant impact to karst values may occur if access is not limited.

In certain circumstances, by way of Regulation 28 of the National Parks and Reserved Land Regulations 2009, an authority may be granted for group activities where it can be shown that environmental risks are acceptable.

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## Cave Classification and Zoning System

The Cave Access Classification and Zoning System (Appendix 2) will be applied to caves managed under the *National Parks and Reserves Management Act 2002*. See Appendix 3 for the Process Map for defining cave zones. Each Region will maintain a record of cave zoning decisions.

Caves which have not been assessed and zoned under this policy, including new discoveries, will be managed to protect their natural and cultural values, in accordance with relevant reserve management plans and the *Tasmanian Reserve Management Code of Practice 2003*. Such caves will not be promoted for public access, considered for commercial purposes or otherwise managed in ways prejudicial to the potential outcomes of future zoning.

Caves known or likely to contain evidence of Aboriginal occupation or caves with special associations for Aboriginal people may be considered for zoning following advice from Aboriginal community representatives.

Where a zoning proposal will impinge on existing patterns of use within a cave, then key stakeholders will be consulted in assessing the proposal. Interested parties will be informed of cave zoning decisions.

## Emergency Management

Access restrictions for Emergency Services would be waived in an emergency situation.

Where-ever practicable, during search and rescue activities and incidents, rescue operators will adhere to the ASF Minimal Impact Rescue Code.

## Issue of Permits and Licences

Permits may be issued to ASF cavers or equivalent (Appendix 4) to enter Limited Access Zones.

Permits will be issued in accordance with Regulations 17, 26 and 28 of the National Parks and Reserved Land Regulations 2009 subject to the criteria set out by this policy. Permit conditions will specify measures appropriate to protect the natural and cultural values of the cave(s) concerned.

Permits to enter Special Management Zones will only be issued in exceptional circumstances related to science or management, in accordance with the Cave Access Classification and Zoning System (Appendix 2).

Commercial visitor services business licence may be granted for relevant cave zones in accordance with Section 40 and 41 of the *National Parks and Reserves Management Act 2002* subject to the criteria set out by this policy. Licence conditions will specify measures appropriate to protect the natural and cultural values of the cave(s) concerned.



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Permits to enter Limited Access Zones may be refused or withdrawn if reasonable grounds exist for believing that the club or individual has failed to comply with conditions attached to a previous permit, will not comply with permit conditions in future or may otherwise act in a manner prejudicial to the sustainable use of caves and the objectives of this policy. In this situation the PWS will provide written advice to the club or individual regarding the reason for the decision.

Annual trip limits and other site-specific conditions of entry may be specified, in conjunction with cave classification and zoning under this policy, to protect natural and cultural values present within a cave.

Where a higher level of support personnel, is needed for special need groups, then a permit may be issued on a case by case basis.

A standardised state-wide system will be established and administered in the Region, for the purpose of issuing permits and filing permit reports. A standard permit format and conditions will be adopted (Appendix 5).

### **Cave Infrastructure**

The level of cave infrastructure permitted within different zones is specified in the Cave Access Classification and Zoning System (Appendix 2).

Fixed anchors for rigging caving ropes ('bolts') are considered low level removable infrastructure for the purposes of this policy. These will be installed, tested and maintained in accordance with the Permanent Resin Bonded Anchors procedure approved by the PWS. The PWS may amend the procedure in consultation with established caving clubs.

Installation or removal of cave infrastructure (including fixed anchors) is not permitted without prior permission from PWS.

Redundant, unsafe or environmentally damaging infrastructure in caves will be removed and disposed of at an approved waste facility outside the reserve.

### **Caving practices**

Cave-based activities are supported, provided they do not result in unacceptable impacts to the environment and are otherwise consistent with this policy.

