

# National Water Sports Centre – Parks Victoria Event Guidelines

## Overview

Parks Victoria is the waterway manager for the waters of the National Water Sports Centre (NWSC) at Bangholme. As the waterway manager Parks Victoria is responsible for managing and permitting events under the *Marine Safety Act 2023 (Vic)*; *Marine Safety Regulations 2023 (Vic)* and the State waterway rules.

The NWSC is a 2000 metre rowing course located approximately 34 kilometres south east of Melbourne along the Patterson River. The centre can be used for a range of water-based activities, such as rowing, water-skiing, canoeing, kayaking, coarse angling, jet skiing, radio controlled yachting, boat shows, boat testing, and special training sessions.

## Associated Agencies

### Safe Transport Victoria (previously Marine Safety Victoria)

Safe Transport Victoria is responsible for regulating commercial and recreational vessel operations and ensuring a safe environment for their navigation on Victorian waters. As the regulator Safe Transport Victoria has the authority to grant exemptions to the *Marine Safety Act 2023 (Vic)*; *Marine Safety Regulations 2023 (Vic)*; State waterway rules.

### Land Managers

The banks and adjacent land at the National Water Sports Centre is managed by Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action. Parks Victoria is responsible for permitting on water activities.

## General Vessel Operating Rules

- Appropriate Safety equipment, and a valid boating licence must be carried at all times.
- The National Water Sports Centre is classified as an inland waterway.
- Vessels must be equipped with fire equipment compliant with the standards required under the *Marine Maritime Safety Regulations (2023)*.
- The Centre is a flood control asset, fed by the creeks of the Dandenong Valley. Users should be aware of, and look out for, floating and submerged debris. Any obstructions that could be considered hazardous must be reported immediately to Parks Victoria.
- Event organisers are to conduct visual inspections prior to events commencing to ensure the safety of event participants.
- Other vessels may be on the water. Keep clear and circulate to the starboard side.
- If rowers are on the water, vessel operators must slow to 5 knots when within 50m being mindful to keep wakes to a minimum as rowing sculls are easily swamped.
- Circuit racing (involving more than one vessel at a time) at the centre is not permitted due to safety reasons. Parks Victoria may consider timed circuits for highly maneuverable vessels such as PWC's (only one PWC at a time).
- Littering is prohibited in accordance with Victorian anti-litter regulations.
- Disorderly behaviour or the use of obnoxious language will not be tolerated at any time.
- Any written or oral directives given by the waterway manager must be obeyed at all times.
- All native wildlife is protected by law and must not be interfered with.

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## Event Planning Considerations

### Public Access

The NWSC is only open to the public for boat testing and water-skiing on Tuesday's from 11.00am - 3.00pm and Friday's from 9.00am – 4.00pm. The NWSC is closed to the public on public holidays and when events are being held on site; it is available for event hire on weekends.

### User Group Days

A number of days per month are set aside as designated User Group Days.

**No events will be considered on the following Saturday mornings between dawn and 12 noon.**

**No events will be considered on the following Sundays & listed Public Holidays**

User Group Weekends (Saturday mornings dawn to 12pm for non-powered, Sundays & public holidays for shared use in the morning & powered user groups after 12pm)

