



# The Datum Post

## eNews of the

**Amalgamated Prospectors & Leaseholders Association. WA**



**Representing Prospectors  
Since 1904**

For anyone out there looking for a way to give back to your fellow prospectors we have just the position for you.

The State Treasurer/Membership Officer position has come up and we are looking for suitable candidates to fill this position this year.

Please find the position advert on page 20.

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**APLA Events Calendar**

- Introduction Camp**  
12/04/2024
- APLA Mandurah Branch Meeting**  
5/05/2024
- APLA Perth Branch Meeting**  
22/05/2024
- APLA South West Branch Meeting**  
28/05/2024

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APLA is made up of individual members in 5 Branches throughout the State of WA.

Perth, Mandurah, Goldfields, South West and Albany.

It can only run as effectively as its input from the members. Your contribution at meetings, articles to the Datum Post and help at Open Days and annual camps is much appreciated.



**APLA  
NEEDS  
YOU**

# **From the President's Desk, April 2024**

## **Resource Industry Consultative Committee meeting (RICC) APLA – 20<sup>th</sup> March 2024 Agenda**

APLA attendees: James Allison APLA President and Nathan Ridout APLA State Secretary

APLA provided a submission for the Eligible Mining Activity (EMA) review and DEMIRS indicated that more consultation was required. When will the proposed consultation take place? Response: EMA's are being assessed with the potential to bring them under the Resources Online programme, which will make it easier for applicants.

APLA provided a submission for the Exploration and Programme of Works Guidance. The guidance information was expected to be released in September / October 2023, but nothing has been forthcoming. Can DEMIRS provide an update when we can expect the guidance information to be released. Response: The POW guidance has now been posted on the DEMIRS website.

APLA requests an update on the current status of the 2017 Validation Bill. The State Solicitor's Office and their Federal Counterparts are still discussing how to implement the Validation Bill when considering the Native Title Act.

Has DEMIRS received any confirmation as to when the Aboriginal Heritage surveys will commence, particularly in the eastern and northern goldfields. Response: DEMIRS have been told heritage surveys will commence on the 1<sup>st</sup> April and it will be on a "first in first served basis"

APLA has been informed that the compliance with the marking out provisions are under review since the *Forrest & Forrest vs O'Sullivan & Ors* [2020] WASC 468 decision. Can DEMIRS provide any further details of this review. No response was provided.

APLA provided a submission for Fee for Objections in October 2023. Can DEMIRS provide an update on any decisions made to date. Response: All submissions have been reviewed and a recommendation has been sent to the mines minister to present to parliament.

APLA has been made aware that the Aboriginal Lands Trust Estate status has been changed to allow for freehold title to be granted to aboriginal lands held in trust over the goldfields and central desert regions. The affected land consists of 284 properties covering 21 million hectares. Has DEMIRS been made aware of this significant change and how will DEMIRS manage tenement applications in the future. Response: DEMIRS are aware of the conversion request and wouldn't comment any further until new information becomes available.

APLA has received information regarding the North Pole Dome/ Meentheena area being assess for inclusion onto the National Heritage List. If this area is included on the National Heritage List the area will be

protected under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999, which means an approval must be obtained from the Australian Government Minister for Environment before any activity takes place that could significantly impact on the National Heritage values of the area. Has DEMIRS received any information regarding this proposal and has DEMIRS assessed the potential impact on the prospecting and mineral exploration of the area in question. Response: DEMIRS has received a proposal from the National Heritage Trust and will provide feedback after a detailed review.

Response: Yes – DEMIRS has been approached by DCCEEW and a meeting was attended in March 2023 in which we were informed of the public consultation process planned for the North Pole Dome/ Meentheena National Heritage List proposal. DEMIRS requested that all affected mining tenement holders be consulted directly and subsequently provided a list of mining tenement holders to DCCEEW.

- DCCEEW has recently commenced this consultation process, to which DEMIRS Land Use Planning branch sent a follow up email to all affected parties, clarifying impacted tenements and requested that we be cc'd into all holder responses, using the email [landuseplanning@dmirs.wa.gov.au](mailto:landuseplanning@dmirs.wa.gov.au)
- DEMIRS will be undertaking our own geological resource impact assessment of this proposal and will factor in any comments/submissions we receive from tenement holders.

**Meeting with Hon. David Michael (new Mines minister) 19<sup>th</sup> March 2024** – James Allison – APLA President

APLA will be seeking the current status of the 2017 Validation Bill knowing the State Solicitor' Office is speaking with their Federal counterparts so mining tenements are valid under both state and federal law. Response: As stated above, this is an ongoing issue and the minister couldn't provide any further details.

The 40E permit system directly applies to prospectors seeking ground to explore/ detect. However, APLA members face numerous obstacles when dealing with pastoralists, exploration and mining companies.

Would the Minister direct DEMIRS to undertake an education programme, specifically targeting the pastoralists, exploration and mining companies, to inform these parties of the rights of a prospector, when using the 40E permit system. Response: Specific details were provided and the minister will take up this issue with the Lands minister.

Standard Conditions for Mining tenements, (reference No.660) refers to the Regional Standard Heritage Agreement (RSHA) and the 90days allowed for Native Title Prescribed Body Corporate to request a RSHA after the grant of the tenement. The tenement applicant has already waited 4 months for the National Native Title Tribunal to assess the application upon submission, then if there are no objections, after grant by DEMIRS, having to wait a further 90 days to see if a Prescribed Body Corporate (PBC) requires the tenement applicant to enter into a RSHA. With the view to expedite the approval process, would the Minister consider implementing a parallel assessment of the application, the NNTT assessment and the PBC requirements. This will have a twofold effect being 1. Allowing the applicant to assess whether to proceed with the application or withdraw and, 2. Save time and valuable resources if the application is withdrawn. Response: See below in quarterly catchup notes.

Compliance section. At present there are 2 investigation officers based in Perth which, by their very location, positions them far removed from where daily breaches of the Mining Act occur. It is common knowledge that most of the breaches take place in the northern and eastern goldfields. Would the Minister consider employing 4 additional officers to have 2 based in Kalgoorlie and 2 based in Karratha. Response: The minister is aware of the problems surrounding compliance and will discuss with senior DEMIRS staff the possibility of additional staff.

The Fee for Objection proposal and the introduction of a \$859 fee will be counterproductive for prospecting and exploration throughout the state. The modelling for the Warden's court cost recovery shifts the onus onto the tenement holder, whereby the tenement holder must pay to protect their given rights under the 1978 Mining act and as the holder of a granted tenement. APLA is of the opinion that the Warden's court operations costs should be funded via the Treasury department from funds gained from mining royalties. Response: The minister is aware of the costs for the additional Warden and was open to how the 2 Warden could be funded. He expressed acceptance to APLA's suggestion how the additional Warden could be funded.

**Aboriginal Heritage Native Title Industry Liaison Committee (AHNTILC) 19<sup>th</sup> March 2024** APLA representatives – James Allison, Julie Bradley and Tim Bates

### **Discussion points relevant to APLA**

#### **ACH Act implementation update (Vaughan Davies):**

DPLH have filled all Regional Director positions but are still filling team roles. Regional offices include Kalgoorlie, Karatha, Geraldton, South-West and Kimberley.

Since 15 November there have been approximately 600 email enquiries, 100 forms, 120 ACHknowledge requests for advice and 212 individuals registered on ACHknowledge (Around 20 new members per month).

There have been 209 new places lodged from survey reports and TO lodgement. The backlog of lodged places that need to be assessed is currently around 16,000.

There have been 8 new Section 18 applications, 3 section 16s, 44 Regulation 10s and 7 New Information notifications. 1 stop work order has been issued. DPLH is encouraging the use of Regulation 10s for small projects with low impact such as maintenance and are looking to develop some guidance for this. APLA suggested time extensions be made available for Reg 10s.

The Department is currently working on developing the Heritage Survey Program (HSP) and Capacity Building Program (CBP). A forum is planned with Native Title parties for next week.