To ensure that unacceptable impacts do not occur to sensitive features protected by zoning in caves, people or organisations entering Self-reliant or Limited Access Zones must be experienced cavers who are competent and familiar with standard minimal impact caving practices. Entry to Limited Access and Self-reliant Zones is potentially available to people who are 'ASF cavers or equivalent' as defined in Appendix 4.

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Leaders of groups entering the Experienced Leader Access Zone will be required to meet the definition of Experienced Leader as defined in this Policy (Section 3 Definitions and Abbreviations).

Schools and community-based organisations planning to take groups into an Experienced Leader Zone must ensure that they have adequate procedure and practice to support minimal impact caving practices.

Use of acetylene lights is not permitted in caves. Spent carbide left in caves will be removed.

Geocaching is not permitted inside caves.

## 7. Procedures

Procedures for classifying and zoning caves are defined by the Process Map (Appendix 3).

## 8. Policy Owner

Mark Bryce  
Director Operations

## 9. Review

This policy will be reviewed in 3 years from the approval date, or if there is a substantial shift in government planning legislation and/or policy.

## 10. Approval

  
Peter Mooney  
General Manager  
15 May 2014

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## **Appendix 1 – Respecting Aboriginal Heritage in Caves: Protocols and Procedures**

- It is an offence under the *Aboriginal Relics Act 1975* to destroy, damage, deface, conceal, or otherwise interfere with a relic. You must notify Aboriginal Heritage Tasmania (AHT) in Hobart (ph 6165 3152) about any discovery of Aboriginal heritage as soon as possible. AHT will then provide further advice in accordance with the *Aboriginal Relics Act 1975*. For further information about identifying and reporting Aboriginal Heritage, please visit the AHT website [www.aboriginalheritage.tas.gov.au](http://www.aboriginalheritage.tas.gov.au)
- Notify Aboriginal Heritage Tasmania (AHT) in Hobart (ph 6165 3152) about any discovery of Aboriginal heritage as soon as possible. AHT will then provide further advice in accordance with the *Aboriginal Relics Act 1975*.
- Do not sit, walk or leave equipment on cave floors or against walls where there is evidence of Aboriginal heritage.
- Keep photography to a minimum, particularly when Aboriginal heritage is present. Flashes on cameras can harm Aboriginal art displayed on cave walls. Do not place a measurement marker directly onto cave floor heritage items. Any photos are only for personal use and may not be reproduced commercially unless appropriate endorsement is given by Aboriginal communities.
- Do not disturb or dig into ANY cave floor without authority. Aboriginal heritage may not be readily identifiable on the surface. Important Aboriginal heritage material may be just below the surface of ANY cave floor of any horizontal system.
- Do not light fires in caves. There may be Aboriginal rock art which has not been identified and smoke could degrade or obscure these markings.
- Do not engrave any cave walls. There may be Aboriginal rock markings which are not readily identifiable and engraving may distort or obscure them.
- Do not pick up any items that you may think are Aboriginal in origin. Should you inadvertently disturb an artefact, replace it as near as possible to where it was originally located.

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## Appendix 2 – Cave Classification and Zoning System

### Cave Access Zoning System for Reserved Land – Parks and Wildlife Service.

<b>CAVE CLASS</b>	<b>SHOW CAVES</b>	<b>WILD CAVES</b>	<b>RESTRICTED ACCESS CAVES</b>
Overview/ Description	Caves designated for commercial use with areas developed specifically for guided tours utilising formed pathways, artificial lighting and other infrastructure. These caves are available for general public access in the context of formal tours supervised by guides. Show caves may contain undeveloped areas zoned for purposes other than tourism.	Caves suitable for visitation by caving parties across a spectrum of skills and experience levels, in general where no formal restrictions apply to access. These caves generally contain minimal infrastructure to support public access. Selected Wild Caves are available for supervised 'wild caving' activities; others are considered suitable only for trips by experienced Australian Speleological Federation cavers or equivalent (See Appendix 4 for clarification of equivalent). These caves may include highly sensitive passages that are designated as Limited Access or Special Management Zones.	Caves where access is restricted. Caves may be declared as a Restricted Area within the meaning of the <i>National Parks and Reserves Management Act 2002</i> or as having Limited Access under Regulation 17 of the National Parks and Reserved Land Regulations 2009. They include highly sensitive caves that include frequent and or outstanding sensitive component features. Access to these caves requires advanced caving skills to navigate through highly sensitive areas without causing unacceptable environmental impacts. Where open for recreational access, restricted access caves are available for trips by experienced cavers who are full members of Australian Speleological Federation or equivalent, subject to site-specific conditions to protect cave environments.

