

CONTACTS

EMERGENCY (ECC B119)	9553 2222
Fleet Base West Switchboard	9553 3333
Fleet Base West Fire Station	9553 2528 9553 2408
Ranger	9553 2432 0410 694 070
Environment Officer	9553 2289

Defence Environmental Internet Site
<http://www.defence.gov.au/environment>



“Defence will be a leader in sustainable environmental management to support the ADF’s capability to defend Australia and its national interests”.

(Defence’s Environmental Vision, endorsed by the Secretary and Chief of the Defence Force as a component of Defence’s Environmental Policy)

Dangers for the unwary

Bushfire

Lighting of fires, including open flamed BBQs, is strictly prohibited. Gas BBQs are provided free of charge at designated picnic sites.

The dense vegetation of Garden Island presents a high bushfire risk in the summer, potentially threatening lives, naval assets and wildlife. Prior to European settlement, fires only started by lightning strikes.

Frequent fires will destroy the island’s unique stands of pine and teatree forest.

Boating visitors can avoid bushfire risk during summer by staying on major tracks and close to the coast.

Hazardous coastal landforms

Crumbling headlands of limestone around the island coast are dangerous.

Do not approach cliff edges or explore under over-hangs as large sections can collapse without warning. Advisory signs have been installed but individual responsibility, including supervision of children, is also required in this natural environment.



No-go areas

For safety and security reasons, Closed Naval Waters surrounding the Armaments Wharf and Careening Bay are restricted to public access.

Similarly, operational precincts on Garden Island, obvious by their surrounding fences or signage, are prohibited to unauthorised public visitors.

Waste management – for healthy wildlife

Rubbish bins at Pig Trough and Herring Bays are serviced by the local council and paid for by the Garden Island Fishing and Aquatic Association.

In all other areas, please take away your waste when you leave. Tammars are currently free of diseases such as Salmonella. Disease may be introduced and spread by inappropriately disposed rubbish and food scraps.

An island steeped in history

Garden Island was not visited by the Indigenous community of the adjacent mainland but featured in aboriginal dream-time lore. Although mapped by Dutch and French explorers, the first land-fall was made by Captain Stirling in 1827. He left a garden and livestock as supplies for his return in 1829 to establish the Perth colony, Australia’s first free settlement (ie without convicts).

Stirling (now Governor), the support crews of Captain Fremantle and the first Swan River colonists camped at Cliff Head for several months while making preparations to establish the mainland settlement. A limestone-sided well remains from this era.

Over the following 175+ years, Garden Island has been involved in many stages of Western Australia’s development, providing ship replenishment and careening for sail and then steam trading ships, fortifications during World War II, holiday escape for generations of Perth families, and most recently port services to over half the Australian fleet.



A Defence base since 1915

The Commonwealth purchased Garden Island for Defence purposes in 1915. In WWII, four batteries were established on the island as part of the Fremantle coastal fortification network, and Careening Bay was home base for the top secret ‘Z Force’ submarines.

Between wars, Garden Island was a popular holiday destination with a main camp at Careening Bay serviced by ferries. Cottages and shacks were scattered along the east coast.

In 1973 a 4.2km causeway to the mainland was completed to enable construction of wharves, workshops and accommodation for the new Indian Ocean naval base. Since its commissioning in July 1978, HMAS *Stirling* has truly lived up to its motto of “Go Forward” with carefully controlled expansion.

Heritage listings

Garden Island has three entries on the Commonwealth Heritage List:

- The whole island (for natural heritage values)
- Cliff Point (Captain Stirling’s settlement)
- J Gun (Challenger) Battery, Entrance Point.

Two shipwrecks in Careening Bay, *Day Dawn* and *Data*, are on the Register of the National Estate.



Fleet Base West & HMAS STIRLING Garden Island

Where the Royal Australian Navy and nature live in harmony



FLEET BASE WEST

Environmental vision

“FLEET BASE WEST and its people will manage Garden Island and its surrounding waters by striving to sustainably manage and conserve the environment whilst supporting the ADF operational capabilities”.



Defence is one of the largest land managers in Australia, entrusted with the stewardship of over 3 million hectares of land, as well as significant sea and air space. Defence is very conscious of the potential impacts from its activities. It is adopting ecologically sustainable development principles and making them an everyday part of its business.

This brochure contains information on the environmental guidelines and responsibilities for visitors to FBW and Garden Island.

The jewel in Navy's crown

Fleet Base West, encompassing HMAS *Stirling*, is one of the largest industrial sites in Western Australia and the RAN's largest base in Australia, being 'home' to over half the fleet.

Fleet Base West's primary role is to enable deployment of ships, submarines and Clearance Diving Team 4. The 3000 plus personnel at FBW include personnel of a large number of support 'lodger units' which provide services in logistics, maintenance, training, research and development and administration/amenities.

Defence facilities take up less than 30% of Garden Island's 1200 hectares. The remainder of this beautiful 12km long, and up to 1.5km wide, island is carefully managed to conserve an environment little altered since documented by early Dutch explorers. Surrounding Garden Island are approximately 2500 hectares of 'Naval Waters' for which the Navy also has responsibilities to protect marine values.



Responsibility for environmental management

The Base Support Manager (BSM, Defence Support Group WA), supported by Commanding Officer HMAS *Stirling*, provides leadership and has ultimate responsibility for environmental protection.

The BSM is supported by a Defence Environment Officer who is responsible for the day-to-day environmental management of the site.

External stakeholder management input is primarily achieved via regular liaison with the WA Department of Environment and Conservation for land-based issues. The Cockburn Sound Management Council, of which Defence is a member, provides management input on marine issues.

A Public Area Ranger, seconded from the Department of Environment and Conservation, manages public access and associated environmental issues.

Managing Defence activities

Defence must comply with Commonwealth legislation such as the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* and International treaties such as protection of migratory seabirds. Defence is also committed, through its 'Good Neighbour' policy, to achieve wherever practicable the intent of Western Australian law and to meet community expectations for managing its land and sea values.



Quality and improvement

An Environmental Management System was developed for FBW/HMAS *Stirling* in 2005.

The FBW/HMAS *Stirling* OH&S, Environmental and Sustainability Committee assists FBW's 80 plus 'lodger units' to identify and manage their own environmental responsibilities, and provides a forum for working together to minimise impacts from general activities on the island.



Public access - where compatible

Garden Island is owned by the Commonwealth. By-laws controlling public access are established under the Public Areas provisions of the Defence Act (1903). The Control of Naval Waters Act (1918) and Regulations establish powers for the Superintendent of Garden Island Naval Waters (Commanding Officer HMAS *Stirling*) to ensure the capacity for the Navy to undertake its operations, and include powers and responsibilities for public safety. Other aspects, such as fisheries and protection of native fauna and flora, are primarily State responsibilities and are therefore subject to relevant State legislation.

When HMAS *Stirling* was established, the WA government negotiated an agreement that allowed for limited access, primarily by private boat, to areas outside restricted zones. The State provides support through regular liaison and input into management decisions and secondment to Defence of the Ranger.

Sewage on boats – don't swim in it

Untreated sewage from toilet waste holding tanks on marine vessels should not be discharged within 500m of land or within 100m of a stationary vessel or a person in the water.



Seawater samples from Garden Island's popular beaches are regularly analysed to ensure that the water remains fit for recreational purposes.



Fishing

Recreational fishing must comply with WA licensing and bag and size limits. For further information, contact the Department of Fisheries (www.fish.wa.gov.au).

Spear fishing and gidgees are weapons and therefore prohibited on Garden Island and within Naval Waters.