1. Event Management & Planning

The Kalbarri Canoe & Cray Carnival seeks to:

- Promote the iconic natural beauty of the Murchison River as a desirable visitor destination
- Promote a community event that makes use of the facilities of the Murchison River and foreshore
- Promote Kalbarri as an attractive destination for those seeking competition for their skills and those wishing to enhance their leisure time during a long week end break
- Promote water based activities such as canoeing that are keenly enjoyed by locals and visitors alike
- Promote physical activity and enjoyment in the social ambience and surroundings of the Carnival
- Celebrate participation and achievement by entrants in Carnival events
- Increase the attractiveness of the Carnival to Midwest and intrastate participation for a premium weekend break way

The ultimate aim is to make the Kalbarri Canoe & Cray Carnival a signature event for the town and a must do event for repeat and new visitors. This Event will be held on Sunday 6 June 2010.

The Kalbarri Canoe & Cray Carnival has been staged for five consecutive years in various formats. The first two years the event was run over a Saturday and Sunday but it was found difficult to sustain the interest of participants and visitors for the time and it was an onerous task for a small band of volunteers. The last three years the Carnival was run as a one day event on Sunday, and this was much more successful and manageable.

The Kalbarri Canoe & Cray Carnival is organised by the Kalbarri Visitor Centre through its staff and a special project committee overseen by the Management Committee. The Event Project Committee is comprised of members of the Kalbarri Visitor Centre, Kalbarri Sport and Recreation Centre and Event Coordinator. The Event Project Committee implements and/or oversees all aspects of the organisation of the Carnival including administration, finance, sponsorship, operations, public relations and marketing.

Each of the four years the Carnival has generated a small surplus for the KVC. These funds are directed back into the promotional activities that the Kalbarri Visitors Centre undertakes for the whole town in accordance with its Constitution.

In addition to formulating a one day action packed event plan, the emphasis in 2009 was on marketing the Carnival more actively within the Midwest Region. An eye-catching poster designed (attachment 1) and distributed to all Midwest Town through a whole sale supplier (McDonalds Wholesalers) who personally delivered posters to businesses in the region with a request to display the poster.
In additions, radio and television ads were broadcast four weeks out from the Carnival. Our sponsors also assisted with distribution of information and editorials through their marketing network and website.

Email promotion of the Event to Surf and Canoe Clubs was undertaken and reinforced by the Department of Sport and Recreation.

The Event was also promoted to stall holders in the region, inviting them to bring goods for sale suitable for the Carnival.

The Murchison River Dash now in its second year starting at the iconic Murchison House Station. This event had 33 competitors this year compared with 24 last year.
Logistical supports are provided by SES volunteers, with their feedback via radio relayed to the MC, keeping spectators on the foreshore informed about the progress of participants. Each participant was given their own certificate detailing the time in which they completed the Murchison River Dash. It is expected that this event will become the blue ribbon event of the Carnival.
Sponsors were invited to support the Carnival, and in 2009 sponsorship was difficult with the economic climate.
I addition to promotion on posters, the website and through the MC on the day, the sponsors and supporters were invited to an evening function to thank them for their generous support. Representatives from the volunteer groups that make the Carnival possible were included in the guest list.

Organisers were thrilled with the response to the Carnival in 2009 both at a local and regional level. The Murchison River Foreshore had all the attributes of a Carnival with marquee, stalls, and activities for kids, food, canoeing activities and lots of people.

It was clear though, that the infrastructure needs to be significantly increased to ensure dissemination of information (sound distribution) and more ablution facilities. In 2009 we were able to get a professional team to distribute the sound and hired a couple of portable toilets from Geraldton.

The Event will also benefit now from direct marketing to potential participants in the water based activities with a clear prospectus for them including details of prizes to be won.

2. Tourism Season

The Kalbarri Canoe and Cray Carnival is held on the Foundation Day long week end in June. There is definitely a shoulder season between the April and July school holidays. May and June are very low activity periods in Kalbarri despite near perfect weather conditions with beautiful clear days, low wind and temperatures in the low to mid twenties.
The Kalbarri Visitor Centre Management Committee specifically chose this long weekend in the year in order to generate interest and promote Kalbarri during this off peak time.

It seems that the Kalbarri Canoe & Cray Carnival has the potential to be the major Event in the Midwest Region at this time of year. Marketing activities described previously had the desired effect with accommodation businesses reporting increased occupancy levels with many people booking or extending specifically to be in Kalbarri for the Carnival. Many cares coming into town had canoes strapped to them, and there was a lot of training happening on the river.
A watch on competing events was made and most other activities to be low key within the towns or cities. There is no major even in Geraldton at this time.

3. Target Markets

The majority target group are all members of the community specifically as participants or spectators. The Carnival aims to celebrate Kalbarri and gives all people the chance to be there and have something to do.