The intention for the HSP is for clearance surveys to identify where heritage is or isn't regardless of activity type. The focus will be on providing a reliable Register. The HSP will not be available to larger companies.

DPLH are still developing criteria, a prioritisation process and setting up a panel of heritage professional providers. The funding available is \$5m per annum for 10 years. It is expected it will take around 6 months to set up funding arrangements including procurement panel, but applications for surveys will be available through ACHKnowledge from 1 April 2024. There was some discussion around the lack of availability of heritage professionals and Native Title parties with concerns that the additional demand will create further blockages and price increases. DPLH are talking to universities re supply of professionals but agreed a collaborative approach with industry is required to manage demand and issues arising.

The CBP will be focused on Native Title parties, more around building capacity for consultation and engagement. Funding is \$8m per annum. There is not sufficient funding to cover every NT group so a prioritisation process will need to be developed.

A Cert 3 TAFE course is being developed but content needs to be changed post-repeal. It is expected the course will be available second half of this year.

The recent practice of declaring heritage 'precincts' / no-go areas becoming more common was raised by industry. While these are technically not supported by the Act, relationship management is a concern in these cases.

#### AHNTILC Terms of Reference:

Members supported the draft amended Terms of Reference provided by DPLH.

There were requests for topics to be discussed at the next meeting, including the widening of Heritage Protection Agreements in terms of terms and costs (and rejection of RSHAs and Standard Heritage Agreements), rising costs of surveys and availability of heritage professionals.

Members to send relevant supporting information to Elaine Cunnington prior to the next meeting.

#### DPC Update:

Two new claims recently lodged.

Nearly 90% of the State has now been determined.

Marlinyu Ghoorlie hearing taking place yesterday, today and tomorrow. The Tribunal will give its determination in due course.

DPC asked for feedback on the level of detail provided with Agendas. All participants appreciate level of information with more information being better.

### DEMIRS Update:

The first Tribunal decision that Expedited Procedure does not apply is now available on DEMIRS website. See attached:

### Member Updates:

Members raised the increasing costs around ACH with costs rising around 40-50% over the last few months, as well as issues with delays in approvals with end-to-end times blowing out. They raised the question of are we achieving better outcomes in terms of heritage protection to justify the increases in time and cost. There needs to be a cost-benefit analysis done.

APLA asked about the progress of the transfer of the Aboriginal Lands Trust Estate to freehold title. DPLH advised that the Government is currently consulting.

APLA advised DPLH are presenting an information session on the Register and ACHKnowledge to the Perth Branch meeting tomorrow night. APLA has requested a similar presentation be made available to Goldfields Branch.

APLA sought confirmation of the following issues:

- Are caravans considered private dwellings – response provided after the previous meeting.
- Does the site cost exemption (s18 application) for small businesses include individuals? Yes

### **DEMIRS meeting for Resources Online 18<sup>th</sup> March 2024**

APLA Attendees – James Allison, Julie Bradley and Tim Bates

DEMIRS attendees – Emily Cross and Jing Gao

DEMIRS provided an overview of the proposed development of the new Online system. The system will be for environmental compliance activities and the long-term objective is to bring all applications across existing systems into the one system as well as provide a system that will provide approvals for the new Eligible Mining Activity (EMA) approvals.

The system will be designed in a staged approach with the first phase focusing on applications, including POWs, EMAs, and Mining Proposals.

The Department is keen to engage with stakeholders to inform the development of the system to ensure that the system is both functional and usable when released. At this stage they are putting together a reference group that APLA has been invited to participate on and will have two consultation and testing phases in 2024 with planned release for early 2025.

The Department will also be consulting on the development of EMA and Small Mining Proposal guidance.

APLA attendees raised the following points / issues / questions:

James asked whether the sign-on would use the existing ex numbers. DEMIRS advised that due to system issues the ex-number would not be able to be used and that they were working through how to confirm identities. They are currently exploring using email addresses for sign-on and the suggestion had been made to link sign-on to the Government's MyGov system. James expressed concern over this and expressed the view that it would be best to keep the Department's system stand-alone due to concerns about identity hacking.

DEMIRS gave an overview of the enhanced application tracking ability intended for the new system where each aspect of the application, including requests to other agencies would be visible. James requested more information be provided to applicants around what information is being requested from external agencies and what happens when this information is not provided by the requested timeframe.

Julie relayed some members concerns about using online systems and asked whether over-the-counter hard copy applications would still be accepted. DEMIRS advised they would but some of the intended application tracking functionality would be reduced in these cases. DEMIRS are working to make the system more user-friendly and robust, so it becomes the preferred method for applications.

James asked whether the system would also incorporate MRF (EARS2). DEMIRS advised that this is a longer-term goal but in the short term replacing EARS is the priority.

There was some discussion about current problems with required fields and forms requiring irrelevant boxes to be ticked to progress. DEMIRS advised that they are seeking to make the forms a little more flexible so people can apply for what they need to rather than have to tick boxes to satisfy the system.

Julie passed on member feedback requested examples of filled-in forms for members new to the process. DEMIRS took this feedback on board and will work with APLA to progress this.

Julie mentioned that Kalgoorlie Branch members had expressed an interest in a briefing and that she had sent an email and had not received a response. DEMIRS took this on board.

### **DEMIRS Quarterly Catch-up – 19 March 2024 –**

APLA Attendees – James Allison, Julie Bradley and Tim Bates

DEMIRS attendees – Kristian Dawson, Zoran Vukojevic, Matt Johnston, Emily Cross



## **Discussion points**

APLA has noted several objections being raised in the Warden's court relating to pastoralists (mining companies) who are stating prospecting/ exploration is interfering with the operations of the pastoral lease. APLA is seeking some guidance from DEMIRS when dealing with these frivolous accusations. Further, some pastoralists are demanding an access deed be signed before any proposed activities can commence then demanding a fee per hectare for clearing and a weekly fee for camping.

James relayed concerns about the increase in frivolous, extortive objections as well as obstructive activities such as locking gates and the fact that there has been no action by either DEMIRS or DPLH to stop this behaviour. Christian Dawson advised that objections are a matter for the wardens but undertook to liaise with the Investigations Team to discuss the lack of prosecutions for denial of access issues.

DEMIRS Position Paper 14 – Pegging. APLA proposed a simple change to the Affidavit for a prospecting license or mining lease so the Mining Registrar can differentiate between the actual pegger or the pegging company/ tenement manager. Has DEMIRS received any feedback from the Chief Magistrate or Warden?

DEMIRS advised they are still working through the feedback they received but at this stage are looking at implementing APLA's suggestion but keeping the material they developed as 'guidance' material for best practice pegging. APLA raised the suggestion that pegging requirements should focus on whether the pegging intent is clear.

DEMIRS are still issuing refunds via cheques, which is causing problems for our members whereby some banks are not accepting over-the-counter cheques. Will this refund process be addressed by the new Resources Online system? Response: A discussion was held relating to the amount of refund whereby smaller amount are easily managed/ approved through the banking system. The problem arises when larger amount in the tens or hundreds of thousands are to be refunded and the online banking systems can't cater for such large transfers. DEMIRS has referred this problem to the Treasury department for a solution.

DEMIRS advised that Resources Online will only be dealing with environmental applications, but they have been advised by the Commonwealth Bank that by 2030 cheques will no longer be available. They are currently looking at alternatives. For transactions that have been paid by credit card they are looking to refund back to credit cards but there are some issues with more complex or higher value transactions and they are working through how this can be managed.

As of February 2024, APLA is aware that unsatisfactory service is being provided by DEMIRS staff. APLA members have asked specific questions and responses have been incorrect, not given or delayed for days eventually giving the wrong information. This is becoming a common occurrence, particularly, within the Perth office. What training and/ or monitoring systems are in place to ensure DEMIRS staff are fully competent?

