



TRADITIONAL RECREATION

we hear you...

A multi-level approach to reclaiming
the State's natural assets for the
enjoyment of all Tasmanians!

A policy of the
Tasmanian Liberal Party

December 2001

An open letter from the State Opposition Leader

My fellow Tasmanians

Much of a political party's work is focused on economic issues, such as unemployment, jobs, population and the future of our society in terms of material wealth.

We have been very active and committed to finding the answers to the State's future management in an economic sense, but we have also, over the last three years, dedicated ourselves to finding solutions to other issues facing Tasmanians, such as our lifestyle.

Tasmania's extraordinary natural assets offer its people a unique lifestyle.

We have heard from Tasmanians that there is an increasing trend at all levels of government, to over-regulate our lives and to raise revenue from every single public asset and service.

There is no doubt that many Tasmanians are beginning to feel alienated from the lifestyle they grew up with and hoped their children would also enjoy.

You have told us you want to be freed from the maze of bureaucratic regulations and petty financial imposts that act as disincentives to the full appreciation of our public assets.

The Liberals have listened to ordinary Tasmanians and heard their concerns and our response is contained in the following policy paper.

Please read on to discover our solutions for maximum enjoyment of Tasmania's assets and a healthy lifestyle for you and your family.

Bob Cheek, MHA
State Opposition Leader

INTRODUCTION

The temperate climate State of Tasmania offers us extraordinary opportunities to interact with our natural assets in a way that has shaped the unique character of the Tasmanian community.

Tasmania offers enjoyment of its natural assets in a whole host of ways: from activities on land and water, physical or motorised, adventurous or peaceful and activities that require high levels of skills, or others that all can participate in. Tasmania is a paradise that calls individuals and families to leave the comfort of their lounge rooms, to go forth and recreate!

The Tasmanian community has, over the last decade or so, learned to respect the State's natural resources and to be responsible in the use of public assets.

Successive governments have instituted good management programs in most areas and our understanding of the value of the State's flora and fauna is far more sophisticated now than it was even 10 years ago.

The Tasmanian Liberals believe strongly that the Tasmanian community has come of age in terms of responsible use of public land and waters and should now be encouraged to better enjoy them.

We are concerned by what we have heard from recreational and sporting organisations, about declining participation by the next generation of Tasmanians, in all sorts of activities. This has the potential to devalue what it means to be Tasmanian.

We believe in the importance of an inter-generational transfer of skills learned through participation in these pursuits. This ensures that the next generation respects and loves our unique Tasmanian environment.

It is our belief that every form of outdoor recreation, if it is conducted responsibly, is legitimate, indeed desirable, for a healthy and happy community. It can also offer jobs through enhanced tourism experiences.

TRADITIONAL RECREATION **AN OVERVIEW**

You have told us and we have heard

The Tasmanian Liberals have listened very carefully over the last three years to people in the community - from small towns to the cities, from coastal communities to the suburbs - and we believe the time is now right to reaffirm the rights of people to enjoy the State's natural assets and to rethink the barriers that prevent us from enjoying the activities that have traditionally been associated with the Tasmanian lifestyle.

We now have a clear message for all Tasmanians

A Liberal Government will free up the State's land, waters and public assets so that you can use them more easily and more often.

This, you have told us, will improve your quality of life in a way that Tasmanian families have traditionally enjoyed.

The Environment

Our community has matured in its approach to its understanding of the importance of sustainability and living in harmony with the environment.

This Policy is predicated upon the responsible use of the State's natural assets by all, and a sensible balance between human activity and the Tasmanian wilderness.

**Aboriginal
Heritage**

This Policy recognises the importance of significant Aboriginal sites throughout Tasmania.

The Tasmanian Liberals strongly believe in the application of appropriate codes of practice and ethics that ensure these sites are treated with the respect and dignity they deserve.

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Enjoying the Bush

National Parks and Reserves

Leave your wallet at home

A Liberal Government will wipe out National Park entry fees around the State*. We believe that our parks should be open and welcoming to all.

The Tasmanian community has not embraced National Park charges. We have heard that these charges have acted as a disincentive to visits by both Tasmanians and tourists alike.