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<b>ACCESS ZONES</b>	<b>Show Cave Zone</b>	<b>General Access Zone</b>	<b>Experienced Leader Access Zone</b>	<b>Self-reliant Zone</b>	<b>Limited Access Zone</b>	<b>Special Management Zone</b>
<b>Statement of intent</b>	To protect cave values and showcase outstanding underground scenery in a safe and controlled setting	To protect cave values and provide opportunities for introductory caving experiences in largely natural settings by parties who may lack prior caving experience	To protect cave values and provide opportunities for more extended caving experiences in largely natural settings by parties supervised by experienced cave leaders	To protect cave values and provide opportunities for caving experiences requiring an advanced level of technical caving competence by all participants	To protect cave values and provide opportunities for caving experiences requiring an advanced level of technical caving competence by all participants, at very sensitive sites where access is formally restricted	To protect cave values at sites which are considered too sensitive for recreational caving activities
<b>Relevant cave classes</b>	Show Caves	Wild Caves	Wild Caves Show Cave	Wild Caves	Show Caves Wild Caves Restricted Access Caves	Show Caves Wild Caves Restricted Access Caves
<b>Principle user group</b>	General public - inexperienced cavers	For general public with limited or no caving experience	General public seeking a guided 'wild caving' experience supervised by Experienced Leaders.	Experienced cavers who are full members of Australian Speleological Federation or equivalent	Experienced cavers who are full members of Australian Speleological Federation or equivalent	Restricted access for management or scientific purposes only.
<b>Permit/Authority requirements</b>	Yes (Entry Fee)	No. Bookings to access some caves may be required	Bookings to access some caves may be required	Full ASF membership or equivalent (no authority required)	Standard Restricted Access Cave Authority required. Bookings to access some caves may be required	Authority may be issued for scientific or management purposes only.

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<b>May be available for external commercial operators</b>	Yes – must be leased or licensed	Yes – must be licenced	Yes - must be licenced	No	No	No
<b>Search and Rescue Activities</b>	Training exercises not permitted. Familiarisation trips permitted.	Training exercises and familiarisation trips permitted.	Training exercises and familiarisation trips permitted under supervision from experienced cave leaders.	Training exercises and familiarisation trips for selected personnel permitted under supervision from experienced cave leaders.	Training exercises not permitted. Familiarisation trips for selected personnel permitted under supervision from experienced cave leaders.	Not appropriate for training or familiarisation.
<b>Supervision</b>	Yes (Cave guide)	No but experienced leader recommended	Yes, all groups to be supervised by an experienced cave leader	Yes, all groups to be supervised by an experienced cave leader	Yes, all groups to be supervised by an experienced cave leader and or an accredited cave guide for certain caves.	Yes, PWS/DPIPWE staff with prior experience. An appropriately experienced ASF caver or equivalent may be considered.
<b>Max Party Sizes</b>	Specified in PWS business plans or stipulated in commercial arrangements for external operators.	12 (including leaders)	12 (including leaders)	6	6	4
<b>Maximum Daily Cave Numbers</b>	Specified in PWS business plans or stipulated in commercial arrangements for	24 (where bookings apply)	24	12	6	4

