




Australian Government

Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development

Guidelines for the Registration of Interest for the Purchase or Lease of Crown land on Christmas Island

March 2017





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Sunset over the MINTOPE site, Christmas Island

Introduction

In March 2017, Senator the Hon Fiona Nash, Minister for Local Government and Territories (the Minister) released the *Christmas Island Crown Land Management Plan*, which sets out proposed parcels of land available for development. For further information, refer to the *Christmas Island Crown Land Management Plan* on the Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development's (the Department) website at www.regional.gov.au/territories/Christmas/land_management.aspx.

The availability of land parcels are part of the Australian Government's commitment to supporting economic growth and sustainable development on Christmas Island. The Department is inviting suitably experienced individuals and organisations to register their interest in purchasing or leasing Crown land on Christmas Island.

This document details the process to register your interest in purchasing or leasing Crown land on Christmas Island and the steps which will follow. In determining whether to register, proponents should consider these guidelines along with the following documents:

- *Christmas Island Crown Land Management Plan*;
- Maps identifying potentially available Crown land on Christmas Island; and
- Registration of Interest Form.

These documents are available on the Department's website at www.regional.gov.au/territories/Christmas/land_management.aspx.



Christmas Island Red Crabs

Background

Christmas Island is an external territory of Australia located in the Indian Ocean, 380 kilometres south of Java, 2,650 kilometres north-west of Perth and 970 kilometres east of the Cocos (Keeling) Islands. It has an area of 135 square kilometres, and a resident population of 2,224¹, with 48.6% of people born in Australia, 28.1% in Malaysia, 3.4% in Singapore, 2.8% in England and 1.2% in New Zealand². Christmas Island is serviced by twice-weekly Virgin Airlines flights from Perth, weekly charter flights from Jakarta, and a freight ship from Perth every four to six weeks.

The main economic activities on Christmas Island are tourism, low grade phosphate mining and government services. The Christmas Island National Park covers 63 per cent of the Island and contains rainforest, beaches and caves, as well as rare plants, birds, red crabs and other wildlife. Spectacular fish, corals, rock formations and caves provide snorkelling and diving opportunities.

There is a strong relationship between the development of land and economic growth. The availability of land for private development supports housing, retail, tourism and commercial activities, providing opportunities for growth and employment. Approximately 27 per cent of land on Christmas Island is Crown land administered by the Department.



Image supplied by the Western Australian Department of Fisheries

¹ ABS, Population by Age and Sex, Regions of Australia, 2014 (cat. no. 3235.0). Population estimates may include people living in the Immigration Detention Centre on Christmas Island for an extended period of time.

² ABS, Census Tablebuilder Pro, 2011 (cat. no. 2073.0). These figures exclude people counted in immigration detention on Christmas Island. These people have been identified using the *Immigration detention centre* category of the Census variable: Type of Non-Private Dwelling.

Crown Land on Christmas Island

The *Christmas Island Crown Land Management Plan* identifies parcels of Crown land on Christmas Island which have residential and commercial development potential, tourism prospects and agricultural viability. This Registration of Interest process is open to all Crown land on Christmas Island that is not subject to a:

- mine lease;
- general lease;
- reserved for Government purposes; or
- under management order to other Australian Government agencies.

The Christmas Island National Park is a Commonwealth Reserve and is not Crown land. Parks Australia is able to assist with enquiries relating to proposals within the Park. If interested, please contact Parks Australia at: christmasislandnp@environment.gov.au.

Maps are available to view on the Department's website at www.regional.gov.au/territories/Christmas/land_management.aspx to assist proponents in determining which parcels of Crown land are potentially available on Christmas Island for lease or purchase.

Vegetation on Crown land is a mixture of native and planted vegetation. The geography of the land varies greatly, ranging from flat, to gentle undulation, to cliffs and fissures. Information on planning and regulatory requirements is in the *Christmas Island Crown Land Management Plan*.

The Department may assist prospective proponents by arranging site visits, where access to a site is limited or restricted. Please contact the Director, Indian Ocean Territories Policy, at: indianoceanterritories@infrastructure.gov.au to arrange a site visit.



Flying Fish Cove, Christmas Island

Information to be Included in a Registration of Interest

A Registration of Interest must contain the following information:

1. The name and address of the proponent, and details of the primary contact;
2. The site that the submission relates to, including its estimated size in area and a map which shows the proposed boundaries and area;
3. A description of the proposed use of the land, including development activities, timeframes and benefits of the proposal;
4. Advice on whether the proposed development is consistent with current zoning requirements (contact the Shire of Christmas Island if current zoning is not known);
5. Advice on whether the proposal is for a long-term lease or sale;
6. A declaration by the proponent that the information contained in the Registration of Interest Form is true and correct. (Knowingly giving false or misleading information is an offence under the *Criminal Code Act 1995*);
7. A declaration by the proponent acknowledging that the Registration of Interest does not guarantee provision of the requested land; and
8. A declaration by the proponent that the allocation of land may be subject to an open and competitive public release process and that the proponent may not be successful in acquiring the requested land.

The prescribed format is the Registration of Interest Form, which requests all of the information listed above. The Registration of Interest Form is available on the Department's website at www.regional.gov.au/territories/Christmas/land_management.aspx.



Lily Beach, Christmas Island

The Process

The Department will follow the Registration of Interest process below:



Following the conclusion of the Registration of Interest period on **Friday 12 May 2017**, the Department will review all Registrations of Interest and determine the level of interest in individual parcels of Crown land.

The Department will advise the Minister on the options for each parcel of land that is subject to a Registration of Interest.

The Minister will make a decision on the next steps. Proponents should be aware that a Registration of Interest does not oblige the Minister to directly provide the land to them. The merits of each Registration of Interest will be reviewed and only those which are deemed suitable by the Minister will proceed to the next stage of the process.

Proponents will be kept informed by the Department on the status of their Registration of Interest.

The Department has a limited capacity to fund significant infrastructure or amenities, such as roads or services, to support the development of land parcels. Proponent/s who are successful in purchasing or leasing Crown land would be expected to install all necessary infrastructure or amenities, where they are not currently in place.



Flying Fish Cove, Christmas Island

How to Submit

Registrations of Interest can be made by emailing the completed Registration of Interest Form to: indianoceanterritories@infrastructure.gov.au, or sent by post to:

Attention: Indian Ocean Territories Policy Section
Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development
GPO Box 594
CANBERRA ACT 2601

Alternatively, you can return the completed form and any attachments to:

Indian Ocean Territories Administration Office
20 Jalan Pantai, Settlement
CHRISTMAS ISLAND

Registrations of Interest must be received by no later than **5pm** (Australian Eastern Standard Time) on **Friday 12 May 2017**. Late registrations will not be considered in this round, however, there will be further opportunities to seek or request Crown land.

Registrations of Interest should be clearly identified with 'Registration of Interest - Crown Land on Christmas Island'.

The Department will advise all proponents in writing of receipt of their Registration.

Please refer enquiries by email to: indianoceanterritories@infrastructure.gov.au, or by phone to 02 6274 6614.



Sout Point coastline, Christmas Island