DEMIRS asked for more specific information and examples around this. They are looking at ways to address this but asked that if members experience bad service, please report it.

Under the Eligible Mining Activities (EMA) Spreading of Vegetation Over all Cleared Areas (copy attached), APLA has proposed an alternate tried and tested method, whereby the cleared vegetation is buried onto the floor of the worked area, the excavated material is used to cover the vegetation then the topsoil is spread on top. The final process is to rake the surface to leave deep furrows to help with rainfall penetration and reduce the overland flow. Has DEMIRS reviewed APLA's submission and can any comments be provided?

Regarding the EMAs, DEMIRS advised they published a response to the EMA feedback in June. The next phase is drafting Regulations and APLA's comments will be fed into this process. They are hoping to send these out for consultation in April.

With regard to alternative rehabilitation methods, there was some discussion about this. DEMIRS are happy to have further discussions and potentially work with APLA members to do some demonstration / test sites. Members can propose their own rehabilitation methods as part of their POW application.

APLA has been made aware that the stamp duty to be paid to Revenue WA is no longer required when transferring prospecting licenses from one owner to another. Can DEMIRS confirm this is the case.

DEMIRS confirmed that for a direct sale of prospecting licence stamp duty is no longer required but for more complex transactions, it is best to check. Response: Simple prospecting license transfers won't attract a stamp duty but more complex transfer like miscellaneous or retention licenses will.

Within the Programme of Works (POW) guidelines, under Clause 1.2.5 Heritage, it states that DEMIRS will carry out a parallel assessment but withhold approval until evidence is provided from Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage. APLA seeks clarification now that the amended 1972 AHA is now law, what is actually required. This question has been asked previously but no satisfactory answer was provided. Response: As below.

There was some discussion around this and confusion as to whether APLA was referring to the POW process or tenement application process with regard to parallel processing. DEMIRS clarified that heritage requirements for the POW process would remain the same. Where a mining tenement application is received the relevant tenure office will assess the application to ensure it complies with the *Mining Act 1978* (Mining Act). The Tenure Officer will also advise applicants that they must sign a region specific RSHA and forward it to the relevant RNTBC or NTP and provide DEMIRS with a Mining Act affidavit or statutory declaration that a RSHA has been signed and sent to the relevant RNTBC or NTP.

Once the application is assessed and considered to be Mining Act compliant, the Tenure officer will refer the application to RAB to undertake the necessary native title assessment and notification. Please note DEMIRS will also undertake a preliminary risk assessment and triage process where an application for an exploratory title has been lodged. This is undertaken to determine whether the application is deemed to be in a 'hot spot' (any known risk factors or affecting an area subject to prior determinations made by the NNTT).

DEMIRS will then determine whether the application should be notified pursuant to section 29 of the NTA with the expedited statement included, or in accordance with the full Right to Negotiate.

If DEMIRS concludes that the application can be notified with the expedited procedure statement, DEMIRS will notify the application with the expedited statement included.

Native title parties objecting to the inclusion of the expedited statement may do so within four (4) months of the notification date specified in the relevant notice.

Notification of the application is sent to the NNTT however not all applications are objected to. It is only where a native party objects to the arbitral body (NNTT) against the inclusion of the statement that the NNTT must determine whether the act is an act attracting the expedited procedure. A guideline to case management in the NNTT outlining the approach the NNTT will take in managing objections can be found here [Guide to case management in the NNTT - Objections to the expedited procedure](#).

If an objection to the inclusion of the expedited statement in the notice is lodged with the NNTT within the objection period, DEMIRS will monitor, and case manage the application until:

1. The objection is withdrawn by the objecting party,
2. The objection is dismissed pursuant to section 148(b) of the NTA by the NNTT,
3. The objection proceeds to Determination by the NNTT,
4. The tenement is withdrawn by the applicant; or
5. DEMIRS withdraws the expedited statement.

Depending on the outcome of the objection, DEMIRS will proceed to clear the application for grant or proceed with the application in accordance with the full Right to Negotiate process under the NTA. DEMIRS will only proceed to clear the application for grant if it has fully complied with the future act requirements of the NTA. This includes if:

- No objection was lodged within the specified objection period,
- The objection is withdrawn by the objecting party; or
- The NNTT determines the objection is dismissed.

Standard Condition 660 is one that is offered by the State to Native Title Parties (NTP) during any future act process in accordance with the *Native Title Act 1993* (NTA) which includes the expedited statement.

The State offers this condition to allow for the NTP to consider withdrawing their objection to the inclusion of the expedited statement, thereby allowing for the quicker resolution of the future act process.

It is not common for this condition to be imposed, a review of DEMIRS records shows that it has been imposed on five Exploration Licences and no Prospecting Licences granted in the last two years. The alternative to DEMIRS imposing this condition is for the applicant to engage with the NTP to negotiate an agreement which considers heritage protection processes.

DEMIRS may consider dual/parallel processing upon receiving a written request from the applicant.

APLA would like to know if/ when DMIRS will be updating the prospecting rules poster. Currently it shows several offices that have closed or moved. Response: DEMIRS communications team is currently addressing this.

APLA has previously requested that the Form 21 Application for Mining Tenement included a box stating the term (years) the applicant is seeking. This is also required when applying for a Special Prospecting License. Can DEMIRS provide any update? Response: DEMIRS took this on board and as the Form 21 is in the Regulations it will be included in the next lot of Regulation amendments.

Follow up post-quarterly catchup meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> March 2024

1. APLA provided a submission for the Eligible Mining Activity (EMA) review and DEMIRS indicated that more consultation was required. When will the proposed consultation take place?
  - DEMIRS is still working on the draft Regulations with Parliamentary Counsels Office and is targeting April for consultation, pending drafting availability.
2. APLA provided a submission for the Exploration and Programme of Works Guidance. The guidance information was expected to be released in September / October 2023 but nothing has been forthcoming. Can DEMIRS provide an update when we can expect the guidance information to be released.
  - The finalised guidance and response to submissions were released in December 2023:

[Program of Work and rehabilitation guidance released \(dmp.wa.gov.au\)](http://dmp.wa.gov.au)

3. APLA requests an update on the current status of the 2017 Validation Bill.
  - The High Court decision in *Forrest & Forrest Pty Ltd v Wilson* [2017] HCA 30 has had ongoing implications for the validity of some granted Mining Act tenure. The decision potentially impacts other applications under the Mining Act 1978 (the Mining Act).

- To address the uncertainty from the Forrest decision, the State committed to validating past grants of tenure as well as ensuring security of future grants. This requires coordination with the Australian Government to ensure that a validation by the State does not fall foul of the Native Title Act 1993 (Cth) (the NTA).
  - The State is actively working with the Australian Government to ensure that any Validation Bill will also meet the requirements of the NTA.
4. Has DEMIRS received any confirmation as to when the Aboriginal Heritage surveys will commence, particularly in the eastern and northern goldfields.

The Department of Planning Lands and Heritage (DPLH) are coordinating the broader Heritage Survey Program and may be able to provide a status update at the next Aboriginal Heritage Native Title and Heritage Industry Liaison Committee meeting on Tuesday 19 March.

5. APLA has been informed that the compliance with the marking out provisions are under review since the *Forrest & Forrest vs O’Sullivan & Ors* [2020] WASC 468 decision. Can DEMIRS provide any further details of this review.
- In the Supreme Court decision *Forrest & Forrest Pty Ltd v O’Sullivan & Ors* [2020] WASC 468 it was found that the mining registrar must satisfy himself or herself that marking out is carried out in strict compliance with the Mining Act in order for an application for a mining tenement to be valid. In that case, an affidavit of compliance was held to be insufficient.
  - The Department created a draft position paper 14 titled: “Marking out the land a precondition of making certain mining tenement applications: Mining Registrars’ obligation to consider jurisdiction.” In it, the Department provided draft guidance as to the information an applicant should provide to the mining registrar to ensure that the mining registrar is satisfied that the marking out was carried out in strict compliance with the Mining Act.
  - Position Paper 14 was released for public consultation from 18 July to 15 September 2023. The Department carried out a number of information sessions with key industry stakeholders and the public in general.
  - The Department received a great deal of interest in the draft Position Paper 14 and the Department is working on the submissions and the consequences on the Position Paper. The results of the consultation will be released in due course.
  - The practice of the Department and the mining registrars will remain as is, until the finalisation of the draft Position Paper 14.
6. APLA provided a submission for Fee for Objections in October 2023. Can DEMIRS provide an update on any decisions made to date.
- DEMIRS will give an update at the meeting.