(*See special arrangements for Port Arthur, p9)

More Rangers

A Liberal Government will fund at least 12 new ranger and trainee ranger positions to manage increased visits to the State's parks and coastal regions.

We believe that it is important to have more rangers on the ground rather than in offices.

Park of the Month

A Liberal Government will institute a permanent promotion called "*Park of the Month*" and that park will be celebrated and promoted for its unique assets and features.

Promotional activities will include subsidised bus visits from major population centres. Tasmanians will be encouraged to adopt a park and participate in its care and management with the help of rangers.

The State Liberals will discuss with local organisations the possibility of them playing a more practical role in the management of their park.

Central marketing of bush and wilderness assets

We have heard that it is unnecessarily difficult to find out how best to enjoy our bush and wilderness. Forestry Tasmania, National Parks and the Tourism Department all put out their own information and this just serves to make things more confusing.

Currently, many of the State's beautiful spots are a well-kept secret from most Tasmanians.

A Liberal Government will centralise the marketing and promotion of all these Tasmanian outdoor experiences.

People with disabilities and the Tasmanian bush

We recognise that many Tasmanians are not physically able to enjoy our wilderness.

Many seniors and people with disabilities lack the mobility to fully experience our beautiful outdoors. In some cases, they can drive into the car parks of our parks, but do little else. This is not good enough!

A Liberal Government will commence the redevelopment of two Tasmanian National Parks to provide improved wheelchair access to some key experiences. These parks will be niche marketed to the growing proportion of the Australian population who face mobility challenges.

In addition, all Parks and assets will undergo a mobility audit, the results of which will be clearly published on signage and brochures.

Port Arthur for all

Tasmanians have told us that they feel alienated from their Port Arthur Historic Site, a place they believe is being marketed solely to interstate and overseas tourists. Most tell us they haven't been there for many years!

Port Arthur is an important Tasmanian tourism icon with special heritage conservation needs.

We will consult with the Port Arthur Historic Site Management Authority and the people and businesses of the Tasman Peninsula about the potential for **free access to the site for four weeks of the year at times when it is most appropriate and useful to the South East Tasmanian business community.**

More enjoyable bushwalking trails

A Liberal Government will identify and promote up to six new trails that are not currently fashionable, as “must do” walks.

We are concerned about increasing pressure on the icon walks in this State and believe we can spread the load successfully over other, beautiful walks.

EPIRBS

A Liberal Government will legislate to make it compulsory for lone bushwalkers to carry an Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon while in National Parks and World Heritage areas and undertaking more than a day walk.

School based traditional outdoor pursuits and Project Hahn

Tasmanian schools and other organisations that have outdoor education programs will be provided with assistance from a Liberal Government.

For example, Project Hahn’s efforts to promote outdoor recreation to children at risk is to be applauded and will be further supported by a Liberal Government.

Community Groups that provide kids with outdoor activities will get help

Fishing clubs and other outdoor activity clubs that focus on junior involvement will enjoy great support from a Liberal Government. These clubs fulfil a very important community role apart from the obvious benefits to the children.

Outdoor Recreation Expo

In order to promote new participants to bushwalking and other forms of outdoor recreation, we will initiate a new major annual Outdoor Recreation Expo.

This major event will be a mid-winter drawcard to publicise and promote healthy and safe recreation.

In order to manage an expected increase in outdoor activities, a Liberal Government will initiate information forums to promote responsible and safe behaviour in the outdoors.

Camping

We believe that camping with family and friends is a wonderful way to enjoy the bush and Tasmania's coastline.

Many Tasmanians remember with great fondness camping trips to places all over the State.

Unfortunately, many traditional camp sites have been at risk of closure or closed in recent times including St Helens, Petal Point, Musselroe Bay and Weymouth.

A Liberal Government will develop or reopen camp sites where appropriate in parks, forestry reserves and on Crown Land.

Local businesses will be provided with "good camper" kits and local information to be handed out to campers

Tread Lightly

Camping sites will be rotated for rehabilitation purposes and our enhanced ranger service will make regular inspections to encourage people to make responsible use of the natural assets.