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	external operators.					
<b>Minimum caving standards to be adhered to.</b>	Clean shoes. Appropriate clothing	ASF Minimal Impact Caving Code and Tasmanian Activity Adventure Standards Caving should be adhered to.	ASF Minimal Impact Caving Code and Tasmanian Activity Adventure Standards Caving to be adhered to.	ASF Minimal Impact Caving Code and Tasmanian Activity Adventure Standards Caving to be adhered to.	ASF Minimal Impact Caving Code and Tasmanian Activity Adventure Standards Caving to be adhered to.	ASF Minimal Impact Caving Code and Tasmanian Activity Adventure Standards Caving to be adhered to.
<b>Recommended RSF classification for cave entrance</b>	Day use Comfort (Complex)	Day Use Get Away (Mid)	Day Use Get Away (Basic to Mid)	NMVS – not managed for visitor services	NMVS – not managed for visitor services	NMVS – not managed for visitor services
<b>Level of permitted cave infrastructure</b>	Broad range of infrastructure required to facilitate public presentation; subject to RAA process and use of approved materials.	Infrastructure to support public access may be permitted using approved materials.(e.g. ramps, steps, viewing platforms); RAA process to be followed	Low level removable infrastructure only, for environmental protection and safety purposes using approved materials	Low level removable infrastructure only, for environmental protection and safety purposes using approved materials	Low level removable infrastructure only, for environmental protection and safety purposes using approved materials	Low level removable infrastructure only, for environmental protection and safety purposes using approved materials
<b>Infrastructure materials permitted</b>	No restrictions on material type as long as it is relatively inert when exposed to the relevant cave environment.	Materials to be used are to be inert and able to be removed with minimal impact to cave.	Materials to be used are to be inert and able to be removed with minimal impact to cave.	Materials to be used are to be inert and able to be removed with minimal impact to cave.	Materials to be used are to be inert and able to be removed with minimal impact to cave.	Materials to be used are to be inert and able to be removed with minimal impact to cave.
<b>Signage</b>	Regulatory signage permitted at cave entrance.	Regulatory signage permitted at cave entrance.	Regulatory signage permitted at cave entrance. Signs may	Signs generally not provided however regulatory signs may	Signs generally not provided however regulatory signs may	Signs generally not provided. Signs may be installed within the

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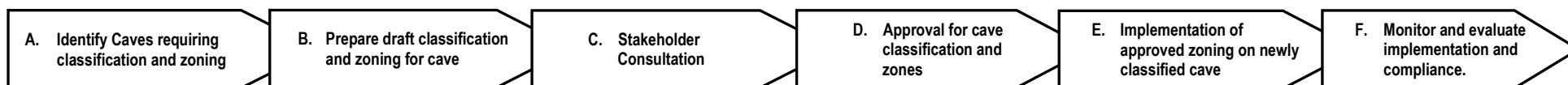
	Interpretation signs may be installed outside the cave in accordance with RSF standards. Signs may be installed within the cave for management purposes.	Interpretation signs may be installed outside the cave in accordance with RSF standards. Signs may be installed within the cave for management purposes.	be installed within the cave for management purposes.	be present at cave entrance. Signs may be installed within the cave for management purposes.	be present at cave entrance. Signs may be installed within the cave for management purposes.	cave for management purposes.
<b>Route marking permitted and type allowed</b>	Hardening of track surfaces and installation of handrails and barriers permitted with internal lighting systems permitted as necessary.	Generally, routes will be defined with 3 mm synthetic line. Other approaches and materials may be approved on a case by case basis.	Generally, routes will be defined with 3 mm synthetic line. Other approaches and materials may be approved on a case by case basis.	Generally, routes will be defined with 3 mm synthetic line. Other approaches and materials may be approved on a case by case basis.	Generally, routes will be defined with 3 mm synthetic line. Other approaches and materials may be approved on a case by case basis.	Generally, routes will be defined with 3 mm synthetic line. Other approaches and materials may be approved on a case by case basis.
<b>Appropriate Level of Publicity</b>	Actively promoted for tourism (intrastate, interstate, overseas)	May be promoted as a caving venue	May be promoted as a caving venue	Not to be promoted as a caving venue	Not to be promoted as a caving venue	Not to be promoted as a caving venue
<b>Monitoring levels required</b>	Monitoring recommended where deemed necessary i.e. radiation monitoring for cave guides.	Monitoring to include frequency of access within this zone (e.g. Registration Book/Counter). Monitoring for environmental impacts where deemed necessary.	Monitoring to include frequency of access within this zone. Monitoring for environmental impacts where deemed necessary.	Monitoring to include frequency of access within this zone. Monitoring for environmental impacts where deemed necessary.	Monitoring to include frequency of access within this zone. Monitoring for environmental impacts where deemed necessary.	Monitoring to include frequency of access within this zone. Monitoring for environmental impacts where deemed necessary.



