

**Keep Australia Beautiful
Australian Clean Beaches Awards 2009**

**Cable Beach WA
Highly Commended: Environmental Innovation category award**

Introduction

Cable Beach is located a short drive from Broome International Airport and is well and truly on the international visitor map. The local population of around 15 000 explodes to over 45 000 during the peak tourist season, with visitors taking full advantage of the range of activities available beachside. The cultural variety of Broome, with its rich tapestry of ethnic diversity, is currently reflected in the cross section of tourists visiting the area.

Community Partnerships

- Recognises achievement in community beautification, presentation and pride.
- Recognises communities which proudly preserve and value cultural history.
- Recognises partnership achievements by government and/or business with local communities.

Broome Shire early on identified the need to ensure the Cable Beach area is well maintained and appropriate facilities are available and well maintained. This commitment is reflected in the excellent Lifeguarding service, well maintained beachside parkland areas and facilities, and overall support for local community initiatives. Other aspects which speaks volumes for Council's commitment to visitor safety is the distribution of safety messages through all the local accommodation providers, excellent beach signage (which is constantly being reviewed and updated) and ongoing review of safety measures provided on the beach.

Council also works with the Kimberley Land Council, Broome Surf Club, local schools, Roebuck Bay Work Group and the traditional Landowners, the Rubibi peoples, to plan and execute plans of management for the beach and surrounding environs. This work includes delineating beach access and appropriate for wheel drive zones in the area.

The Cable Beach and Broome Communities value the strong aboriginal heritage and this is shown in the Minyirr Park facility and nature reserve, and how visitors from Town or around the world can come and experience traditional customs and practices on site.

Community groups such as the local Lions Club are also active at Cable Beach, and a good example of their involvement is the provision and maintenance of the stinger stations along the beach. Stinger remedies and a range of information are available on site and this helps reduce the risk for swimmers.

There are five commercial operators licensed to use Cable Beach, and each are not only required to maintain a commitment to care for the environment, all are active and eager to see Cable Beach's allure and attractiveness maintained and enhanced.

Overall, a sure sign of the good job being accomplished by the Community is the number of celebrations stage beachside. These include the Kite Festival, many surf life saving competitions, long distance events, Opera Under the Stars, the Shinju Matsuri Festival (which celebrates Broome's pearling history) and the well known Broome Turf Club Race Days to name a few.

Environmental Innovation

-Recognises achievement through innovation by community, government and business under the principles and practical actions associated with environment protection and sustainability.

Cable Beach is an area focused on the natural environment, with many community groups, including Council involvement, participating in wildlife rehabilitation and protection. This includes caring for migratory birds, sea turtles, seagrass monitoring, crabs, and even working in with DSE to protect and monitor visiting crocodiles.

Often identified as the highlight of local initiatives, the monitoring program for the visiting sea turtles, where the annual CVA program brings together the community to monitor and protect the flatback turtles and other species visiting the beach – *and the innovation is best showcased by the ability to engage the community to uphold no vehicle zones during nesting*. Council, working with the DEC, CVA and local groups implemented the initiative over a relatively short time frame, and undertook extensive community consultation and education in an effort to encourage stewardship of this project.

The Community Weed Project, an innovative collaboration between Environs Kimberley and Minyirr Park Nature Reserve, utilising the local community along with visitors and people at risk, undertaking work to eradicate weeds and maintain locally provenanced plants in dune and related areas.

Resource Recovery

-Recognises achievement in community litter management and reduction including the undertaking of litter audits, and litter education programs.

-Recognises achievement in resource recovery and waste management including initiatives which conserve resources, water or energy minimisation practices; the recovery and reuse of materials including packaging, and the appropriate disposal of non-recyclable materials.

The Shire is committed to reusing green waste and mulching where ever possible around the beach and throughout the township. In addition, recycling is a high priority, and there is a commitment to reducing the amount of litter generated through recreational fishing. For example, at Gantheaume Point at the southern end of Cable Beach there is an oil recycling facility, and receptacles for the disposal of monofilament line. In addition, a strong no litter message is evident around the beach and town, with great signage and educative materials being widely available.

Council maintains a good range of bins around the beach, and these are emptied daily, with contents being recycled at the Broome Waste management Facility.

Protection of the Environment

-Recognises achievement in the protection of the natural environment and, specifically, the preservation of native flora and fauna.

Along with the protection of turtles through the demarcation of vehicle no go zones, the Shire maintains a number of dog free areas, along with great educative materials available throughout the area.

Along with the protection of fauna, flora is also important and the Shire, working with traditional landowners have identified a vast number of important trees and wildlife areas which are protected and cherished by the Community. Once again, the Minyirr Park Nature Reserve plays an essential role in conserving and enhancing the natural ecosystems of the area.

Water Conservation

-Recognises sustainable water management within communities which has combined innovative water conservation and water re-use initiatives at the private, industrial and municipal levels, benefiting society and nature.

While it would be easy to assume water is not an issue in Cable Beach, the Shire has undertaken a number of simple initiatives which help reduce water usage and encourage climate sensitivity. For example, all showers and ablutions have time limited flow, and local urban developments have strategies in place to ensure ESD principles, along with encouraging the planting of locally provenanced plants which require less water than introduced species. *This is also an important feature in order to maintain the lore of traditional landowners as well.*

Energy Conservation

-Recognise sustainable energy management within communities which has combined innovative energy conservation initiatives at the private, industrial and municipal levels, benefiting society and nature.

Energy management systems are in place, or planned for as buildings are refurbished or replaced. In addition, solar power is also heavily relied upon to light the pathway which runs along the entire Cable Beach Foreshore area. In addition, the Shire encourages the Community to take up their offer of free long life energy efficient globes available for every household and organisation.

Young Legends

-Recognises environmental achievement through youth initiative and/or by a community, which encourages and promotes youth initiative and environmental education.

Excellent links to local primary, secondary and tertiary schools, where students are encouraged to participate in a variety of social and educative events. These include the Crab Monitoring Survey, the "Sea, Salt and Sand" school holiday program (where tidal walks, colouring competitions and eco fishing clinics are staged).

Of course a focus for Cable Beach is the Broome Surf Lifesaving Club, where youth are exposed to a variety of educative experiences designed to foster stewardship of the local marine environment through interacting on a day to day basis in the monitoring and care of the local environment.

The programs undertaken by the Minyirr Park Nature Reserve group, targeting youth at risk are to be commended. By instilling an understanding of traditional culture and appreciation for the natural environment, the Group have achieved a great deal to alleviate many of the issues associated with this at risk demographic.

Special Thanks

A big thank you to Broome Shire Council for facilitating my visit, and an especially big appreciation to Shire Lifeguard Tim Trew for taking time out of his busy schedule to show me the beach and surrounding areas. Tim's enthusiasm and commitment to Cable Beach and the adjacent area was admirable, and this enthusiasm is reflected in the numerous Shire publications featuring Tim and his Staff undertaking environmentally aware practices.

My appreciation goes to Mikalo and the Crew at the Minyirr Park Nature Reserve. Tim and I spent some time at the facility and I was impressed by the heartfelt joy for the environment and the commitment to education and rehabilitation expressed by the Crew. No camels were harmed during the execution of my visit.

<http://maps.google.com.au/maps?f=q&source=s_q&hl=en&geocode=&q=cable+beach&sl=-25.335448,135.745076&sspn=34.931274,40.166016&ie=UTF8&ll=-17.928477,122.213931&spn=0.01817,0.019612&t=k&z=15>