Recreational Boating

A boating paradise

Tasmania is an island state, with hundreds of lakes, estuaries, rivers and exciting coastal waters.

We know that a significant number of Tasmanians own or have access to a boat, large or small, sail or powered.

The Liberals believe that the great majority of boat users are responsible and skilled operators who deserve good facilities and support.

Better access to help you launch your boat

The State Liberals believe that for reasons of basic safety and equity, the owners of boats carried by trailers need better access to coastal and inland waterways.

Accordingly, a Liberal Government will ensure beach and other access ramps are located in reasonable proximity to population centres around the State, suitable for all weather launches and retrievals.

Further, remote sites such as Eddystone Point will have proper ramp facilities installed to allow recreational boating and diving access to these waters.

***Improved access
to fishing waters
and jetties and
wharves***

Marine and Safety Tasmania, set up by a Liberal Government, does a great job in spending scarce dollars to upgrade boat ramps and marine facilities and maintain navigation aids.

They have a 10 year, long range plan and a five year medium range plan. However, current Government funding does not match the need for urgent upgrades and regular maintenance on existing facilities.

Accordingly, a Liberal Government will provide an additional \$500,000 over the next term of Government for this purpose.

This will allow MAST to address urgent decking maintenance of wharves at places like St Helens, Nubeena and Bridport, the provision of all-weather and all-tidal ramps at locations such as Burnie and to set up and maintain beach launching facilities around the coast of Tasmania.

***Sailing and
windsurfing***

In light of Tasmania's rich yachting heritage, it is important that we encourage new participants and further foster quality competition to increase skill levels.

Sailing clubs, including sea cadet units, will be consulted with a view to them receiving some assistance to encourage the take up and retention of new participants to the sport.

***Waterskiing and
jet skis***

Safe participation in these water sports is best achieved through the dedication of specific areas. Issues such as noise and water disturbance are less of a problem when dedicated areas are available.

The State Liberals will work with clubs and groups involved in these sports to provide facilities and work to identify potential dedicated areas, especially for jet skiers.

***Search and Rescue
Capability Audit***

A Liberal Government will instigate an independent review and audit of the capacity of groups such as the Australian Maritime College, CSIRO, local fishermen's groups, Royal Volunteer Coastal Patrol and Coastguard and Surf Life Saving Tasmania with a view to integrating their capabilities into formal search and rescue operations.

(See Page 40 re assistance for Volunteer Search and Rescue Groups)

***Continuous
improvement in
boaters skills***

The Tasmanian Liberals believe that most people who enjoy boating are responsible and skilled and that they deserve to have good facilities and safety back ups.

A Liberal Government will increase the number of free skills upgrade forums across the State to promote continuous improvement in navigational, weather and handling skills for all Tasmanian boat users.

This process, to be called "*Boat Smart Training*", will be carried out by MAST and will be designed with the assistance of the Australian Maritime College.

Recreational Fishing

Go wet a line

Tasmania is blessed with lakes, rivers, estuaries and coastal waters with magnificent fishing opportunities, whether from the shore or by boat.

Tasmania also benefits from the foresight of many wise people over the years who have propagated a world-class inland wild trout fishery.

We want both salt and freshwater fisheries to be further developed and enjoyed by more Tasmanians.

No more over-regulation

The Liberals feel very strongly about the protection of fisheries and the living marine environment.

It was the Liberals who set up the *Living Marine Resources Management Act*, to make sure all Tasmanian coastal waters are subject to good management practice. Indeed this Act provides the same protection for Tasmanian waters as a high category Marine Protected Area.

The structure we put in place has wide community acceptance. However, the Bacon Government wants to implement new management regimes, over-regulating the whole coastal environment.

This is unnecessary duplication.

Therefore, a Liberal Government will refuse to implement any new Marine Protected Areas in Tasmanian Coastal Waters.

Under a Liberal Government, there will be no further restrictions on recreational or professional fishing in Tasmanian coastal waters unless, under the terms of the current Act, scientific evidence demands that an area be closed for a period.

A Liberal Government will disband the expensive Marine Protected Areas strategy unit and reassign all its public servants to more positive roles.

