

7.5. VOYAGES TOURISM FEE PROPOSAL

REPORT AUTHOR	Chief Executive Officer
EXECUTIVE	Chief Executive Officer
DEPARTMENT	Office of the Chief Executive Officer
TEAM	Office of the Chief Executive Officer
DATE	29 September 2026

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. Note the new Commercial Activity Permit fee applied from 18 October 2026 implemented by the Department of Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation; and**
- 2. Endorse the \$2.70 fee increase for all free independent travelers who board the Mossman Gorge Cultural Centre Bus Service in accordance with the Commercial Activity Permit fee.**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Voyages Tourism Australia Pty Ltd trading as Mossman Gorge Cultural Centre (MGCC) requests Douglas Shire Council's (DSC) endorsement, under clause 3.4 of the Road Use Agreement, of a one-off exception increase to the fees charged for the MGCC Shuttle Bus Service, effective 18 October 2026 (as defined in the Road Use Agreement).

PREVIOUS COUNCIL CONSIDERATIONS / RESOLUTIONS

Not applicable

REPORT/BACKGROUND

The Department of Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation (DETSI) administered through Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS) has notified MGCC that from 18 October 2026 onwards it will be applying a new Commercial Activity Permit (CAP) fee to all free independent travelers (FIT) who board the MGCC Shuttle Bus Service and are dropped adjacent to and for entry into the Daintree National park.

This is a new arrangement, and CAP fees for FIT are not currently charged (only when visiting the Park with a Tour Operator). This new fee, set at \$2.70 per person as of 1 July 2026, will flow directly to the Jabalbina Yalanji Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC (Jabalbina) under their park management arrangements with DETSI. As this cost is imposed by a third-party regulator and is unrelated to CPI movement, it exceeds the annual CPI/4% increase contemplated under clause 3.4 of the Road Use Agreement and therefore requires Council endorsement before it can be passed on. This Fee increase and proposal is fully supported by Jabalbina.

Endorsement of this proposal will:

- Ensure compliance with DETSI permit requirements;
- Establish a transparent and consistent fee structure for visitors;
- Support the sustainable environmental management of Mossman Gorge and the Daintree National park;
- Enable MGCC to continue operating the shuttle bus service in accordance with regulatory requirements;
- Support Jabalbina as the RNTBC for the Eastern Kuku Yalanji people and their native title rights as traditional owners; and
- Provide additional financial support for the ongoing maintenance of protected areas.

To be sustainable MGCC will need to pass through the full \$2.70 per person new CAP fee as an addition to the current fee, applied per person across all fare categories. The table below sets out the current fees and the proposed uplifted fees inclusive of the \$2.70 increase.

After this, it is expected the standard CPI/4% annual increases to be applied as usual under the Road Use Agreement.

Fare Category	Current Fee	Fee Increase	New fee from 18 Oct 2026
Adult	\$15.50	\$2.70	\$18.20
Child (5-15 yrs)	\$7.75	\$2.70	\$10.45
Family Pass (2 Adults + 2 Children)	\$38.75	\$10.80	\$49.55

FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

There are no identified financial or resource implications for Council.

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

Reputational/Political: Endorsement of the fee increase introduced by a 3rd party supports a local business and prevents the MGCC having to cover the introduced fee. Non-endorsement may have reputational implications for Council due to impacts on the MGCC.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

The Commercial Activity Permit revenue will be passed onto Jabalbina by the Department. This revenue will continue to allow Jabalbina to perform environmental initiatives within the Douglas Shire.

SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable

CORPORATE AND OPERATIONAL PLAN

This report has been prepared in accordance with the following:

Corporate Plan 2025-2030 Initiatives:

Theme 1 - Liveability

To deliver community activities to promote safe, healthy, inclusive and socially engaged communities with an environmental conscious.

1.7 - Investigate and promote environmental, green, eco-friendly and nature focused initiatives.

Theme 2 - Prosperity

Council plans, builds and maintains the infrastructure required to improve our lifestyle and promote economic growth, working actively to support local businesses.

2.6 - Recognise the contribution of established local industries.

2.7 - Build strong local, State and Federal relations.

Operational Plan 2026-2027 Actions:

New project arisen during the financial year.

LEGISLATION AND POLICY

- *Nature Conservation Act 1992*
- *Recreation Areas Management Act 2006*
- *Forestry Act 1959*
- *Marine Parks Act 2004*

CONSULTATION

External Consultation:

- Mossman Gorge Cultural Centre
- Jabalbina Yalanji Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC

CONCLUSION

The Department of Environment, Science, Tourism and Innovation has introduced a new Commercial Activity Permit fee for all travelers who board the Mossman Gorge Cultural Centre Bus Service for access into the Daintree National Park.

The \$2.70 fee increase is in excess of the approved price increases as per the current road use agreement, therefore approval of the increase is required by Council

ATTACHMENTS

Nil