2026	2027
Saturday 4 <sup>th</sup> of July	Friday 1 <sup>st</sup> of January (New Year Day)
Sunday 5 <sup>th</sup> of July	Saturday 2 <sup>nd</sup> of January
Saturday 1 <sup>st</sup> of August	Sunday 3 <sup>rd</sup> of January
Sunday 2 <sup>nd</sup> of August	Tuesday 26 <sup>th</sup> of January (Australia Day)
Saturday 5 <sup>th</sup> of September	Saturday 6 <sup>th</sup> of February
Sunday 6 <sup>th</sup> of September	Sunday 7 <sup>th</sup> of February
Friday 25 <sup>th</sup> of September (AFL Day)	Saturday 6 <sup>th</sup> of March
Saturday 3 <sup>rd</sup> of October	Sunday 7 <sup>th</sup> of March
Sunday 4 <sup>th</sup> of October	Monday 8 <sup>th</sup> of March (Labour Day)
Sunday 1 <sup>st</sup> of November	Friday 26 <sup>th</sup> of March (Good Friday)
Tuesday 3 <sup>rd</sup> of November (Melbourne Cup)	Saturday 27 <sup>th</sup> of March (Easter Saturday)
Saturday 7 <sup>th</sup> of November	Sunday 28 <sup>th</sup> of March (Easter)
Saturday 5 <sup>th</sup> of December	Monday 29 <sup>th</sup> of March (Easter Monday)
Sunday 6 <sup>th</sup> of December	Saturday 3 <sup>rd</sup> of April
Friday 25 <sup>th</sup> of December (Christmas)	Sunday 4 <sup>th</sup> of April
Monday 28 <sup>th</sup> of December (Boxing Day) Public Holiday	Saturday 1 <sup>st</sup> of May
	Sunday 2 <sup>nd</sup> of May
	Saturday 5 <sup>th</sup> of June
	Sunday 6 <sup>th</sup> of June
	Monday 14 <sup>th</sup> of June (King's Birthday)

ANZAC day falls on a Sunday so no public holiday

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### National Water Sports Centre Shared Usage

The NWSC Usage Timetable (see link on page 5) confirms when the waterway can be shared, powered – public access, non-powered, event and user group days.

As the NWSC can provide shared access to the waterway, event organisers must clearly indicate the section requested for their event, within the event application:

- Half course 0 – 1,000 metres;
- Half course 1,000 – 2,000 metres (main event space adjacent to facilities); or
- Full course (includes main event space adjacent to facilities and 1,000 metres upstream).

Organisers will need to prioritise event dates. Any request involving more than four dates within a financial year will require additional justification and negotiation with Parks Victoria.

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## Boating Activity Exemptions

A boating activity exemption allows a person or event organiser to conduct an organised boating activity or an on-water event or series of events on State waters that would otherwise be in contravention of a relevant law, rule, or regulation.

A boating activity exemption is temporary and can exempt the activity or event from the application of:

- The *Marine Safety Act 2023 (Vic) (MSA)*
- The *Marine Safety Regulations 2023 (Vic) (MSR)*
- The waterway rules (Vessel Operating and Zoning Rules) (VOZR)

Parks Victoria is required to apply to Safe Transport Victoria for all boating activity exemptions. If your event requires exemption and/or exclusion zones, Parks Victoria is required to advertise these in a Government Gazette and on its website. Please note that all advertising costs will be added to the event fee. Minimum requirement for STV review is 12 weeks.

## Environmental Considerations

**Noise:** Event organisers will need to ensure that outdoor activities such as playing amplified music, or other elements that will be louder than general noise (PA systems, horns etc) abide by the *State Environment Protection Policy (Control of Music Noise from Public Premises) (SEPP N-2)*. Depending on the nature and scale of the event supporting documentation may be requested. If the proposed event will involve amplified music/sound event organisers will need to inform Parks Victoria as part of the event application. For more information please refer to the Environmental Protection Authority's website [www.epa.vic.gov.au](http://www.epa.vic.gov.au).

Vessels with an engine used for propulsion must adhere to noise regulations within the *Marine Safety Act 2023 (VIC) (MSA)*. Parks Victoria request that users of the NWSC respect residents and do not operate power boats and personal watercraft prior to 10am on Sundays. Vessels that emit excessive noise ie: Drag boats are to ensure silencing devices are installed and put all measures in place to reduce noise impacts on the community.

**Algae impacts:** In the instance of an algae bloom all activity will be suspended on site until the bloom has subsided. No events can occur during this time. Impacted events will need to be cancelled or rescheduled.

