



Public Service Officers Ski Club Co-operative Ltd.

(YALARA ALPINE SKI LODGE, PERISHER VALLEY)

Mr. Alex Dobes
Program Manager
Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal
Level 2, 44 Market Street
SYDNEY
NSW 2000

22/10/04

Re: Review of Pricing of Infrastructure Services for Perisher Range Resorts

I write on behalf of the Board of Directors of the Public Service Officers Ski Club Cooperative Limited, operating our Yalara Alpine Ski Lodge, which has been in Perisher Valley for forty years. For further details, see appendix.

Whilst the concerns expressed herein are based on our experience with our own Club in Perisher Valley, there would seem to be no reason why the issues raised herein would not be applicable to most/all of the other private club lodges and also apply to Smiggin Holes and Guthega.

The principles of "user pays" implemented, promoted and enforced by both sides of the NSW political spectrum for the best part of two decades would be the fairest and most equitable basis for determining the pricing for infrastructure services for Perisher Range Resorts.

Increased Demand

The development/building industry are very aware that any increase in demand brought about by any development that places more demand on existing services will require expenditure by the proponent – be it via the State Environmental Planning Policy S94 (as amended): water, sewer and power developer contributions; or works in the form of major road construction, etc.

The Strategy Overview (1.1) clearly identifies that the need to expand existing services are attributable to increased visitor numbers by: (a) increased bed numbers (1320) mainly in Perisher Valley and (b) increased day visitors.

It also refers to the need to improve some facilities and we can accept that there are some issues that should be shared by all users, e.g., the removal and treatment for solid waste (garbage) which has been the subject of debate for some years and will, hopefully, be resolved for the benefit of all users in the near future.

Whilst only having access to the IPART Extracts, our initial comments regarding existing services are that :

- Water would not warrant any upgrade if it wasn't for increased demand in Perisher.
- Sewerage attracted a significant levy on Clubs three years ago which should cover all the existing lodges in Perisher as far as capital contributions/levies are concerned.
- Storm water is very controversial as Yalara and many other lodges have enjoyed and look forward to future enjoyment of Perisher being a predominantly "snow-bound village" for most winter seasons. Yalara is in the 2(a) land released in 1962 and is accessed in the summer by a dead-end gravel road servicing 7 club lodges. To have that replaced with a reinforced concrete structure would require major reshaping and widening with bigger embankments which is not environmentally or aesthetically favourable. We submit that storm water and run-off can be managed more economically with silt traps, particularly as Yalara and the six other lodges along the ridge are 100 metres from Rock Creek, which has always run crystal clear without any sediment control.
- Car Parking with the "Design Day" being the tenth busiest day of the season. Yalara is more than 95% full during the mid July – August peak and all of our guests would be weekly bookings and accessing Perisher via the ski tube and over-snow transport. These guests would not be contributing to any parking demands at Perisher.

Balancing the Budget

The ethos of Yalara, is to provide affordable skiing for members and guests and has been attuned to a reasonable level of accommodation and facilities, the cost of which relates directly to the accommodation charges that have to be set every year to ensure that the club remains viable.

In recent years, considerable expenditure has been required to remove the last four small bunk bedrooms and replace them with four bedrooms with ensuites, one with disability provisions, etc, all to comply with the Building Code of Australia and OHS requirements—The next projects will be the replacement of our forty year-old oil fired boiler with two gas boilers with all consequent building costs and a suspended steel off-road car park for disabled access.

With Perisher Blue offering very cheap packages with accommodation below the snow-line as well as more cheap accommodation in Jindabyne, we are finding it increasing difficult to provide affordable accommodation for some of the children of our initial members who now have their own families.

NPWS Revenue

It is understood that the income received by NPWS from bed levies, gate takings and percentage of ski tube tickets does not come back into the Kosiosko National Park. This is not the case with the Victorian snow fields where all takings are redeployed into the resorts with the result that NSW is losing business to Victoria. We also understand that Thredbo MSU charges and rent are largely spent on facilities.

We submit that NPWS should be applying these revenues to KNP and, in particular, to the secondary services and all environmental matters thereby ensuring that ALL users of KNP contribute to its upkeep and improvements through the takings that "hit" all users who enter the park including the guests of Yalara Ski Club and the other 87 Perisher Range Resorts private lodges.

APPENDIX

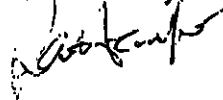
Yalara Alpine Ski Club was formed from the members of the NSW Public Service Officers' Association and staff of the NSW Water Conservation and Irrigation Commission in 1962-63. Most of these members are now retired and on limited fixed incomes. The Club had 120 members and Yalara's lease was for 16 beds and opened in 1964 with communal cooking and shared facilities.

Increased demand led to us adding 8 additional beds in 1976, mainly funded by advanced, paid-up membership for member's young children.

All maintenance and much of the building's improvements over the years has been carried out by Club volunteers. The recent improvements to 4 bedrooms and disability facilities were also, in part, funded by another expansion of the membership.

We would be pleased to expand upon any of the issues touched on herein if required.

Yours faithfully,



Richard A. Harper
Vice-President, Yalara Alpine Ski Club