

## **Outback Offsets**

Assurance Statement to the Stakeholders of Tourism NT

### **Background**

PE Australia were engaged by Tourism NT to oversee the 'Outback Offsets' initiative. The objective of this Pilot Program was to facilitate NT tourist operators becoming carbon neutral. The pilot included three tour operators who service approximately 40% of the local Alice Springs touring industry.

The three participating operators were

- Adventure Tours Australia (Alice Springs),
- Connections Safaris and Connections Adventures Northern Territory Red Centre Tours; and
- Way Outback Desert Safaris.

The activities of the operators included:

- Preparation phase
- Use phase
- End of life

### **Scope of Work**

PE Australia completed two Greenhouse Gas Life Cycle Assessments (GHG LCA) on each of the three operators.

The first GHG LCA provided a baseline for the GHG emissions and a process and protocol for measuring the emissions. The second established the emissions for the 2008/09 year of operations.

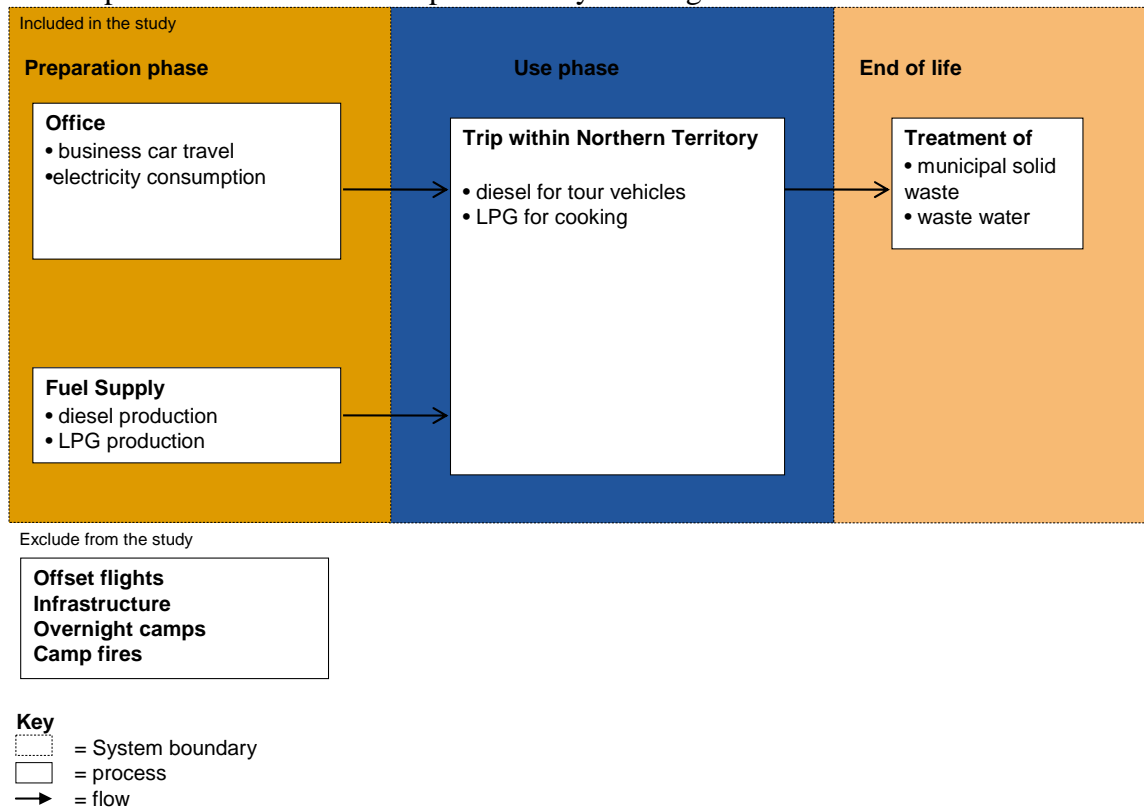
The boundary of the study was from the point of "pickup" of the passenger by the operator, considered to be at the Alice Springs Airport or at an Alice Springs Hotel, to the conclusion of the tour.

Sources for greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from their operations were identified as being:

- Office electricity consumption
- Business car travel
- Transfer of new vehicles to Alice Springs
- Business air travel
- Tour vehicles
- LPG
- Waste water treatment
- Municipal solid waste
- Dry-cleaning of bed linen

Not all emission types were present in all operators.

The scope of the assessment is represented by the diagram below.



## Methodology

Two comprehensive Life Cycle Assessments were conducted on each of the Operators. They were aligned with ISO 14040 requirements and the Australian Government Department of Climate Change Greenhouse Friendly™ guidelines. The Greenhouse Friendly™ program was suspended by the Department of Climate Change during the course of the Project. However the guidelines were still followed to ensure consistency between the two LCA reports.

Scope 1, 2, and 3 emissions were included. Emissions associated with camp fires were not included on the assumption that firewood is harvested in a sustainable manner where GHG emissions are balanced against GHG sink from regenerating vegetation.

Data were supplied by the Operators on the basis of a questionnaire developed by PE Australia to cover the operations of the companies. Data consistency checks were conducted by PE Australia to guarantee a complete and consistent data provision, and that they were valid and fit for purpose.

The studies were conducted to a standard capable of being independently verified. GHG emissions are calculated using the methodology and emissions factors outlined in the Department of Climate Change NGA workbook June 2009.

Tourism NT purchased Emission Reduction Units (ERUs – Carbon Credits) from LMS Generation which were accredited through the Greenhouse Friendly™ Program. This purchase was verified by PE Australia.

The GHG LCA results for the operators were supplied to Tourism NT who then notified the Department of Climate Change to retire specific registered credits. PE Australia verified this retirement.

### **Limitations and Exclusions**

The GHG LCAs were conducted by PE using data provided by the three operators on the basis that they are a true and accurate record of the company activities for the 2008/2009 period. PE has conducted internal consistency checks of the data but has not undertaken a site audit of the source data.

Emissions for activities outside the geographic and time period boundaries were not included.

PE Australia has taken reasonable actions to verify statements provided by Tourism NT, LMS Generation and the Department of Climate Change.

### **Statement of Independence, Impartiality and Competence**

PE Australia was engaged by Tourism NT to conduct this work. PE Australia, as part of PE International group of companies is an internationally recognised expert in sustainability, and has conducted numerous similar GHG LCAs to ISO standards.

PE Australia has at all times acted independently and impartially, and believes that there are no conflicts of interest between the work of the PE experts engaged in this work, and any other activities of members of the team or of PE Australia.

### **Conclusions**

- The three operators involved in this Programme have complied with the objectives of the Programme and measured and reported their Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions for 2008/09 as agreed;
- The total GHG emissions for the three operators for 2008/09 were 3835 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub> – e;
- The three operators have put in place a number of initiatives which have reduced their total Greenhouse Gas emissions;
- Tourism NT have retired the required the appropriate number of ERUs and these have been noted by Australian Government Department for Climate Change on their ERU register;



- The operations of the three operators for 2008/09 within the scope of activities subject to this study were effectively carbon neutral..

Simon Whitehouse  
Managing Director  
PE Australia  
South Perth  
Western Australia

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**Simon Whitehouse; Managing Director**  
s.whitehouse@pe-international.com

**PE Australia Pty Ltd**  
25 Jubilee St  
South Perth  
WESTERN AUSTRALIA 6151

Phone +61 (0) 418 947 590  
Fax +61 (0) 8 9367 3108

[www.pe-australia.com.au](http://www.pe-australia.com.au)

ABN 55 121 363 031