***Recreational
Fishing Trust Fund***

This Fund, which has income from fishing and boating licenses, is under utilised.

A Liberal Government will move to buy back existing commercial fishing licenses in prime recreational areas such as the Derwent River and Georges Bay, St Helens.

This will greatly enhance the recreational fishing experiences at these and possibly other locations.

***Charter Boat
Fishing***

Tasmania enjoys the services of a number of excellent blue-water charter fishing operators.

These operators, and any new operators, will be encouraged to commit to a nationally recognised accreditation program incorporating an industry code of practice based on ecologically sustainable principles.

While being encouraged to continue the high number of catch and releases, the right to fish for southern blue fin tuna will be restated and confirmed.

Annual Fishing Competitions

Annual competitions, both inland and sea, will be encouraged and assisted to develop further to promote increased participation in fishing activities.

Coastal and Estuary Fishing

A Liberal Government will move to more strictly enforce the limitations on commercial trawlers approaching the coastline to protect recreational fishing.

Angling Hall of Fame

The world famous Salmon Ponds at Plenty, with its beautiful grounds and surroundings, are to be redeveloped. As part of that redevelopment, two rooms have been set aside for an Anglers Hall of Fame.

The Liberals will provide funding to the Freshwater Anglers Council of Tasmania to collate and mount the displays that are central to the success of the Hall of Fame.

This development will encourage not only many tourists, but attract anglers from around the State, encouraging future generations of Tasmanians to take up this sport.

More camping facilities at fishing spots

Better camping facilities at lesser known fishing locations will be developed to spread fishing activity across all waters.

Recreational Hunting

A traditional recreation where high skills and responsible behaviour are passed down through the generations

The Liberals believe that the activities of recreational hunting and game hunting are legitimate and skilful.

Participants in these sports demonstrate high degrees of care, attention to equipment and behaviour and are worthy of support and encouragement.

We believe that recreational hunters are responsible Tasmanians with a well-developed knowledge of native flora and fauna and bushcraft.

Game Management Unit

Tasmania benefits from an internationally recognised Game Management Unit.

The Game Management Unit will be removed from the Nature Conservation Branch of DPIWE and be placed in a more appropriate position.

Management of wild duck numbers

The activity of duck hunting, indeed the whole environment, will benefit by the annual count of duck populations to be carried out in a more scientific and accurate manner.

A Liberal Government will ensure that the annual count is carried out with the assistance of the Game Management Unit, and with the input of the primary industry sector.

Firearm Laws

No discussion about traditional recreation in Tasmania can avoid the vexed issue of our firearms laws.

The Port Arthur tragedy changed Tasmania forever. The Liberals implemented the Firearms Act of 1996 in a tripartisan response to a compelling need for better regulation of firearms and their use.

These laws continue to have the broad support of the Tasmanian public.

Politicians of all colours have been subjected to intense lobbying both to water down these laws and, alternatively, to further tighten them.

We have considered all views and have concluded the laws are fundamentally sound.

Two small improvements

In order to improve safety and consistency across jurisdictions we believe it is necessary to enhance the existing law with two small improvements.

Due to the urgency with which these laws were instituted across the country, there were some differences in the firearm laws as adopted by the respective States and Territories.

As a result, Tasmania's legislation is well out of step with other states in one area and thereby fails to promote best practice safety training for young firearm users when outside of controlled shooting ranges.

To correct this, a Liberal Government will bring our laws into line with the strictest interstate position by allowing a person 12 years or older who has undergone formal range instruction to also discharge a firearm while in the company of an appropriately licensed adult while in the bush.

The arrangements in all States at present are as follows: NSW 12 years; Victoria 12 years; ACT 12 years; QLD 11 years; SA 10 years; NT any age; WA any age; TAS 16 years.

Currently, a potentially dangerous situation exists where young persons, on reaching the age of 18, are qualifying for a firearms license in spite of not having benefited from an intergenerational transfer of off-range skills. While the current Act provides for a 16 year old to be trained in the bush, in reality, most parents find that at this age they have limited interest in learning proper bushcraft and hunting etiquette.