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### Appendix 3 – Process Map for Defining Cave Zones

**Program:** Natural Resource Management  
**Process Name:** Cave Classification and Access Zoning  
**Process Owner:** Karst Reserve Management Group (KRMG)  
**Process Clients:** PWS Staff and key interested parties  
**Process Objective:** Implement Cave Access Policy



<b>Activities</b>	<b>A1 Identify Caves for Zoning:</b> Field centres to identify list of caves in priority order for zoning, together with other key stakeholders and persons with specialist knowledge of caves in the area.	<b>B1 Establish Project Team:</b> Each cave to be assigned a project leader and project team. Team should include staff from the PRMA/Region, RMC Karst Officer and other key stakeholders with specialist knowledge of the cave.	<b>C1 Consult With Interested Parties and Key Stakeholders:</b> Prepare communications plan for consultation. Meet with key stakeholder groups and discuss draft zoning document.	<b>D1 Regional Manager Approval:</b> Regional Manager to endorse final version of cave classification and zoning plan. Refer document to Manager Operations.	<b>E1 Preparation of Project Delivery Plan:</b> Project team advised by PRM to proceed to develop project delivery plan.	<b>F1 Monitor Progress:</b> Project Manager to develop monitoring plan for monitoring progress and compliance against project plan in accordance with PWS Monitoring and Reporting System
	<b>A2 PRM Review:</b> Cave selection list to be reviewed by PRM and highest priority caves within respective PRM areas to be identified	<b>B2 Advise interested parties:</b> Identify interested parties and advise them of the intention to classify/zone.	<b>C2 Comment Period:</b> Provide key stakeholder groups with draft document and allow 4 weeks to provide feedback on draft.	<b>D2 Manager Operations Approval:</b> Manager Operations to endorse final version of cave classification and zoning plan. Refer document to General Manager	<b>E2 RIC Review of Project Plan:</b> Project plan to be reviewed by RIC, request amendment or refer to PRM for approval	<b>F2 Report Progress:</b> Regular progress reports to be provided by the Project Manager to RIC, PRM, KRMG and RM.
	<b>A3 KRMG Review :</b> KRMG to meet and review caves nominated by PRM for zoning	<b>B3 Values and Recreation Assessment of Cave:</b> Team to identify values present, the level of recreational use and current impacts.	<b>C3 Review Period:</b> Project team to review feedback and consider changes where appropriate. A schedule of comments to be kept with draft responses to be provided.(draft document to be prepared)	<b>D3 General Manager Approval:</b> General Manager PWS to approve final version of document.	<b>E3 PRM Review of Project Plan:</b> Project plan to be reviewed by relevant PRM, request amendment or approve	<b>F3 Notification of Project Completion:</b> Project Manager to advise RIC, PRM, KRMG and RM once project is completed.
	<b>A4 Regional Manager Approval:</b> Cave sites recommended for zoning sent to respective Regional Manager for approval to proceed with classification process.	<b>B4 Cave Mapping:</b> A cave map will be prepared for recommended cave sites. Map needs to provide the ability to clearly zone all accessible areas of the cave system.	<b>C4 Revised Document Reviewed by KRMG:</b> KRMG to meet to review any revisions made to draft document including schedule of comments and draft responses. Request amendments or refer to respective Regional Manager.	<b>D4 Interested Parties Advised of Zoning Decisions</b> (includes key stakeholders as a sub-group of interested parties)	<b>E4 Implementation of Project Plan:</b> Project Team to commence cave zoning project	<b>F4 Monitor implementation of cave zoning:</b> Monitor implementation and compliance issues with the zoning system for the cave.