7. APLA has been made aware that the Aboriginal Lands Trust Estate status has been changed to allow for freehold title to be granted to aboriginal lands held in trust over the goldfields and central desert regions. The affected land consists of 284 properties covering 21 million hectares. Has DEMIRS been made aware of this significant change and how will DEMIRS manage tenement applications in the future.
  - DEMIRS is not aware of any such proposal, however similar to the above question – the reform of the ALT Estate and Aboriginal Affairs Planning Authority Act is also being coordinated by DPLH. Detail on the proposed reforms and consultation can be located on the DPLH website - [Aboriginal Affairs Planning Authority Act 1972 \(www.wa.gov.au\)](http://www.wa.gov.au).
8. APLA has received information regarding the North Pole Dome/ Meentheena area being assess for inclusion onto the National Heritage List. If this area is included on the National Heritage List the area will be protected under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999, which means an approval must be obtained from the Australian Government Minister for Environment before any activity takes place that could significantly impact on the National Heritage values of the area. Has DEMIRS received any information regarding this proposal and has DEMIRS assessed the potential impact on the prospecting and mineral exploration of the area in question. This was discussed during the RICC meeting held on the 20<sup>th</sup> March 2024.

**Meeting with Mia Davies 13<sup>th</sup> March 2024** APLA attendees: James Allison, APLA President and Nathan Ridout, APLA State Secretary

APLA had forwarded 2 pastoral access agreements to Mia before the scheduled meeting so she understood the problems facing prospectors and exploration companies. APLA discussed the pastoral deeds and, particular, the demand for a ground disturbance and a camping fee. APLA stated that an applicant has 2 granted prospecting leases in the same area and is actively working on both leases and now the pastoralist has objected to an application of 3 more prospecting leases with a demand to enter into a pastoral deed. There is nothing in the Mining Act or the Mining Regulations where such a demand can be made. APLA requested Mia to ask on the floor of parliament to the relevant minister why pastoralists would resort to such a tactic. Mia noted this issue in her diary and would raise the subject matter during the Grievance session of parliament.

DPLH has held implementation group meetings since September 2023 and the latest Powerpoint shows the timeline for the preliminary works to begin in April 2024 prior to the commencement of any heritage survey. The Cook government, stated in the media late last year, that heritage surveys will commence in the first quarter of 2024, which, from the information contained in the Powerpoint presentation, is not correct. APLA requested Mia to ask the relevant minister when will the heritage surveys begin and where are the priority areas, knowing the northern and eastern goldfields are a priority area for APLA members.

**Meeting with DEMIRS Tara Read - General Manager- Abandoned Mines Programme – 18<sup>th</sup> March 2024**

APLA had provided a submission for the 10-year Mining Rehabilitation Review in November 2023 and part of the submission suggested to get local prospectors involved in the rehabilitation process. See below.

APLA believes that the current allocation of funds solely to rehabilitation of mines that contributed to the fund, does not adequately address the large number of historic abandoned mines and workings requiring rehabilitation across the State. APLA believes that all funds, both principal and interest should be open for use for any historic area that requires rehabilitation.

The current scheme appears to focus on large-scale, expensive areas for rehabilitation. Although it is acknowledged these large-scale areas are a priority, there are also many abandoned workings, including old camps and rubbish dumps that could be rehabilitated at low cost for maximum effectiveness.

It is proposed that a program could be established to engage local prospectors and tenement holders who have existing earthmoving equipment to begin smaller scale rehabilitation projects that reinstate these areas. Old camps and rubbish points on tenements could be cleared and rehabilitated and pathways for disposal arranged through local councils. Shafts should be recorded, fenced off with signage (perhaps done through local Historical Societies and/or DMIRS History Division) giving visitors a snapshot of a time that should always be preserved. Old costeans and scrapings could be backfilled and rehabilitated. These are small scale projects that can make a big difference to both safety and the environment in a relatively short period of time, requiring only a small administration for coordinating and recording purposes.

This is an opportunity for government and land users to work together to restore small scale historic disturbances with moneys available in the MRF budget by engaging tenement holders and land users to begin rehabilitation programs throughout the State. Tenement holders would need to provide consent, and in the case of small-scale tenement holders, should be given first option. By employing local on the ground operators in these regions it would give a financial boost to these small operators who support local economies. It is important that operators with experience in the Mining Industry be engaged for these activities as they can most effectively assess the workings and what is appropriate rehabilitation / conservation. These operators have the capacity, capability and are locally based which would keep costs at a minimum. These are low risk and cost-effective measures that can commence at short notice and can revegetate areas again quickly.

The main discussion centred around available funding with DEMIRS stating that there were very limited funds currently available. APLA stated that the MRF fund had over \$300 million readily available and why couldn't this money be used in the rehabilitation process. DEMIRS stated that State Treasury wouldn't release the principle sum but only make the interest gained from that principle available, which currently is \$3.1 million. APLA questioned why some of the principle can't be used with DEMIRS stating any drawdown from the principle must be repaid. APLA expressed dismay at this approach and stated the MRF money has been paid by the mining industry in the form of royalties and should be used by the mining industry to clean up old legacy sites and make good on abandoned mines. DEMIRS couldn't offer a plausible solution so APLA will continue to raise this issue with the mines minister at the next opportunity.

James Allison APLA State President

# EDITORIAL

Ryan Daws. Editor

Contact:  
aplanews@apla.com.au



## From the Editors Desk

### Road Conditions

It has been a bit of an up and down summer for Western Australians this year.

I would be very easy to plan you prospecting trip from Perth with little consideration for the weather we have experience over the summer months within both the Northern and Easter Goldfields.

Please contact the Pastoral Lease owners of the ground you are planning on Prospecting, I mean not just try but talk to them. I spoke to one the other day out new Leanora and they had rescued 4 vehicles just that day due to being stuck! There is still plenty of water on the ground especially to the East and that is just what is left standing from Summer without any Autum/Winter top ups.

Please be respectful of the area you are traveling into. Chewing up roads and having to call on Pastoralists to rescue you only gives more reasons for people to try and block our access to ground that APLA has worked so hard for over the past 120+ years.

A few nuggets is not worth spoiling it for everyone!

Good luck and safe travels.

### Current Gold Price

For those who are looking to offload their hard-earned yellow stuff, prices look pretty good at the moment, \$3661 at lunch time 12-4-24!

I have read a few articles reporting of a positive price direction being predicted by several agencies and I have heard of numbers like \$4k AUD and \$3k USD, predicted by end of 2025. This of course depends on many factors so I am not saying the current price will stay nor rise but it defiantly looks good to me at the moment!





### Another impressive year for Western Australia's resources sector

Statistics Digest details 2022–2023 as a record-breaking year for the sector.

Western Australia remains a resources powerhouse after another year of stellar mineral and petroleum sales.

The sector recorded \$254 billion of sales in 2022–2023, according to the Statistics Digest released by the Department of Energy, Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety.

The digest provides detailed editorial and statistical information on the performance of Western Australia's resource sector during the past financial year.

In addition to record sales, the sector employed 126,481 full-time equivalent jobs, marking six consecutive financial years of employment growth.

The iron ore sector achieved ground-breaking levels of production during the year, with \$125 billion in sales during 2022–2023. The commodity accounted for 68 per cent of all mineral sales, remaining the backbone of the Western Australian resources sector.