The Liberals believe that failure to make this change will threaten the standard of knowledge, skills and safety of the next generation of recreational hunters, and therefore presents a risk to the wider community.

Drafting error

The Tasmanian firearms legislation also contains an unintended consequence that requires existing licensed firearm owners who wish to purchase a subsequent firearm, to undergo a “cooling off” period as though they were first time firearm owners.

The Liberals totally support the value of the “cooling off” period and will do nothing to lessen the protection it provides against impulsive actions by first time prospective gun owners.

If a person already owns a firearm there is no public benefit to be gained by requiring him or her to wait 30 days before acquiring another firearm.

Requiring a person to do so was a drafting error and needs to be corrected.

Target Shooting

An exciting, highly skilled sport

Olympic medals and public enjoyment of the shooting events at the last two Olympic Games have highlighted the great sportsmanship and skills involved in target shooting.

The sport also promotes a high degree of skill and safety in firearms handling - an advantage that flows into other firearm based activities - and deserves the support and encouragement of the Government and the community.

To continue our high achievement levels, this sport deserves encouragement and enhancement to attract new participants.

Clay, Trap, Target and Sporting shooting

The Liberals are aware that the competitive side of sporting shooting is well managed and run under ruthlessly strict safety standards.

Accordingly, the Liberals will encourage competitive shooting by assisting clubs with the running of key events to encourage greater participation in this sport.

Assistance will be provided for young participants to progress in their chosen discipline and develop their skills against higher competition.

***Hi Tech and high
skills in pistol
shooting***

The Liberals believe that the high technology sport of pistol shooting promotes advanced skills and is run under very tough safety standards.

Pistol shooters and pistol shooting clubs have an exemplary record of safety and deserve the support and encouragement of the Government and the community.

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A Liberal Government supports the current regime on pistol ownership.

Water Sports

Surfs up

The sport of surfing is very popular – particularly with young Tasmanians – and our island State features great surfing spots. From good conditions for learners right through to some of the wildest surf in the world, the State serves up a surfing smorgasbord.

We have been told that the biggest frustration for surfers, particularly in the South East, is a lack of consistently good surf at accessible locations. This can put off new surfers and even discourage all but the hardest core surfers.

A new Artificial Reef

To help overcome this problem, **the Liberals have promised to fund the construction of at least one environmentally sound artificial reef.** The first will be built at South Arm, near Hobart, using internationally proven technology and assistance from the Australian Maritime College.

Surf Lifesaving A wonderful sport and a great community service

This sport is a national icon and Tasmania, given its size and climate, has a good record in competitive events.

Of course, it is not just a sport and Tasmanian surf lifesavers have also always maintained high standards of service to beach users.

The Liberals believe that surf lifesaving clubs have always provided outstanding service to the community through the training of young people as strong swimmers and as lifetime volunteers promoting beach safety.

Accordingly, a Liberal Government will provide extra assistance to Surf Lifesaving Tasmania to promote participation by young people in surf lifesaving.

In consultation with Surf Lifesaving Tasmania, the Liberals will conduct a rolling program of mapping and audits of Tasmania's popular beaches to ensure that beach safety and awareness are optimised.

(Please see Section 13 regarding assistance to Volunteer Search and Rescue and safety organisations.)

Recreational Diving

The Liberals believe that the activity of recreational diving in Tasmania allows the enjoyment of Australia's most diverse underwater experiences and is deserving of support and promotion.

In many places in the world and even in Australia, the placement of redundant vessels on the ocean floor has provided stunning diving opportunities.

We have heard that the addition of a dedicated dive wreck in Tasmanian waters would greatly enhance the already outstanding Tasmanian diving experience, provided it was done in an environmentally sensitive manner.

The Bacon Government has missed two excellent opportunities to secure retired naval vessels, the HMAS Hobart and just recently, the HMAS Brisbane. The Liberals will not miss future opportunities and are committed to securing at least one vessel for submerging in Tasmanian waters for this purpose. The placement of this wreck will be determined in consultation with relevant stakeholders.

Recreational divers will also have many opportunities for new dive territories through increased boat access sites - as described earlier.