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	<b>B5 Prepare draft classification and zoning document:</b> to include mapping information for cave as well as detail on proposed signage and track marking both outside and within the cave.(document template to be developed). Conditions for access to be developed.				<b>F5 Review Cave Zoning:</b> Review any significant issues identified and refer back to KRMG for discussions and further actioning where appropriate.
	<b>B6 Draft Reviewed by KRMG:</b> KRMG to meet to review the draft cave zoning document. Request amendments or refer to respective Regional Manager.				
	<b>B7 Draft Reviewed by RM:</b> Regional Manager to review and request amendments or provide approval to refer to key interested parties.				

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### RACI Table: Cave Classification and Access Zoning

Activity Ref.	Description	Ranger in Charge	Parks and Reserves Manager	Karst Reserve Management Group	PWS Project Team	Regional Manager	Manager Operations	General Manager
A1	Field Centres to identify a list of caves within their respective areas that should be considered for classification.	R	C					
A2 - A4	Proposed caves for zoning to be reviewed and final list approved			R		A		
B1	Identify Project Team for development and implementation of cave zoning system.	R	A	I				
B2-B5	Undertake values assessment and preparation of draft cave zoning document	C	C		R			
B6-B7	Review draft cave zoning document	R	R	R		A		
C1	Prepare stakeholder engagement communications plan for RM approval.	C	C		R	A		
C1-C3	Undertake consultation process with key stakeholder groups	I	I		R			
C4	Review comments and any revision to first draft	C	C	A	R			
D1-D3	Final approval of cave zoning document		R			C	C	A
D4	Interested Parties advised of zoning decisions	I	I		R			
E1	Develop project plan for implementation of cave zoning.	C	C		R			
E2-E3	Review and approve project delivery plan	R	A	I				
E4	Implement project plan				R			
F1-F4	Monitor, review progress and report on outcomes of cave zoning project	I	I	I	R	I		
F5	Review implementation of cave zoning and identify any significant issues	C	C	R				

#### Definitions:

- R - Responsible:** Person who is responsible for implementing the activity in accordance with established policy and procedures.  
They may undertake the bulk of the work associated with an activity or delegate this work.  
They usually make decisions but must have written approval from those persons listed as Approve.  
If there is no officer listed under Approve for a particular activity then they are also fully accountable for the decisions or output/outcome.
- A - Approve:** The officer that needs to approve any decisions hence they are accountable for the decisions or output/outcome.  
The officer that approves the completed activity and is held fully accountable for it.
- C - Consult:** Must be consulted.  
The responsible officer must consult with the officer listed before recommending or taking a course of action.  
The consultation should be recorded.  
The communication is two-way
- I - Inform:** Must be informed.  
The responsible officer after making a decision or deciding on a course of action is to ensure that officer listed is informed.  
The officer listed under inform can have an opinion on the decision or proposed course of action but the responsible officer is not required to formally consider that input.  
The communication is one-way.