The liquefied natural gas (LNG) industry achieved an all-time high production volume and a production value of \$56 billion.

Twenty-seven billion dollars was invested in Western Australia's mining and petroleum sector during the year, driven by new and expanding lithium and iron ore projects. These investments are at the highest level for a single financial year since 2015–2016.

Exploration expenditure was at record levels, due to spending on gold, iron ore, and critical minerals which are essential to a net zero emissions future.

The Western Australian Government received \$12.76 billion in royalties and related grants from minerals and petroleum producers in 2022–2023

Details care of DMIRS

#### EYE ON IT

DMIRS have on the bottom of their website page a box entitled.

## Subscribe to updates.

The department provides a range of newsletters and information products to keep you up to date. Subscriptions to the latest DMIRS news services of your choice are available.

They are free to the public and cover a wide range of articles and information.

Click and keep yourself informed on the DMIRS web page.

## **Perth Mint celebrates 125th anniversary with new coins.**

Australia's largest gold and silver mint is celebrating its 125th anniversary with the release of five special coins, each imprinted with an image of King Charles III and one with an extremely limited mintage of just 500.

The Perth Mint will release two pure gold coins, two pure silver coins and a coin of pure platinum, all with King Charles on one side and a P125 mintmark on the other.

The coins also feature a kangaroo, koala and kookaburra.

The mint, which is wholly owned by the West Australian government, serves as a gold refiner and manufacturer, and delivers premium precious metals products to markets around the world.



The Perth Mint celebrates its 125th anniversary in 2024. Supplied Credit: News Corp Australia

It opened its doors for the first time on June 20, 1899 as a branch of Britain's Royal Mint at the height of WA's gold rush, the mint's website states, and remains Australia's oldest operating mint.

Perth Mint chief executive Paul Graham said the anniversary coins reflected the mint's "richness" of craftsmanship.

"We are proud to be releasing these 125th anniversary coins to allow Western Australians and the broader public to join us in celebrating this unique and tradition-rich organisation," he said.

The Perth Mint, established in 1899, is Australia's official bullion mint.

"Throughout the ups and downs of the gold cycle and the evolution of the Mint over the past 125 years, we have maintained an unwavering focus on supporting the gold mining sector and producing high quality precious metals coins and minted products."



**The five coins are:**

- a 1oz Gold Bullion Coin, made of 99.99 per cent pure gold with a limited mintage of 25,000, priced at \$3744.93;
- a 1oz Gold Proof Coin, made of 99.99 per cent pure gold with a mintage of just 500, priced at \$5299;
- a 1oz Silver Bullion Coin, made of 99.99 per cent pure silver with a mintage of 150,000, priced at \$52.50;
- a 1oz Silver Proof Coin made of 99.99 per cent pure silver and a mintage of 7,500, priced at \$140; and
- a 1oz Platinum Bullion Coin made of 99 per cent pure platinum with a mintage of 5000, priced at \$1624.27.

Article care of Duncan Evans NCA News Wire

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# *Expressions of Interest- Volunteer Position- Treasurer and Membership Officer Delegate*

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Amalgamated Prospectors and Leaseholders of Australia (APLA) has a rich history of supporting and safeguarding prospecting activities in the Western Australian outback dating back over 120 years.

APLA is looking for a Volunteer Treasurer-Membership Officer who would become a Delegate to join our passionate team of 12.

If you already have experience in accounting, sound bookkeeping or have worked on a board and would like something more interesting, then this is for you.

## **Responsibilities:**

- As a Delegate, you'll play a crucial role within the Association.
- Financial Reports: Income and Expenditure Balance Sheet Reports - Budget.
- Data Entry from an Integrated CMS Management System. Some Training is available for this. The payments from Members are processed this way. Along with renewals.
- Sound understanding of the APLA Constitution and By-Laws for information about Treasurer and Membership. (This research could be done over the first 3 months).
- Help onboard new members by assisting organisers during membership drives, Open Days and Field Days, also via email campaigns and Facebook social media.
- Once a year attend the Beginners Camp.
- Collaborate with the Webmaster with any issues and the Website Developer.
- Collaborate with the APLA Merchandise officer for budgets and purchasing request of a small amount of stock. Invoicing and purchase orders for stock.
- We meet at least 4 times a year Online on MS Teams and correspond by email.
- As a State Delegate you will also be liaising with members and Branch Presidents.

## **Skills/Knowledge Needed:**

- Applicant must be computer literate. If you have used Saasu that's an advantage but not imperative.
- Skills for Financial Reporting: Strong understanding of accounting/bookkeeping principles for bank reconciliation's, Saasu Reports, journals.
- As CMS Management system is used, knowledge of the CMS Management system for reporting is valuable.
- Membership Statistical Reporting using, Microsoft Access Data Stats exported into spreadsheets. Macros are run to facilitate this. Good or demonstrated knowledge on spreadsheets would be advantageous. Some training also available for this.

**Perks:**

- Enjoy bush activities with like-minded individuals.
- The opportunity to work with a friendly experienced group of individuals who share their experiences with you.
- The opportunity to gain experience and learn about prospecting for gold including metal detecting through to how to peg a lease.
- An honorarium is offered to the right candidate and other details will be discussed should you apply.

**Time Commitment:**

- Approximately 15 hours per week, with variations based on the time of year.
- The busy period for onboarding renewal membership is from December to April.
- Meeting virtually on MS Teams at least four times a year.
- Attend the annual Beginners Camp.
- Involves participating in membership drives, including local events, email campaigns, and social media.

**Nomination and Election Process:**

- As a financial member of the APLA, you will be nominated through your local branch as a delegate.
- Candidate will be joining the team of around 12 Delegates in July 2024.
- From the 12 delegates, the Treasurer-Membership Officer position is then nominated and elected by the remaining Delegates during an MS Teams Delegate Committee Meeting held after the Annual General Branch Meeting.
- The Position is then Ratified at the state AGM.
- The successful individual will need to sign a Statutory Declaration as per the Incorporated Associations Act.

Some training will be provided on handover and ongoing for the Membership CMS Management online system via the outgoing Treasurer, between August- October. Thereafter the current treasurer (Marise), is just a phone call or email away and happy to help.

**Please contact Marise Palmer**

APLA Treasurer and Membership Officer Delegate

[treas@apla.com.au](mailto:treas@apla.com.au) or alternatively send your application to [sec@apla.com.au](mailto:sec@apla.com.au)

Phone 0403 353 029

# How is gold mined?

Ever wondered how gold is actually retrieved from the earth? Although movies may have you believe gold is found in big nuggets on the surface or by panning in a river, this is rarely true on a commercial scale.

The process of getting gold out of the earth is a little more complicated (and costly) than that, so read on to find out exactly how gold is mined here in Australia.

## EXPLORATION

Gold exploration begins at the exploration phase. The first job is to establish if there is gold in the ground. This might be a brand-new site, or an existing resource that could be extended. A geologist will conduct in-depth investigations and analysis of the area through detailed structural mapping, sampling and geophysics to understand the target areas.

If this shows potential for gold mineralisation, exploration activities move into initial drilling. This involves drilling holes into a potential orebody, logging the rocks encountered and taking regular samples. The results of this sampling are used to determine the size and grade of a potential deposit.

If the initial drilling is successful at finding gold, much more drilling will follow until a resource can be confidently defined. This is handed over to engineers to assess what can be economically mined.



## **MINING - Open cut vs underground**

There are two types of gold mines in Australia – open cut and underground. Open cut or open pit is a surface mining technique that extracts minerals from an open pit in the ground.

This is the most common method for mining minerals across the world as it is simpler and cheaper for mining deposits close to the surface. Most of Australia's gold comes from open-cut mines like the Super Pit in Kalgoorlie Boulder.

Giant shovels and trucks remove waste rock from above the ore body and then the ore is mined. Waste and ore are blasted to break them into sizes suitable for handling and transport to waste dumps or, in the case of the ore, to the crusher.