Adventure Recreation

***Extreme sports are
very attractive to
active people***

The State Liberals recognise that many Tasmanians are now keen to experience the rush of what have come to be known as 'extreme' or 'adventure' sports.

Many adventure sports, such as rock climbing, abseiling and rafting, to name just a few, have been practised in Tasmania for many years and already have a strong following.

These existing sports deserve to be encouraged and new adventure sport opportunities developed to provide new challenges for active Tasmanians.

Go for it!

The State Liberals will thoroughly explore opportunities to develop adventure activities around the State.

We will also provide seed funding for the development of business plans, Environmental Impact Assessments and resolution of access issues for good commercial ideas involving adventure sports.

Given Tasmania's unique characteristics, the Liberals believe that at least the following adventure sports are worthy of further development:

- caving
- rock climbing & abseiling
- white water rafting
- sea-kayaking and canoeing
- hang-gliding
- mountain biking
- sky-diving, and
- endurance events

We will work with the relevant activity groups to further adventure sports in Tasmania.

Motorised Recreation

Cruisin' without Bruisin'

The responsible use of Tasmania's bush by four-wheel drivers deserves the encouragement and support of the Government.

The various organisations that represent four-wheel drivers already maintain a high standard of ethics and apply codes of practice throughout their respective memberships.

In order to enhance the enjoyment of the many four-wheel driving experiences around the State, a Liberal Government will assist with the publishing and distribution of appropriate publications detailing four-wheel drive opportunities, including track notes, maps and co-ordinates.

On yer Bike!

All Terrain vehicles and trail bikes are a great way to enjoy Tasmania's outdoors.

A number of organisations involving the use of these vehicles and bikes exist and the promote good behaviour in the bush. These organisations will be encouraged to find interesting new and improved opportunities for their activities.

New participants will be encouraged to join these organisations, providing them with improved training and education.

***No more
over-regulation***

The Liberals will not close any more trails without full consultation with user organisations. The Liberals will reconsider any recent trail closures with a view to reopening trails where appropriate and possible.

The move by the Bacon Government to restrict access to the Arthur-Pieman region is a good example of over-regulation. The Liberals will reconsider the decisions made by the Government.

Linear Recreation

The Tasmanian Trail, Horse Trails and Suburban Cycling Tracks

***A wilderness
revelation – all
done by volunteers***

The Tasmanian Overland Trail is a developing asset that provides a unique challenge to both mountain bikers and endurance horse riders.

Running from Tasmania's north-west through to the Derwent Valley, traversing public and private land, the Trail is developing into an exceptional world class experience.

The State Liberals believe that the Tasmanian Trail Association should receive additional assistance to further develop the Trail's facilities and that the experience should be marketed better locally and to tourists.

The Trail currently running between Devonport and Dover, should be developed further with lateral links to the east and west.

A Liberal Government will provide funds for the surveying and establishment of potential new trails.

Horse riding trails

The Liberals will not close any more trails without full consultation with user organisations. The Liberals will reconsider any recent trail closures with a view to re-opening trails where appropriate and possible.

Cycling Trails

A Liberal Government will provide assistance to enhance the existing cycling trail network in Tasmania.

Horseback Recreation

A truly traditional recreation

Recreational horse riding is an activity that has a great history in Tasmania. Existing experiences such as the Tasmanian Trail Association provide for world class recreation.

Endurance Events

Endurance events, such as the Tom Quilty event will receive assistance to attract new participants.

Mountain Cattlemen's Association

This Association provides a direct link with traditional highland activity and its activities will be supported and developed.

Pony Clubs and Eventing

All state pony clubs will be encouraged to apply for assistance to promote new participants to the sport and enhance facilities.

The Lauderdale eventing course will receive special assistance for further development.

A New Role for Country Shows! **A Grand Prix circuit for the heartland sports of** **Woodchopping and Equestrian Events**

Country shows, showcases for Traditional Recreation

A State Liberal Government will enhance the Federal Government's recent public announcement of support for country shows through a new alliance with rural shows.