## Venue Facilities

**Rubbish Collection and Removal:** Bins located at the NWSC are for the general public's use. Event organisers are responsible for providing their own bins and remove litter generated by their event at the NWSC at their own expense. The area must be free from rubbish at the conclusion of the event, to the reasonable satisfaction of Parks Victoria. If rubbish is left in the NWSC, Parks Victoria may issue a fee to rectify. Parks Victoria will give priority to events who propose a "carry in, carry out" methodology for waste management.

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**Parking:** Onsite car parking is limited and shared with the Melbourne Cable Park. Event organisers need to liaise with Melbourne Cable Park with the proposed use of this space in relation to their event. A small amount of additional car parking is available in adjacent open space. Event organisers who wish to utilise the additional car parking will need to seek approval from Parks Victoria prior to the event.

**Toilets:** NWSC toilets are provided for park visitors; they are not capable of supporting events, therefore the provision of portable toilets is recommended for events at the venue. Event organisers will need to seek approval from Parks Victoria prior to the event if they wish to utilise the toilets on site. Approval is subject to event organisers cleaning the toilets and restocking consumables prior to, during and immediately after their event. Event organisers will be liable for any repair or maintenance of onsite toilets which are damaged because of the event – this includes any costs associated with additional cleaning requirements required post event

**Additional Facilities:** Event organisers to identify within their event application any additional facilities required within applications. If access to the race tower / PA system / gate codes are required these must be clearly outlined in applications and coordinated with the local Parks Victoria team prior to event day.

**Bump in / Bump out procedures:** Requirement for event organisers to document additional dates/times required in order to set up/pack up are required to be submitted as part of the event application. Bump in and Bump out times will be assessed based on their impacts to other events/ user group and public access and cannot always be guaranteed. No late notice requests outside of the event application process will be considered.

### Vessel Management

#### Exclusive Use

Many events that take place at the NWSC require the waters to be closed for event and spectator safety. Parks Victoria as a waterway manager has a responsibility to ensure the safety of events that occur on our managed waters. Depending on the nature of the activity, number of participants, and potential risk, restricting access to the venue for other users may be required to ensure the safe operations of an event. Events requiring exclusive use will be responsible for staffing the venue access gate to ensure the venue is not accessed by other users.

Event organisers must clearly indicate within the application if exclusive access is required – Exclusive access requirements may incur commercial hire rates.

### Drone Usage

Drone usage on Parks Victoria managed waterways is to be conducted in accordance with the Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA). If a drone is proposed to be used as part of your activity, **even those under 2kg**, you must also provide the following documents, no less than 20 business days prior to the event;

- Detailed aircraft Operations Plan outlining;
  - Take-off and landing zones;
  - Proposed flight path;
  - Proposed exclusion zone; and
  - Location of spotters and demarcation signs.

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- Remotely Piloted Aircraft Controller Licenses for all proposed operators;
- Remotely Piloted Operator’s Certificate issued by CASA;
- Certificate of currency of Operator’s public liability insurance;
- Job Safety Analysis relevant to the proposed production and location;
- List of types/models of proposed aircrafts and serial numbers;
- Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) area approval (if required).

### Waterway Incidents

In an emergency, event organisers must call 000. Event organisers must notify Parks Victoria as soon as practical if an accident or incident occurs during the activity which results in injury or death of persons, environmental damage, pollution or damage to property.

If you are the owner/master of a vessel involved in a marine incident, you are required by law to report the incident to Safe Transport Victoria via a Marine Incident Record Serious Incident Form. Further information can be found on Safe Transport Victoria’s website <http://transportsafety.vic.gov.au/maritime-safety/recreational-vessel-operators/report-a-rec-boating-incident>

### Further Information for Event Organisers

Event organisers are required to review the following information before submitting an event application for the NWSC:

- [Parks Victoria Bays and Waterway Guidelines](#)
- [Transport Safety Victoria Website - Maritime Safety Victoria](#)
- [Waterway Rules - Vessel Operating and Zoning Rules \(VOZR\)](#)
- [Boating Activity Exemptions and Exclusion Zones](#)
- [Recreational Boating Safety Handbook](#)
- [Recreational Boating Safety - Minimum Safety Equipment](#)