

# Yarra River, Maribyrnong River and Victoria Harbour

## Parks Victoria Event Guidelines

### Overview

Parks Victoria is the waterway manager for the waters of the:

- Yarra River (upstream of the Bolte Bridge to Dights Falls)
- Maribyrnong River (upstream of Shepherds Bridge/Footscray Road to the Canning St Bridge)
- Victoria Harbour, Docklands.

As the declared waterway manager Parks Victoria is responsible for managing and permitting events under the *Marine Safety Act 2010 (Vic)*; *Marine Safety Regulations 2012 (Vic)* and the State waterway rules. These waterways are the focus for a variety of events including the Moomba Festival, Rowing Regattas, Firework displays and Dragon Boat festivals.

### Associated Agencies

#### Maritime Safety Victoria

Maritime Safety Victoria is responsible for regulating commercial and recreational vessel operations and ensuring a safe environment for their navigation on Victorian waters. As the regulator Maritime Safety Victoria has the authority to grant exemptions to the *Marine Safety Act 2010 (Vic)*; *Marine Safety Regulations 2012 (Vic)*; State waterway rules.

#### Land Managers

The banks and adjacent land along the Yarra River, Maribyrnong River and Victoria Harbour is managed by various agencies including Melbourne Water and local councils. Parks Victoria is responsible for on water activities up to the high tide mark. If your event involves the use of adjacent land to a waterway then approval from the relevant land manager will be required.

### Specific Area Considerations

#### Yarra River

The Yarra River is recognised as one of Melbourne's greatest recreation and landscape assets. It is a highly utilised waterway and other river users must be considered when planning events. Only events of state significance will be considered between Spencer Street Bridge and Princes Bridge which includes applications for fireworks displays.

The Yarra River ranges in depth from two to four metres in the area managed by Parks Victoria.

#### Maribyrnong River

The Maribyrnong River has a lower volume of both recreational and commercial vessel traffic. The Maribyrnong River ranges in depth from two to three metres in the area managed by Parks Victoria.

Edgewater lake, on the Maribyrnong River, is an excellent venue for water based events with a large floating landing for vessels, and nearby cafes.

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Organised events that occur in the harbour must be approved by Parks Victoria. The marinas at Victoria Harbour are managed by the City of Melbourne and a private operator (D'Albora Marinas).

### Dights Falls and Upstream of Dights Falls

Dights Falls has become a popular site for kayaking and canoes. The current is strong and reliable all year due to upstream flow regulation at Upper Yarra Reservoir. It has a vertical drop and a depth of 2 meters and width of 50 meters.

Parks Victoria does manage the Yarra River upstream of Dights Falls. No powered vessels are permitted upstream of Dights Falls. There is boat ramp access available above Dights Falls for non-powered vessels. Please contact Parks Victoria for further information regarding events and permit requirements for this section of the River.

### Herring Island

Herring Island is a small artificial island located at South Yarra on the Yarra River. It has a converted house which can be used as a function space for exhibitions, meetings, private functions, as well as an open space area with BBQs, picnic tables and limited toilet facilities. Parks Victoria runs a punt service to the island on the weekend between December and April. The only transport to the Island at other times is by private vessels. Due to difficult island access event logistics can be challenging, so please get in touch with Parks Victoria for further information regarding holding events on Herring Island.

### General Vessel Operating Rules – Yarra River, Maribyrnong River and Victoria Harbour

- Safety equipment, and a valid boating licence must be carried at all times.
- Vessels must be equipped with fire equipment compliant with the standards required under the *Marine Safety Regulations (2012)*.
- A 5-knot speed (9km/h) restriction applies to all vessels.
- When traveling along the Rivers ensure the you keep to the right of the channel. Vessels traveling downstream have right of way when transiting through bridges.
- Personal Water Craft are not permitted on the Yarra River, upstream of the Bolte Bridge, or on the Maribyrnong River.
- Swimming is not permitted in the Yarra River downstream from the Gipps Street Bridge or in the Maribyrnong River downstream of the Canning Street Bridge.
- 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 plants and wildlife are protected by law.
- Anchoring on the Yarra or Maribyrnong River is not permitted.

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### Event Planning Considerations – All River Areas

#### River Users

Waterways are used by various vessels. Event organisers must consider the impact of an event on the following:

- Commercial Ferry Operators
- Recreational Users – Sporting clubs (rowers, kayaks, canoes etc)
- Private Craft

#### 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 2010 (Vic) (MSA)*
- The *Marine Safety Regulations 2012 (Vic) (MSR)*
- The waterway rules (Vessel Operating and Zoning Rules) (VOZR)

Parks Victoria are required to apply to Maritime Safety 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.

#### Vessel Management

##### Exclusion Zone

Many events that take place on Melbourne rivers require sections of navigable waters to be closed for event and spectator safety. As a waterway manager, Parks Victoria have a responsibility to ensure the safety of events that occur on our managed waterways. Depending on the risk, location and number of participants, an exclusion zone may be required to ensure the safe operations of an event. An exclusion zone will be managed by Parks Victoria and the costs associated with staff and vessel time will be included in the event permit fee.

##### Flag System

A flag system was introduced by Parks Victoria to help provide a system of communication during events, such as rowing regattas to enable recreational and commercial vessels to pass through the course either between races or during breaks in a race schedule. Events that do not require an exclusion zone may utilise the flag system to assist vessel movements.

##### River Access

There are no public boat ramps for motorised boats on the Yarra or Maribyrnong rivers. A restricted boat ramp is managed by Parks Victoria at Burnley Harbour. If a boat ramp is required, please advise your assigned Activation Agreement Officer of this requirement.

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### 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).

### Waterway Incidents

In an emergency, event organisers must call 000. Event organisers must notify Parks Victoria 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 Maritime Safety Victoria via a Marine Incident Record Serious Incident Form. Further information can be found on Maritime Safety Victoria's website <http://transportsafety.vic.gov.au/maritime-safety/recreational-vessel-operators/report-a-rec-boating-incident>

### Fireworks

Applications for Fireworks will only be considered on a case by case basis depending on the nature of the display and location. Please contact Parks Victoria for further information.

### Infrastructure

Parks Victoria has a limited number of pontoons (6m x 4m) and gangways that are available for hire. Hire fees for the use of Parks Victoria infrastructure apply.

### 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 14 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.
- 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).

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### Further Information for Event Organisers

Event organisers are required to review the following information before submitting an event application to hold an event on the Yarra or Maribyrnong Rivers:

- [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](#)
- **Other useful documentation that accompanies these guidelines (located on the [Parks Victoria Website](#))**