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## **Appendix 4 – Definition of ASF Cavers or Equivalent**

An ASF Caver or equivalent is defined as

- a person who is an individual full member of the Australian Speleological Federation Inc. (ASF) or a member of a club which is a corporate member of the ASF. ASF membership can be verified via the ASF membership database (<http://www.caves.org.au/membership>). Membership of a club affiliated with the ASF, but not a corporate member of it, does not constitute ASF membership for the purpose of this policy
- a group or individual who is not ASF members but is competent in minimal impact caving practices (e.g. experienced overseas cavers, established caving clubs outside ASF and Cave Leaders who have completed accredited training such as the AQF Cave Leaders Certificate 3 or higher). Accordingly, this policy provides for access by non-ASF cavers who are equivalent or commensurate with ASF cavers in minimal impact skills. This must be verified on a case by case basis.

The following guidelines should be applied in assessing applications by non-ASF cavers.

1. An application by a person who is not an ASF caver for authority to enter a Limited Access Zone may be considered, provided the applicant and all accompanying persons have demonstrable skills and experience in minimal impact caving practices.
2. Applications of this type should be accompanied by supporting documentation concerning the minimal impact caving skills and experience of the applicant and accompanying persons. Examples of relevant documentation include:
  - a resume of caving experience;
  - a reference from an experienced caver or an executive officer of a state or national caving body;
  - a certificate in caving skills from an accredited training provider or other recognised authority;
  - membership of an established caving club which upholds minimal impact caving practices.
3. The application may be referred to relevant third parties for advice. Examples of relevant third parties include:
  - DPIPWE Karst Officer;
  - executive officers of an established caving club;
  - Tasmanian Speleological Liaison Council;
  - Australian Speleological Federation;

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- other State or National peak speleological body.
4. The application may be approved if, in the opinion of the responsible PWS officer, the supporting documentation and/or advice received confirms that the applicant and accompanying persons are experienced cavers with knowledge of standard minimal impact caving practices.
  5. The requirement to provide supporting documentation concerning minimal impact caving skills and experience may be waived where the applicant has previously submitted such documentation and been issued an authority to enter a Limited Access Zone.

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## **Appendix 5 – Standard Permit Conditions**

The following conditions apply to all permits for entry to Limited Access Zones. Additional site-specific conditions may be attached to permits as a condition of entry to particular caves.

1. It is the responsibility of the permit holder to ensure that all members of the party are aware of and comply with the permit conditions.
2. The permit holder will be present on the caving trip, unless prevented from doing so by unforeseen circumstances. If the permit holder is not present on the trip, the permit holder will advise the Parks and Wildlife Service (PWS) issuing office accordingly prior to the trip and, if the trip proceeds, delegate responsibility for ensuring compliance with permit conditions to another person within the party.
3. The party size will not exceed six persons including the leader and, where relevant, guide.
4. All members of the party will be individual members of the Australian Speleological Federation (or equivalent) or members of a group that is a corporate member of the ASF, except where specific permission has been sought and obtained for the party to include non-ASF persons.
5. This permit is valid for a single trip to the specified cave, unless stated otherwise on this permit.
6. Caving practices will be consistent with the intent of the ASF Minimal Impact Caving Code. That is, all reasonable measures will be taken to minimise disturbance to the environment and, where relevant, features of historic or cultural significance.
7. Additional site-specific instructions and minimal impact protocol attached to this permit will be adhered to.
8. The party will stay within established routes, where defined by string lines, matting or other means. The party will not enter special management zones, as identified on any map or instruction attached to this permit or delineated in the cave by string lines, sign or other markers.
9. The party will clean boots, gloves and other items as appropriate where washing stations are provided.
10. The following activities are prohibited: use of carbide lighting, underground camping, digging and use of explosives. Except by prior authority from the PWS, no infrastructure including permanent anchors (bolts) will be installed.
11. This permit, duly signed by the PWS Director or a representative, constitutes the only authority to enter the specified cave on the date(s) shown.
12. A post-trip report must be submitted to the PWS issuing office within 14 days of the caving trip (including cancelled trips). This should be done using space provided

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on this permit (with attachments if required), clearly stating the names of all persons present on the trip and briefly describing the activities undertaken. Observations concerning evidence of recent damage or suggestions regarding management of the cave are welcome.