The circuit of country shows in Tasmania provides a wonderful showcase for two of Tasmania's traditional sports, woodchopping and equestrian events.

Woodchopping and Axemen's Events

The Liberals consider this to be an icon Tasmanian sport that has strong traditional roots and showcases skills across all ages.

The sport is run by hard-working volunteers and each event is marked by tough competition and outstanding sportsmanship.

In light of dwindling participation at junior levels, participation in axemen and sawing events is highly deserving of government assistance.

The sport is attractive and interesting to spectators and is a highlight of rural shows in Tasmania.

An exciting axemen's Grand Prix circuit

Accordingly, a Liberal Government will be a key sponsor for a new grand prix circuit of wood chopping events based around Tasmanian country shows.

The emphasis will be on the introduction of new participants into the sport and maintaining the culture of these events.

The Axemen's Hall of Fame at Latrobe will be a key focus of this policy.

Showjumping and Dressage

The Liberals believe these disciplines often introduce whole families to participation in animal husbandry, as well as riding skills.

A Liberal Government will be a key sponsor for a new grand prix circuit of equestrian events, based around Tasmanian country shows.

These events will carry prize money and will encourage new participants into the sport.

Country Shows

In light of the expected enhancement of wood chopping and equestrian events by the proposed grand prix circuit, country shows will need to steadily improve facilities to host these events.

Country Show associations will be engaged in dialogue with a view to developing an assistance program to upgrade and maintain facilities to showcase these two sports.

While designed primarily for country shows, this initiative could be extended to major shows if a similar need for assistance can be demonstrated, given that in some cases some government assistance already exists.

Snow Skiing

A sport that is severely limited by a lack of development of ski fields

Mt Field Following the construction of the new visitors centre, a good base now exists for snow based activity at Mt Field National Park. Skiing facilities, including cross-country skiing trails, will be enhanced to encourage new participants to this sport.

A Liberal Government will fix the Parks and Wildlife senior management practices to remove unnecessary regulation, make them less bureaucratic and more business and people friendly.

Ben Lomond

The State Liberals will focus on developing Ben Lomond into a viable two months of the year “snow destination”.

Snowmaking

There has been much debate and consideration over the viability of snow making devices on Ben Lomond. The time has come to establish once and for all whether and how this technology could be utilised on Ben Lomond.

The matter of who would develop the technology in the future is not an issue for now. The threshold issue is whether the technology will work well enough to make a difference.

The challenge is to “guarantee” useful snow for two months within the period of July to September in the following snow use areas:

- (a) a new designated recreational snow

- area, for tobogganing and general snow play
- (b) the ski school area, to introduce people into the sport
- (c) the ski slopes

Snow Gun Trials

A Liberal Government will take up the offer from Snowfield Engineering Pty Ltd to conduct a one season trial of snow making technology on Ben Lomond.

Although the mountain appears to offer conditions suitable for snow making, only an onsite season long machine test will prove how well the technology will work.

The water pumping and power generation for the trial will be sled based and temporary for the trial.

If trials show that snow making could be successful, a business case for either commercial or public development will be investigated.

Slope Grooming

While slope grooming will not be necessary for the trial season, the trial will be conducted on the basis that a State Liberal Government would undertake strategic mechanical slope grooming to take advantage of the snow making technology if proven.

Winter Tourism

Innovative marketing of Ben Lomond as an attractive winter tourism destination, not just for skiing, but for a variety of other commercial purposes (as has been done at Mt Baw Baw in Victoria) can help provide the cash flow needed to underwrite the use of snow making technology.

Volunteer Search and Rescue

More help for Public Safety Volunteers

The Liberals are dedicated to encouraging many more Tasmanians to take up old and new pursuits in the outdoors.

Many of these activities, however, would be unthinkable without the continued great comfort of knowing that hundreds and hundreds of volunteers stand nearby to help if we get into trouble in the bush or out on the water.

Accordingly, organisations including

- Royal Volunteer Coastal Patrol
- Coastguard
- State Emergency Service groups
- Surf Lifesaving groups

Will receive special assistance to maintain the high levels of training of their volunteers.

It's time that these great organisations got help to maintain their readiness to save our lives!