

USAGE OF VACANT CROWN LAND POLICY

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Acronyms	Full form
DIPL	Department of Infrastructure Planning and Logistics
VCL	Vacant Crown Land
NT of A	Northern Territory of Australia
OL	Occupation Licence
CLA	<i>Crown Lands Act 1992</i>

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1. Aim

The aim of this policy is to document the permitted and lawful use of vacant Crown land.

This Policy will clarify for users those activities that are compatible with the lawful use of Crown land and those which are not. For headings, you must use the correct heading styles.

2. Introduction

Land in the Northern Territory is managed under the Torrens Title system of registering interests. There is approximately 52,287 square kilometres of vacant Crown land in the Northern Territory made up of approximately 3624 individual land parcels.

The Northern Territory *Crown Lands Act 1992 (CLA)* regulates and defines use of vacant Crown land. This Policy provides clarification on the lawful uses of Crown land by members of the public under the *CLA*.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all vacant Crown land in the Northern Territory under the care and control of the Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics (DIPL).

4. Purpose

The Policy objectives is to provide clarification to the public on permitted and non-permitted use on vacant Crown land in the Northern Territory.

- To provide certainty to the public, Industry and Government agencies.
- Clarify the rights of members of the public to undertake low impact activities on Crown land.
- Clarify what is not lawful or permitted use.
- Clarify uses which require a licence.
- Limit the Territory's exposure to negligent activities and public liability.

5. Permitted Use

The considered legal opinion of the Solicitor for the Northern Territory is that all members of the public have an inherent and lawful right to use Crown land for low impact activities. The permitted use of Crown land encompasses activities that comply with the law, are not of a commercial nature or creates a disturbance to the land.

Low impact activities that fall outside of commercial activities where permission to enter the land is not required can include, but is not limited to; recreational fishing, bushwalking, picnicking, bird watching, parking, sun bathing, bike riding and walking the dog.

The lawful permitted use does not extend to land other than vacant Crown land and separate approval is required from the land owner.

6. Licenced Use

Commercial activities on Crown land require a licence granted under the *CLA*. A licence is also required for large organised activities of a non-commercial nature, such as festivals, concerts, weddings and advertised community events.

Examples of commercial uses which may be permitted under a licence include activities such as food vans, advertising signs, storage, sporting events and tourism activities. Each application for a commercial use will be assessed on its merits, with regard to matters including, but not limited to, potential impacts to the land, the suitability of the site, potential conflict with other users, the proposed length of use and compliance with the Northern Territory Planning Scheme. For this reason, a commercial use determined to be suitable in one location may not be considered suitable across all vacant Crown land sites.

A fee may be charged for the commercial use of vacant Crown land.

If you are interested in harvesting/collecting or undertaking scientific studies on native plants or animals on vacant Crown Land you will need to apply for a Permit to Take or Interfere with Wildlife in accordance with the *Territory Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act 2006*. Further information can be found here:

<https://nt.gov.au/environment/animals/wildlife-permits/permits-take-interfere-with-wildlife>

If you are unsure if your activity requires a licence, please contact Crown Land Estate, DIPL.

7. Non Permitted Use

The public is not allowed to enter vacant Crown land and undertake an activity that is not permitted.

Use activities that are not permitted include, but are not limited to;

- Camping on vacant Crown land beyond 14 days.
- Riding motor bikes and quad bikes, and driving off road buggies and four wheel drive vehicles.
- Erecting fixtures or buildings without expressed permission.
- Constructing new roads.
- Lighting fires.
- Clearing land and vegetation.
- Shooting wildlife.
- Dumping household litter (including green waste), building or commercial waste
- Spreading category A and B declared weeds.
- Drawing graffiti on Crown owned assets.

For activities that create a high impact or disturbance you must first apply for an appropriate licence under the *CLA*. It is not guaranteed that you will be provided with a licence as the activity must comply with Government Policy and priorities.

Where there is evidence of unlawful activity these matters will be referred to the relevant regulatory authority for investigation.

8. Communication

It is recommended that public communications be prepared in consultation with the DIPL Media and Communications unit.

For low impact activities limited communication is required as people go about their lawful activity.

For commercial or high impact activities applicants are required to submit applications to use Crown land which can take up to six weeks to progress.

9. Where to get additional information

<p>For further information or to obtain a licence application form contact the Crown Land Estate Unit in your region</p>		
<p>DARWIN 5th Floor, Energy House 18-20 Cavenagh Street DARWIN NT 0800 Ph: 8999 6886 Email: crownland.estate@nt.gov.au</p>	<p>KATHERINE 1st Floor, Government Centre First Street KATHERINE NT 0850 Ph: 8973 8924</p>	<p>ALICE SPRINGS Ground Floor, Green Well 50 Bath Street ALICE SPRINGS NT 0870 Ph: 8951 9235</p>