

Working at Carnarvon Gorge



Carnarvon Gorge National Park, Photo courtesy of DES

Management structure

The Carnarvon Gorge Work Unit is part of the South West Region of the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS). QPWS is an entity of Department of Environment and Science, which is responsible for managing national parks and state forests.

The Carnarvon Gorge Work Unit is responsible for the Carnarvon Gorge section of Carnarvon National Park. This section covers 43,500 hectares of the 300,000 hectare national park.

Carnarvon Gorge ranger base is approximately two hours drive from Injune and three hours from Roma. The roads are sealed with bridges that may become impassable for several days following heavy rainfall events.

Carnarvon Gorge is about nine hours drive north-west of Brisbane. The current workforce at Carnarvon Gorge consists of six employees.

Carnarvon Gorge is the most visited area of the park and includes:

- numerous short visitor walks
- one of the trail heads for the 86km Carnarvon Great Walk
- a campground that is open during school holidays excluding Christmas school holidays.

Neighbouring commercial accommodation means that the area has many visitors during the peak season (March to October).

Work programs are generally based around natural resource management including fires, pest and weeds, as well as asset maintenance including walking tracks, cultural sites and visitor infrastructure.

The area has very important cultural heritage values including some significant Aboriginal art sites. Liaison with the traditional custodians of this cultural heritage is an important part of working at this location. Rangers at this location may also consult

with other government departments, lessees, contractors, neighbours, tour operators and the public.

Carnarvon Gorge has outstanding natural heritage values. The area has great diversity and key aspects in its management include pest and fire management. The management unit has a significant role in hazard reduction burning and controlling wildfires.

Given the location, employees must be able to provide their own reliable transport to and from Carnarvon Gorge.

Working conditions

Shift arrangements

Carnarvon Gorge rangers generally work a 10 days on, four days off roster commencing on a Monday. This is subject to change at operational need. Public holidays that fall within the 10 day shift pattern are normally worked by the employees rostered on, including Easter and long weekends.

There is limited provision for overtime for work that takes place out of hours. Overtime is mainly associated with emergency response including wildfires. Employees will be provided with up to 12 working days (one day per month) per calendar year with their immediate family for ration runs to Roma or Emerald that can be undertaken in work time and using work transportation. (Subject to approval)

Accommodation & Associated Services

QPWS employees based at Carnarvon Gorge are provided with departmental housing, with a range of accommodation available at the Carnarvon Gorge ranger base. In certain circumstances, there may be a requirement for employees to share barracks style accommodation or a residence. To suit varying individual and family needs there may also be times where housing allocations need to be reviewed and adjustments made to meet accommodation needs at

the time. A high degree of flexibility is required from employees to meet these accommodation needs.

On-site park accommodation has either air conditioning or evaporative coolers for summer and gas/oil heaters for winter, with all external doors and windows fitted with flyscreen security frames. Drinking water is sourced from Carnarvon Creek and is treated by UV filters.

The range of accommodation on site includes 2 x two bedroom duplexes, 1x one bedroom house, 1x two bedroom house and 1x three bedroom house.

Houses are not fenced and all come with clothes lines. With the exception of the two bedroom house, all residences have an adjoining carport. No pets are allowed due to the location of housing within Carnarvon Gorge.

Electricity, gas and water services are provided for employees at no cost. Telstra land phone lines are connected to all residences with the costs of calls to be reimbursed by the occupant. There is poor mobile phone reception at Carnarvon Gorge. TV satellite set top boxes are provided and there is Satellite internet available, with the connection and setting up of accounts with service providers the responsibility of the occupant.

Photos of accommodation options are provided below:

Duplex



(Front view of eastern duplex)

The duplexes have ducted evaporative cooling. A gas heater and oil heater are also supplied. Built in storage is located in the two bedrooms, laundry and hallway. The laundry is furnished with two stainless steel tubs and has space for a washer and dryer. The bathroom contains a bath tub and shower with separate toilet. The kitchen is furnished with a gas stove, oven and walk in pantry room. There is an open plan dining/lounge room adjoining the kitchen. A single carport, insect screened rear veranda and paved area at the rear of the building is also provided.

The western duplex is an identical adjoining building with the added features of a garden shed and green house.

Two Bedroom House



Side view of 2 bedroom house

The two bedroom house is the most private accommodation on site and comes furnished with a gas heater, gas stove/ oven and ducted evaporative cooling. The main bedroom has built in robes. The bathroom has a shower only and incorporates the laundry area with the toilet being separate. There is a large, level lawn with a picnic table and fire pit/BBQ. Multiple covered car parking is located 25m away.



1 bedroom house

The one bedroom house and the three bedroom house are constructed to a similar standard to the duplex.



Three bedroom house

Note: Employees residing in QPWS departmental housing are required to complete a Rental Tenancy Authority condition entry report and be responsible for the cleanliness and maintenance of the building as per rental terms.