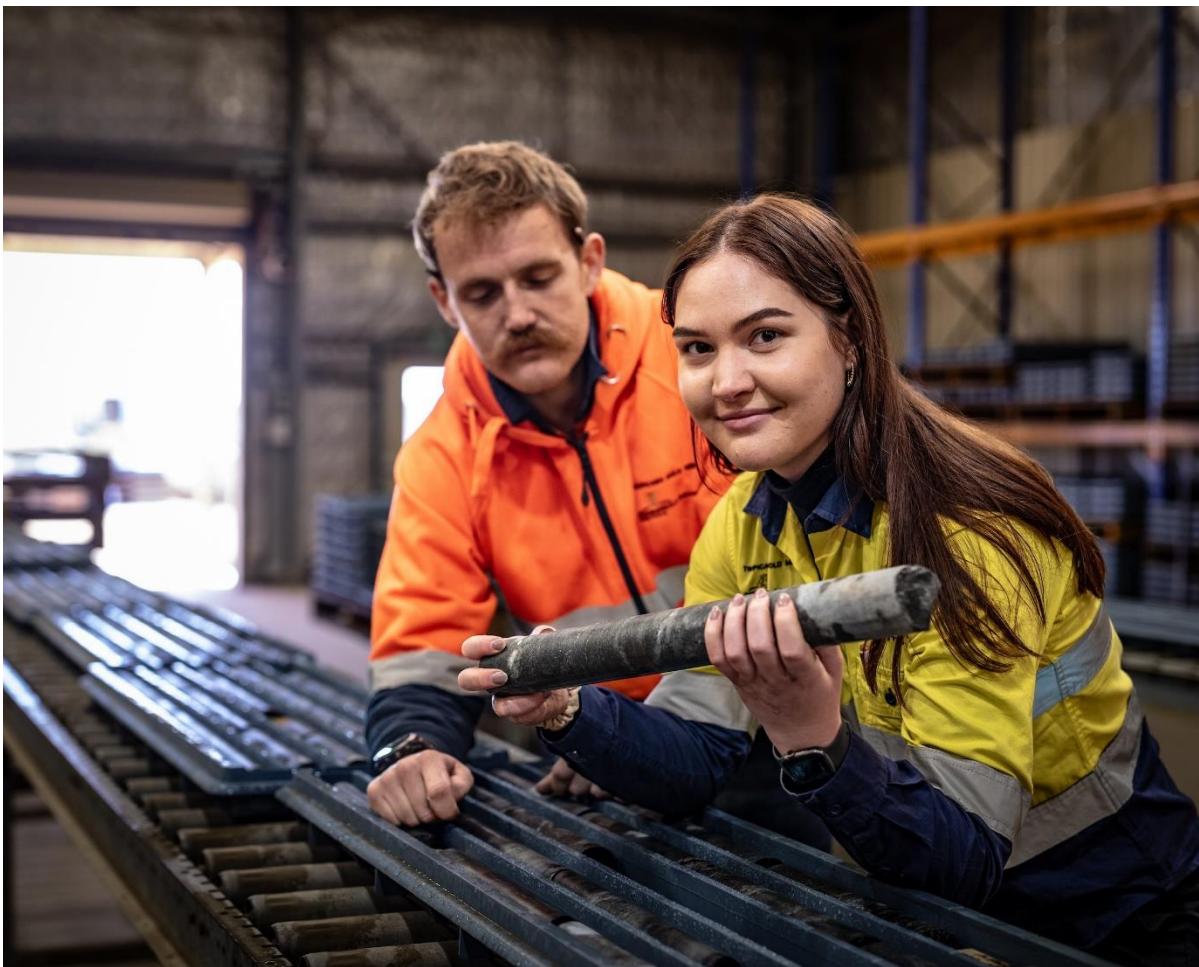
Underground mining is used where the depth of ore below the surface makes open-cut mining uneconomic. Vertical shafts and long, winding tunnels (Declines) are used to move people and equipment in and out of the mine, to provide ventilation and for hauling the waste rock and ore to the surface. Extensions of deposits mined by open pit methods may be mined later by underground methods beneath the old open pit.



## **PROCESSING - Crushing and grinding.**

Now the ore is out of the ground, it needs to be processed. Once recovered from the mine, the ore is fed into a crusher at a processing plant. The huge jaws crush the rock to small pebble-sized pieces which then go to the mill. Steel balls roll around inside the mill, crushing the rock further into dust. Water is added at this point to turn the rock into slurry. The slurry is then pumped into a cyclone, which spins allowing coarser materials to fall to the bottom, before being crushed and ground again. Lighter material is pushed up and onto the next stage.

Coarser gold is recovered with a gravity circuit. Different elements settle at different rates, so a gravity circuit uses water and pulses to agitate the slurry. The gold settles faster than other minerals, so it is separated and can be collected.





## FLOTATION AND OXIDISATION

The flotation stage is the first opportunity to separate the gold bearing ore from waste rock. Chemicals are added to help the gold particles bond to the sulphur inside the rock. Air is then used to agitate the slurry and float the gold bonded sulphur to the top.

This mixture is then thickened and fed into an autoclave to break the bonds between the sulphur and gold – a chemical process that replicates natural oxidisation. Gold is then released as the oxygen and sulphur react under pressure.

## LEACHING AND ADSORPTION



The oxidised slurry then moves to the carbon leach circuit to dissolve the gold out of the rock. This is done via gravity fed tanks and chemicals like sodium cyanide. The sodium cyanide leaches the gold from the rocks turning it into a liquid. This process can take days! By the time the rock particles reach the last tank (this bit takes multiple days!) almost all of the gold is recovered.

At the same time, activated carbon (coconut husks) are pumped upstream through the tank system to catch the leached liquid gold. Once full of gold the carbon travels to a gold desorption column designed to wash the gold out of the carbon.

When this process is complete, all that is left is eluate containing hot water, gold solution, cyanide, and caustic soda. The eluate is transported to the gold room and electroplated onto cathodes wrapped in steel wool.

The steel wool is then melted in a furnace and causes the gold to sink to the bottom and remaining waste (slag) to rise to the top. As the bar is poured, the slag pours out, followed by the gold, causing the slag to overflow out of the mould, leaving behind the gold.

And finally, we have our gold bar!

A sample is taken to send to the state's Mint to determine the quality before the gold bar is then removed and cleaned. It is weighed and numbered before being shipped to the Mint.

So, there you have it! The long and incredible process people in the gold industry use to get this precious mineral from ground to Mint.

Article care of gold industry group

# How much water should you take on an Outback trip?

Article by Ron Moon on why we need to rethink our water use.



We are always told to carry plenty of water when we head to the Outback. But what do we mean by 'plenty'?

Recently, an Acting Police Commander in the NT suggested we should carry four litres of water per person per day when out in the scrub. That comment was made after a large police search found two young fellas that had got lost south-east of the small Aboriginal community of Arlparra, located on the Sandover Highway, north-east of Alice Springs. While the young guys were lucky to survive their ordeal, the comment by the police officer got me thinking.



*To preserve drinking water, use water from other sources.*

## **How much water can you carry when heading to the desert?**

Recently, we were out in the middle of the Gibson Desert with a group of like-minded travellers and, as you'd expect, water was a subject that was often talked about. How much we had, where could we get some, was it drinkable and when was our next chance to fill, were just some of the questions asked. When I asked the aforementioned question, I was absolutely gobsmacked when I found some of the bigger campers in the group were carrying around 400 litres of water.

"You don't really need that much," I spluttered, "That's nearly half a tonne of weight," I continued, somewhat flabbergasted.

You have to think frugal when you are travelling across our vast desert landscapes and some of these people obviously weren't. Still, water is the most essential fluid you are carrying, closely followed by the amount of fuel you require to go from A to B; and both are heavy!

