

## MEDIA RELEASE

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### **Auditor-General assesses management of national parks**

Today, Auditor-General, Mr Rod Whitehead tabled a report in Parliament presenting his findings on the Parks and Wildlife Service's (PWS) management of Tasmania's national parks. This audit examined PWS planning processes with a focus on the allocation of funding to national parks, management of high value assets within national parks, and management of threats such as bushfires, pests, weeds and diseases and human impact.

The Auditor-General noted that PWS had a logical process for the allocation of funding, but was not persuaded that enough priority was given to the threat of weeds, pests and diseases in regional business plans. Mr Whitehead also noted that funding in 2014–15 on a per hectare basis was low in Tasmania compared with the national average.

Other major findings were:

- Park management plans reviewed were outdated and were in need of updating
- No systematic process for monitoring and managing high-value assets or pest, weeds and disease threats
- Threats from human impact were generally well managed using the Reserves Standards Framework and reserve activity assessments (RAAs), however, there was no effective system for monitoring identified risks.

The Auditor-General concluded that PWS was effectively managing bushfires as fire management plans existed across all national parks and objectives and related strategies to address bushfire risks were identified and a bushfire risk assessment model had been implemented.

Concerning infrastructure and visitor safety, Mr Whitehead noted PWS had generally effective processes to manage infrastructure and visitor safety.

The report made ten recommendations aimed at improving park monitoring and reporting systems and PWS management effectiveness.

The complete Report can be downloaded from [www.audit.tas.gov.au](http://www.audit.tas.gov.au).

**Ends**

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