This accommodation is provided in accordance with Queensland Government policies.

Employees housed at this location are currently entitled to apply for a remote locality allowance.

Mail is delivered and collected twice weekly on Tuesdays and Fridays.



Carnarvon Gorge, Carnarvon National Park. Photo courtesy of Tourism and Events Queensland

When staff are on days off or travelling barracks accommodation for private use is currently available for overnight accommodation in Roma with prior approval from the Senior Ranger Sandstone.

Employee Responsibilities

Due to the high visitation to Carnarvon Gorge, rangers in uniform are in the public eye and represent a 'face' for the department. It is essential that neat uniforms and a well-groomed personal presentation are maintained at all times.

Rangers must be polite, professional and courteous in their interactions with the public. Rangers are required to wear the uniform provided.

Rangers living and working in Carnarvon Gorge must demonstrate appropriate behaviour at all times.

Given the location of the park and the range of activities undertaken by visitors and residents, QPWS employees are often first on the scene for medical emergencies, vehicle accidents, search and rescues, wildfire outbreaks and other incidents. Rangers may also assist other agencies such as the Lifeflight Rescue during incidents or emergencies.

Work health and safety is a significant priority for employees at Carnarvon Gorge. Rangers are required to understand and follow departmental work health and safety policies and procedures and uphold safe work practices when working alone, with other departmental employees, or with members of the public.

The operational requirements of working as a ranger in the Carnarvon Gorge Work Unit include occasional work away from the base and camping outdoors overnight. For this reason an awareness of remote area operations is essential.

The social isolation and difficult climatic conditions in this work area mean team members need to be able to maintain effective relationships with colleagues, under sometimes demanding conditions.

Some rangers at Carnarvon Gorge are required to hold a firearms licence or have the ability to acquire a firearms licence to assist in wildlife and pest management. Rangers may be required to use a firearm (e.g. dart gun or gun) to trap, treat or euthanise wildlife and/or pest animals.

Appropriate QPWS training is provided to designated rangers so they can obtain and manage relevant competencies and licences. It is expected that when employees are nominated for training they will attend and participate to the best of their ability to achieve a successful outcome. This training may include the application of chemicals, use of plant and equipment, and implementation of the Australian Inter-service Incident Management System for emergency response.

Further information

Rangers are required to work across all focus areas in times of operational need. The main outcomes of each of these focus areas are as follows:

Pest management

Pest management responsibilities include:

- managing co-operatively the ecological, social and economic impacts of current and potential pests on QPWS managed estate
- ensuring that pest management on QPWS managed areas is aligned with State Government and departmental policies, and is properly planned and executed to produce tangible long-term outcomes
- wildlife management, including addressing problematic or dangerous wildlife in public use areas, trapping, containment and release of wildlife and collecting and entering data from field work
- some pest management control methods including:
 - plant pest management—monitoring, spraying chemicals, physical containment and removal of species
 - animal pest management—monitoring, trapping and euthanising.

Fire management

Fire management responsibilities include:

- managing and responding to fires on, and where appropriate, near its managed areas, to minimise the risk of adverse effects of fire on human life, property, sustainable resource production, community assets, environmental and cultural values
- undertaking fire management, including planned burning operations and firebreak maintenance.

Estate management

Estate management responsibilities include:

- developing and implementing strategic plans, management plans and management statements
- developing plans for natural resource management and undertaking assessments, monitoring.
- implementing Indigenous agreements
- managing partnerships for parks and forests including intergovernmental arrangements.

Visitor management

Visitor management responsibilities include:

- interacting with the public to promote tourism and recreational usage of the QPWS managed estate
- managing visitor facilities such as walking tracks, campgrounds and day use areas and ensuring cleanliness

- developing and delivering interpretive programs to inform and educate QPWS managed estate users
- conducting compliance activities.

Asset and safety management

Asset and safety management responsibilities include:

- planning and delivering capital infrastructure projects within budget and timeframes
- maintaining management infrastructure such as parks bases, workshops and firebreaks
- managing and operating vehicle fleet, heavy plant, minor plant and equipment
- managing a safe workplace
- assisting with construction and maintenance duties (e.g. erecting signage, cleaning and maintaining facilities and equipment).

Cultural heritage

Cultural Heritage responsibilities include:

- protection of significant cultural sites that are spiritual, physical and tangible
- monitor and record cultural sites
- provide information that is culturally appropriate
- cultural awareness training
- looking after country

Other duties

Other duties may include:

- administrative duties such as compiling and maintaining reports and records and the procurement of goods and services using computers and technology.

Working as a ranger in the Carnarvon Gorge is a rewarding and challenging career.

For more information, search for any of the parks listed in this information sheet on the website www.des.qld.gov.au