## **How much water should you carry? Is four litres per person per day enough?**

Well, four litres a day will keep you alive if the poop hits the fan, but you'd be a bit pushed for water on a normal trip when you include water for drinking, cooking, washing dishes and washing yourself.

We kind of work on eight to 12 litres for the two of us when travelling in our remote country and we've found that to be heaps with a good safety margin.

Sure, when we get to an outpost like Warburton, or even a reliable source of good water such as the remote Jupiter Well, we splash out a bit, washing clothes, enjoying a good shower and refilling our water tanks. And you'll find there's a number of these wells and bores, many fitted with a hand pump, scattered across the remote desert country that provide delightful water.

On a 15-day trip along the Canning Stock Route you'll find good water at a number of the reconditioned wells, so you don't need to carry any more water than say 80 to 100 litres for a couple of you. A crossing of the Simpson, where there is no water between Mt Dare and Birdsville, normally takes four to seven days, so again, you don't need to carry more than 60 to 80 litres of water.



*Spray bottles will help limit water use*

### **How do we save water and use so little?**

Well, either use paper plates or, when you need to wash plates and utensils, use a spray bottle of water and detergent for the not-so grubby ones.

If we have food-covered pots and pans, the paper towel gets rid of most of the food debris before using a minimum of hot water to wash and clean them.

Showers are not an everyday thing and when we do, we keep them to a minimum. The procedure is easy enough – wet yourself down, switch off the tap, soap up, and then rinse yourself. If water is really scarce but you badly need a wash, grab a plastic 1.5- to 2-litre bottle, drill some holes in the bottom, fill with water and use that for a wash down – you’ll be surprised how far that two litres will go!

The moral of the story is, for travellers, water equals weight ... and weight out on the bush tracks is a killer of vehicles and trailers. However, you really need water, so always make sure you are carrying enough for those essential needs – like keeping you and your party alive. Know where you can restock and keep what you carry on board your vehicle or camper to a minimum. Anything more than 15 to 20 litres a day for a couple or young family, even on a long desert trip, is too much and you need to rethink your water use!

# TIPS FOR PREPARING YOUR VEHICLE

## PREPARING THE VEHICLE

Your 4x4 needs to be in good mechanical condition, in other words no bad oil leaks, "dodgy" radiators, battery trays, fuel tanks, bullbars or roof racks, worn out tires, brakes or clutches.

If you can't do the preparation yourself take it to someone who can, preferably a 4x4 specialist. The vehicle will need a full service even if it isn't due. On the shortest Outback trip most people will clock up in excess of 5,000 km, which will most likely take it past the service interval and you won't have time to do it while you're away.

Make sure the vehicle preparation is done at least a couple of weeks before you go. There has been many an occasion where the 4x4 was picked up on Friday to go Saturday only to find something's not quite right, ie; a new fuel tank that leaks because of a loose hose.

The most common break downs are from aftermarket products, so when buying them do your homework and go to a reputable agent. Get the right accessories for you and not the ones you don't need. In particular, make sure your suspension components (shockers and springs) are in good shape.

## MOST COMMON FAILURES

Roof rack	Bullbar	Spotlights
Tow bar	Battery tray	Spare wheel carrier
Shockers	Shocker rubbers	Radiator
Exhaust system	Tyres	Fuel tank
Number plate	UHF antenna	

## TOOLS TO TAKE

A set of ring-open end spanners	A socket set
Adjustable spanner 10 or 12 inch	Pliers, bull nose and pointy
Screwdrivers assorted	Hammer small & large
Snatch strap	Tyre pressure gauge
Shovel, long handle is preferred	Jacking plate
Jack, a spare one if traveling on your own	

## **SPARES TO TAKE**

Electrical wire and Fuses

Electrical tape

Race tape or cloth tape

Cable ties

Tubeless tire plugs

Air compressor

Fuel hose, 1 meter

Fuel filters, some people have dirty jerry cans

Nuts & bolts assorted sizes, not too many, metric is preferable for Jap 4x4's

Oils and fluids (Engine, brake, auto trans etc)

Tyre repairing gear including a spare tube, make sure you know how to use it

Jumper leads

## **SPARES TO SHARE, but not compulsory**

Cordless drill & drill bits

High lift jack, if it is suited to your vehicle (just remember how heavy they are)

Oil and air filters

If you are traveling with other vehicles it's a good idea to share some of the tools and spares, this will save a bit of weight.

## **THINGS TO LEAVE AT HOME**

Excessive amounts of spanners

Excessive amounts of jerry cans, plan your trip and take only what is necessary

Poorly made accessories such as a roof rack

Low profile tyres

Pets are prohibited in National Parks

## **CAMPING GEAR, WHAT TO TAKE & WHERE TO PUT IT**

### **WHERE ARE YOU GOING?**

Before anything can be packed you must first consider where the journey will take you, at what time of year and what activities you will be doing. Many people take far too much with them, think about your last camping trip and if you didn't use something, don't take it this time. Do you really need 2 camp ovens or spare chairs! Just in case.



## **SLEEPING**

Central Australia in the winter, contrary to popular belief gets very cold at night (as cold as -5) with nice sunny days (about 20) and cool evenings. It's essential to pack warm sleeping gear, a comfortable mattress, a jacket and warm clothes for the night with lighter clothes for the day. In the warmer months, autumn and spring expect the days to be between 25 & 35 with the nights a mild 10 - 20, jackets and extra blankets won't be necessary now. In the summer, if you're brave enough the days can be a scorching 40 - 50 with little relief at night, lows are 23 - 33.

Swags are a great idea if the boys are on a trip, but they don't suit everyone! When using a tent a couple of things need to be considered, how many people will sleep in it and how hard is it to put up? Only use a tent that suits your needs, as a tent that's unnecessarily large will only be a hassle. There are many tents available that can sleep 4 and only take minutes to put up. some great Ausie made tents are from [OzTent](#) and [Southern Cross Canvas](#). Maybe consider using a ground tarp to reduce the uptake of soil moisture for a clean and easy pack up.

## **COOKING**

For most camp cooking is fun and a very important part of camping. Many people enjoy the candle lit roast dinner with an ice cream desert in the most unlikely places, like the Simpson. This is not hard to do with some planning.

Try to compile a menu; it only has to be a guide for your shopping list, next work out where the towns are so some of the shopping can be done along the way. Don't pack too much tinned or frozen food "just for emergencies". I've seen people pack enough for a month or more and when the fridge became unplugged they lost more than \$150 in meat and other food. Try not to take all of the food for the trip from your home town, it's far better to purchase some things as you need them, they will be fresher and less likely to spoil even if they do cost a little more.

To have a freezer is convenient but not necessary unless you want ice cream. Cryovaced meat can last up to 6 weeks in a fridge, even longer if it is frozen before you leave, pack it at the bottom of the fridge and it will stay frozen for up to a week. It will also prevent the dreaded blood from leaking everywhere. Ask your butcher to cryovac the meat in portions for the meals you have planned, some meats keep longer than others, so ask the butcher.

## **WATER**

Water will always need to be carried, but be sure to only carry what you need with some spare for emergencies. Work out places where your water containers can be refilled and how much to carry, for example two people would need 7 litres of water each per day, but 4 people would only need 5 litres each as washing and cooking water is shared.

This is a guide only, for a 3 day trip across the Simpson two people would require  $2 \times 7 \times 3 = 42$ , plus 2 days spare,  $2 \times 7 \times 2 = 28$  is a total of 70 litres. Four People in the same vehicle would require  $5 \times 4 \times 3 = 60$  plus  $2 \times 5 \times 2 = 40$  spare, is a total of 100 litres. When water is available every day only half these amounts would be needed.

Water bladders are a good idea as these can be located in an out of the way place, low down in the vehicle. A ruptured container could leave you dangerously short, don't carry all of the water in 1 container or bladder. They vary in size and quality; check them out at a reputable 4x4 accessory store.