Clearly, it is important to have participants in the canoe based events and potential participants within the region are targeted, specifically members of the Geraldton Surf Life Saving Club who have been very active in being involved each year. There are also local participants both from the school and general community who have been challenging themselves to participate.

The Murchison River Dash as described above was formulated to generate more interest from keen and experienced paddlers.

While it is obvious that there are winners, so there is a competitive element to the Carnival, there is emphasis on participation and entrants are described as participants rather than competitors. All participants in the Murchison River Dash receive a certificate stating the name and the time that they complete the course in. Hopefully in years to come they will see their personal best time improve and this will be their intrinsic motivating factor.

Activities on the foreshore are also about participation and being physically active at a low cost or no cost premium including rides, games (coordinated by the sun City Christian Group), tug of war, rope coiling, face painting and so on.

There are also stalls with high quality merchandise, information, health promotion.

In general, there is something for everyone and certainly the Kalbarri and Midwest community responded by being there. Many seasoned locals stated that they had never seen so many people on the foreshore ever.

In addition, there was a high level of very willing participation from the Kalbarri volunteer services. The Kalbarri Sport & Recreation Club were involved in provision and erection of the marquee and bar services, plus other activities, the SES and VMR provided logistics for water safety of participants including the whole length of the Murchison River Dash course, and St John Ambulance were onsite to provide first aid and emergency transport.
This year we had to get outside catering in to cope with the increase in competitors and visitors as well as a couple of local businesses operating food stalls.
In total 100 participants including the Pirates of the Murchison.

Another highlight this year was the “Pirates of the Murchison” which involves a Pirate Shop anchored in the Murchison in front of Sally’s Tree with mischievous Pirates squirting water at participants who dare to participate in “Pirates of the Murchison” Teams constructed their own watercraft and decorated them to a theme of their choice. The winner is judged as the most creative craft and best dressed crew. This is a free event to enter.

4. Visitor Numbers

The information provided in this section is anecdotal, but it is clear that particularly this year in response to more active marketing we were able to attract larger numbers of visitors to Kalbarri. The town was busy for that whole weekend, as it would be during a normal school holiday period.

It would be hoped that over time, as the Carnival develops that other activities can be attached to it that might attract visitors to stay for a longer period.
Kalbarri has 5000 beds available and the Visitor Centre estimates that these were 80% booked. There was a frenzy of booking the week of the Carnival largely generated by radio advertising and interview and people were finding it difficult to get accommodation. Two of the three Caravan Parks were fully booked.

Visitors were mainly regional, though there were both participants in the carnival events and general interest from Perth.

We expect that as the Carnival becomes better known that visitors will plan their stay in Kalbarri around the Carnival and include it in their holiday. There were people for the 2009 Carnival that extended their stay in Kalbarri because they found out about the Carnival after they arrived.

5. Marketing Media

The Marketing plan includes

- Email contact with clubs that potentially or actually have an interest in participating in the Canoe Events.
- Email contact with schools throughout the Midwest region informing them of the Event and requesting promotion through their newsletters etc- this is done via the Kalbarri District High School.

- Email contact with Shire offices throughout the Midwest region informing them of the Event and requesting promotion through their networks – this is done via the CEO of the Shire of Northampton
- Poster distribution throughout the Midwest region through McDonalds Wholesalers who agreed to distribute posters in each town asking the main supermarket and/or roadhouse to display the poster
- Regular publication of information and motivational points in the Kalbarri Town Talk and school newsletter starting in March
- Paid advertising through GWN and Red FM radio throughout April and may with Red FM doing a live broadcast from Kalbarri on the foreshore on the day of the Carnival.
- Colour advertising in the Midwest Times (regional) half page colour plus editorial
- Radio interviews on ABC local radio and Red FM
- Printing and sale of Carnival hats.

The budget was for $25,000

If Eventscorp were to support the Kalbarri Canoe and Cray Carnival, it would be proposed that:

- Eventscorp is designated as a Carnival Partner therefore automatically receiving logo promotion on all printed materials, TV advertising, website and hats.
- Signage at the Carnival as provided by Eventscorp
- Naming of an aspect of the Carnival programme eg a canoe based event, entertainment or fireworks.
- Named and thanks as a Carnival Partner in communication at the Carnival throughout the day.

The funding would be used to increase the marketing budget ($8000)

As previously stated, the Kalbarri Canoe & Cray Carnival needs to leap to the next stage of Event production to keep pace with the growth of the Carnival and the overall objective to make this a signature event for Kalbarri. In order to achieve this we need to increase brand recognition of the Event through increase marketing, and we need to improve the infrastructure and support for the Carnival to ensure that participants and visitors experience a professionally staged Event that they want to return to and bring their friends.