## **WALKS**

The Centre has many attractions with nearly all of them involving a walk, ranging from a short 100m walk up to the likes of Kings Canyon with a lengthy 6km, 4hour walk. If you plan to do any walking and you should, be prepared. A pair of walking shoes and a good quality day pack is essential. You'll need to carry your camera, food for a snack or lunch and most importantly water, even if the weather is cool and extra if it's hot.

## **FUEL**

Work out when extra fuel is really needed and, only fill jerry cans when necessary. There's no need to carry more fuel just to save \$5 or \$10 at the pump, the extra weight will do more harm than good increasing wear and tear on the vehicle and tyres. Ask people who know for advice on how much fuel to carry in the outback area that you will be traveling in. The amount will vary depending on the type of 4x4 and if it is towing.

Fuel quantities to cross the Simpson are as follows,

Large 4x4 (Nissan Patrol) - Diesel 150L expect to use 100L - 125L, ULP 200L expect to use 130L-170L

Medium 4x4 (Toyota Prado) - Diesel 140L expect to use 95L - 120L, ULP 180L expect to use 120L-155L

Small 4x4 (Holden Colorado) - Diesel 130L expect to use 85L - 115L, ULP 160L expect to use 110L-140L

Tiny 4x4 (Suzuki Siera) - ULP 110L expect to use 65L - 95L

These quantities include LPG (if applicable) all fuel tanks and jerry cans. For example, a Landcruiser on Gas would have 90L of LPG and 90L of petrol and so would only need 1 -20L jerry can to total the 200L required.

If you are towing a camper trailer an additional 40L of Diesel and 60L of ULP would be required. We only recommend very experienced people with medium to large 4wd's attempt this. Travelling in a convoy with a vehicle that's not towing is also strongly recommended.

## **COMMUNICATIONS - UHF**

It's a good idea to have a UHF Radio fitted in your 4wd, a good quality handheld is OK but cheap ones are rubbish. Don't over complicate your UHF with features you don't need, the simpler the better. There are a couple of things you need to know about your UHF Radio though.

Firstly they can be used for vehicle to vehicle contact, this is limited to a range of about 10-15km and this is called "Simplex" communication. Secondly, they have the ability to communicate through a Repeater Tower, this is called "Duplex" communication and is done by pressing the "Duplex" button on the Radio. A range of 100km or more can be achieved if transmitting through a repeater.

Repeaters are always limited to channels 1-8 and operate on 2 UHF channels by sending a signal to the repeater on one, the repeater then resends this signal back on another and this is why it's called "Duplex", it requires 2 UHF channels to function. Channel 1 has the duplex channel of 31, channel 2 is 32 and so on.

UHF Repeaters work because they are located up high on a mountain, or tall hill in our case. A UHF Radio is limited by "Line of Sight" so hills or trees affect its performance, this is where a Repeater comes in. Because of its height a signal can reach it more easily without any obstructions, where likewise it can resend this signal out to a greater area, reaching locations that would be impossible from a vehicle mounted UHF.

For example Mt Dare has access to a repeater, it's channel 6 Duplex. If contact to the Pub was required and you were 40km away, you would select channel 6 and press your "Duplex" button. Press the microphone "push to talk" button and release it, if the repeater is reached a tone will be heard, it's morse code for the repeater identification and all repeaters have it. You can then call the Pub, "Mt Dare Hotel on channel?" always wait for a minute for a response before retrying. Once your communication with the Pub is complete, always return to another channel for vehicle to vehicle communication unless you need to monitor it, or call the Pub again.

NEVER use channels 1-8 or 31-38 for vehicle to vehicle communication, this is considered rude as many people maybe monitoring the repeater channel as part of their business and don't wish to hear the "chit chat" that goes on while you are on holiday. Absolutely do use a repeater if it is an emergency or to communicate with someone that is monitoring that channel, Like the Mt Dare Hotel.

Channels 31-38 are the repeaters duplex channels and so if you are in range of a repeater and use them for vehicle to vehicle communication, a repeater will pick up this signal and resend it on channel 1-8.

For example 2 vehicles are communicating on channel 36, this is our repeaters "Duplex" Channel. Anyone monitoring the channel 6 repeater (as the Pub does) will hear all commutation made on channel 36 via the repeater, but will be unable to communicate back to the vehicles. This is because the repeater receives on channel 36, but transmits on channel 6 and with the vehicles on channel 36 the repeater can't be used to communicate with them and they are too far away to be reached on channel 36 directly. So we must put up with annoying transitions until the vehicles are out of range of the repeater.

## **PACKING**

In most cases a typical 4x4 will have a roof rack and with that care must be taken when packing it. It's a good idea to pack the light stuff on top - like tents or swags, sleeping gear and the table & chairs. Try not to put too much fire wood up there. A [roof bag](#) is an easy way to store things, just load it and zip it. They come in various sizes and will help keep the gear dry if it rains.

The water, tools, cooking gear and food, etc can be packed in the vehicle. Even "approved" jerry cans. Pack them safely nice and low in the 4x4 and when they are empty they can go up top.

**Good Luck and have fun, where ever your travels take you.**

Article care of the Mt Dare Hotel

# BRANCH NEWS

## ALBANY BRANCH UPDATE

Meetings held 3rd Saturday of every second month. Each meeting consists of general Branch business and a guest speaker to assist members.

Next meeting 15<sup>th</sup> April

Contact Michael McCaffery

## GOLDFIELDS BRANCH UPDATE

Meetings are held at the Regency Room at the Tower Hotel Crn Maritana and Bourke st Kalgoorlie. Contact R Laing 0418 930 064

Next meeting 30th May (Branch AGM)

## MANDURAH BRANCH UPDATE

Meetings held at 1.30pm, 2 Leslie st Mandurah. See APLA website for dates.

Contact Bob Wilson 0429 001 515

Next Meeting 5 May (AGM, Camp Notice)

## SOUTHWEST BRANCH

Meetings Fourth Wednesday of every Second Month at the Capel Golf Club at 7:00pm - \$5 Includes Supper)

Next meeting 28 May (Branch AGM)

Annual camp is proposed for the long weekend in June.

Contact Judith, SW Secretary for more information, 0428385457

## PERTH BRANCH UPDATE

APLA Perth Branch is conveniently located for Perth Members and now meets in the WA LAPIDARY AND ROCKHUNTING CLUB.31-35 GLADSTONE ROAD, RIVERVALE WA.

Next Meeting Wednesday 15th May 2024



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Importantly, APLA represents stakeholders to Government on Policies that exclude Prospectors from accessing some areas within WA. APLA fight for your rights to go Gold Prospecting. Delegate Representatives from each branch are attending, representing our members, all 2145 members as at year end 2023. We run training Camps free for Members. Our Branches

do fantastic volunteer work to improve your prospecting experience. Your membership includes public liability Insurance. These are the things that are important.

Recently joined **New Members** please **check out**, up and coming events listed on the APLA webpage. [www.apla.com.au](http://www.apla.com.au) click on your branch and the **events** window in the bottom right corner to find out more. Join our members only APLA Facebook page. Link can be found on the bottom of the webpage.

[APLA | Facebook](#) If you need help with a virtual payment or joining just contact:

Membership Officer: **Marise Palmer** Email: [tres@apla.com.au](mailto:tres@apla.com.au) Phone: **0403353029**

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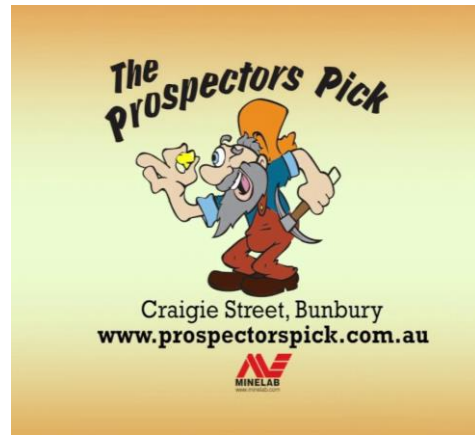


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