The amount of $4000 for administration/coordination would provide 4 weeks full time or 8 weeks part time staffing at $30 per hour and would assist with increased level of activity experienced at this time, and would ensure that the Carnival is not run almost entirely on volunteer effort as it has been in the past. As the Carnival grows professional assistance for coordination is required.

Marketing funds would be used to increase the level of radio and television advertising. More print media in the regional papers would also help to increase the brand recognition of the Event, and a special participant

prospectus would be more appealing to them than email messages to group leaders.

6. Uniqueness and Image Building

The Kalbarri Canoe & Cray Carnival is designed around the beautiful Murchison River and one of Kalbarri's signature industries – crayfishing.

The theme of the Event is centred on the keywords of the name of the Event: canoeing, food that includes a choice of crayfish and fun and entertainment (carnival).

The 2009 Event Programme is attachment 2

The Event is staged on the Murchison River foreshore and it would be impossible for anyone present in or arriving in Kalbarri not to know that it is on. The Murchison River itself is a focus of the Carnival through the canoeing events including the Murchison River Dash.

A canoeing based event is unique within the Midwest Region, and the focus on Kalbarri reminds people within the region of the beautiful holiday destination they have within easy reach.
Canoeing as a recreational activity is associated with Kalbarri with many visitors throughout the year sporting a craft on their vehicles when they drive in.

We are confident that the Kalbarri Canoe & Cray Carnival will grow in stature with canoe sporting enthusiasts and that they will be attracted by the beauty and challenges of the sporting experience as well as prizes. It follows that event participants bring with them family and friends and this will exponentially contribute to the growth of the Carnival.

7. Community Support

The Kalbarri Canoe and Cray Carnival is very well supported by the Kalbarri community, see list of sponsor and supports as attachment 3
This support includes local businesses through sponsorship, Lotterywest, community groups through volunteer effort, the school through promotion and assistance on the day, and the community in general through participation and attending the Carnival as a great day out.

The Shire of Northampton supports the Carnival as a partner with a cash contribution, plus makes readily available its staff and infrastructure with rubbish collection facilities, and general preparation of the town for visitors, e.g. making sure lawns are mowed, and everything looks clean and tidy,

The Kalbarri Visitor Centre is the organiser of the Carnival and we have received helpful support with promotion through the Northampton and Geraldton Visitor Centres in particular and through Australia's Coral Coast through website/email marketing.

8. Event Frequency

The Kalbarri Canoe and Cray Carnival 2009 will be the fourth year that the Carnival has been staged. This Carnival is a long term strategy to establish it as a signature Event for Kalbarri. As yet the Carnival is not on the national or state circuit for canoeing events but it has the potential to be so. We have been greatly encouraged by the Department of Sport and Recreation to grow the Carnival.

9. Tour Packages and Programmes

This event is greatly supported by the local tourism industry, both through cash contribution, but also through support, as this Carnival is staged by the Kalbarri Visitor Centre with the encouragement and support of its members.

As the Carnival is now a one day event, it does give local tour operators more scope to promote their products and book tours.

The Kalbarri Visitor Centre which provides the administrative function for the Carnival located its entire office remotely at the Carnival site on the Carnival Day, which directed all visitors to Kalbarri on the day to the Carnival, if they wanted to make bookings or enquiries.

10. Measuring Effectiveness

The main measure of effectiveness is that we have participants in the Carnival programme and that people turn up on the day to support the Carnival, and we had both in good measure for 2009, necessitating increased infrastructure planning for 2010

Another measure is the level of accommodation that is booked in Kalbarri, with staff at the visitor centre were very busy trying to get last minute accommodation for people who had left it a bit late to get organised. It is possible and highly likely that people intending to come to Kalbarri for the Carnival will have to get organised earlier much like the pressure we experience for the Easter weekend.

Effectiveness of radio advertising and interviews was demonstrated by the number of people who said they heard advertisements or interviews, and the increase in the number of phone calls to the visitor centre to make enquiries, register or events or book accommodation.

As previously stated, this June long weekend was a very quiet time in Kalbarri, and all members reported an upturn in business for the weekend.

11. Financial Viability

A detailed budget has been prepared and updated each year of the Carnival. A financial statement for 2008/2009 is attachment 4

A draft budget for 2010 is attachment 5

The carnival is part of the normal activities of the Kalbarri Visitor Centre and as such the financial transactions are part of our annual independent auditing process.

Insurance cover for the event is provided by McNaughton Gardner.
Cover for Canoe event participants are provided by Canoeing WA for which we pay a cost of $5.00 per person. Certain safety measures have to be in place to comply with the Insurers requirements.

12. Use of Funds

The total amount that we would appreciate form Eventscorp is $10,000 this would be used to increase marketing and assist with some infrastructure required.