



Yarra Ranges Council Flag Policy 2025

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Applicable To:	Councillors and Council Employees

Acknowledgement of Country

Yarra Ranges Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri and other Kulin Nations as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of these lands and waterways. We pay our respects to all Elders, past, present, and emerging, who have been, and always will be, integral to the story of our region. We proudly share custodianship to care for Country together.

Yarra Ranges Community Vision 2036

The Yarra Ranges Community Vision 2036 has been developed to describe the communities and Council's aspirations for the future of the municipality. It's based on input from over 1,000 community members and reflects the local communities' aspirations for the municipality.

Whether you live here or visit, you will see how much we care for Country, how inclusive and connected our communities are, and how balanced growth makes this the best place in the world.

What We Want to Achieve

Council has five goals to describe what we are working towards and how we want Yarra Ranges to be in the future. These goals have been developed in response to our communities priorities and the big issues facing Yarra Ranges. All policies and activities completed by the organisation contribute to one or more of these goals.



Connected and Healthy Communities

Communities are safe, resilient, healthy, inclusive and socially well connected. Quality services are accessible to everyone.



Quality Infrastructure and Liveable Places

Quality facilities and infrastructure meets current and future needs. Places are well planned and are hubs of activity that foster wellbeing, creativity and innovation.



Protected & Enhanced Natural Environment

A healthier environment for future generations.



Vibrant Economy, Agriculture and Tourism

Our tourism, agriculture, health, manufacturing and other industries are leading and dynamic. Strong investment and attraction underpin sustainable economic growth and job creation.



High Performing Organisation

An innovative, responsive organisation that listens and delivers quality, value for money services to our community.

Contents

Acknowledgement of Country	2
Yarra Ranges Community Vision 2036	2
What We Want to Achieve	2
1. Introduction	4
2. Purpose	4
3. Scope.....	4
4. Definitions	5
5. Flying of Flags Guidelines.....	5
6. Flying of Flags at Half-Mast	5
7. Request to Fly Community Flags.....	6
8. Procedure and Protocols	7
9. Roles and Responsibilities.....	7
10. Related Documents	7
11. Monitoring and Evaluation	8
12. Policy Review.....	8

1. Introduction

Flags are flown by Council at the Civic Centre, Lilydale and the Memo Healesville, in accordance with the Flags Act 1953 and the *Australian Flag Booklet*, administered by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. As noted by the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet; “As one of Australia’s most important symbols, the [Australian National] flag should be used with respect and dignity.”

Council also proudly displays flags on a range of prints and digital formats. Flying and displaying the National Australian Flag, Aboriginal and the Torres Strait Islander Flags re-affirms Council’s 1997 Statement of Commitment to Indigenous Australians and aligns with Council’s Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

2. Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to inform and guide Yarra Ranges Council (Council) on the applicable protocols for:

- Flying the Australian National Flag and other flags on flagpoles managed by Council.
- Displaying flags in digital or print formats across selected Council's hard copy publications, online platforms and electronic communications.

These protocols are designed to ensure consistent, respectful and appropriate flag usage, in line with the *Flags Act 1953*, Council’s guidelines, and commitment to reconciliation as outlined in Council’s RAP.

3. Scope

This Policy applies to:

- Flagpoles managed by Council, excluding those managed by other organisations.
- Flag within the Council Chamber.
- Digital and printed materials produced by Council that include flags.
- Councillors and all Council employees.

This Policy covers four flagpoles at the Civic Centre, Lilydale, displaying the:

- Australian National Flag, Aboriginal Flag, Torres Strait Islander Flag, Municipal Flag, or various Community Flags for special occasions.

The two flagpoles located at the MEMO, Healesville, displaying:

- Australian National Flag and Aboriginal Flag.

The three flagpoles located within the Council Chamber, displaying the:

- Australian National Flag, Aboriginal Flag, Torres Strait Islander Flag.

The fourth flagpole at the Civic Centre, Lilydale is available for various Community Flags to commemorate or celebrate important dates, events and festivals, or for flags of other Nations during officially sanctioned visits of representatives of the nation or to acknowledge a significant event of that nation.

4. Definitions

Table 1 - Definitions

Act	<i>Flags Act 1953.</i>
Australian Flag Booklet	Contains the protocols for the appropriate flying of the flag administered by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet.
Commonwealth Flag Network	A network established by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet to distribute up-to-date advice on how to fly the flag on special occasions.
Community Flags	Flags representing a local communities or community event, charity days, or celebrations, festivals and events. The Rainbow Flag is an example of a Community Flag.
Community Organisation	An organisation established by the community with an aim to making desired improvements to a community's social health, well-being, and overall functioning.

5. Flags Guidelines

5.1 Flying the Flags Guidelines

In accordance with the Act and the Australian Flag Booklet, the Australian National Flag will be flown on every day of the year.

The following guidelines will also be considered when flying the Australian National Flag and other flags listed in this Policy or as requested by the community:

- All flags should be treated with respect and dignity and the Australian National Flag must always be flown in a position superior to that of any other flag or ensign.
- All flags flown at the Civic Centre must be of standard size, in good repair and capable of being flown on Councils flagpoles.

Any requests to fly Community flags on days or events listed under Section 6 will not be considered.

5.2 Digital and Print Publications Guidelines

Council will consistently display the Aboriginal Flag, Torres Strait Islander Flag and Australian National Flag (in that order) with the Acknowledgment of Country Statement on selected Council publications, Council's website, and Council email signatures.

6. Flying of Flags at Half-Mast

As directed by the Commonwealth Flag Network and in accordance with the protocols stated in the Australian Flag Booklet, Council will fly its flags at half-mast as a sign of mourning or in the case of an event which requires the Australian National Flag to be flown at half-mast.

When flying the Australian National Flag with other flags, all flags in the set should be flown at half-mast. The Australian National Flag should be raised first and lowered last.

6.1 Public Notice

Where flags are flown at half-mast or if a flag not managed by Council is flown at the Civic Centre then a public notice will be published on Council's website indicating the reason.

6.2 ANZAC Day – 25 April

Anzac Day is a day of special significance to Australians, particularly for serving military personnel and returned veterans. In accordance with Australian flag protocols, flags will be flown at half-mast on 25 April, from dawn until noon, at which time the flag should be raised to the peak of the flag mast for the remainder of the day.

6.3 Remembrance Day – 11 November

Remembrance Day is a day of special significance to Australians, commemorating the loss of Australian lives in all wars, conflicts and peace operations. Flags will be flown on this day at the peak of the flagpole until precisely 10:30am (local time) when they should be adjusted to the half-mast position.

At 11:02 am the Australian National Flag should be moved back to the peak of the flag mast for the remainder of the day. This protocol allows for the traditional ceremonial duties to be carried out, including a minute of silence from 11:00 am.

6.4 Commemorating Local Elders

On request from relevant Aboriginal community members (in consultation with Council's Indigenous Development Coordinator) all flags may be flown at half-mast on the death of an elder or significant community member on the day, or part of the day, of their funeral.

6.5 Councillors and Council Employees

On request and in consultation with the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and the Mayor, all flags may be flown at half-mast on the death of a current or former Councillor or member of Council employees or on the day, or part of the day, of their funeral.

6.6 Discretionary Requests

At the discretion of the CEO, and in consultation with the Mayor, the Australian National Flag may be flown at half-mast.

7. Request to Fly Community Flags

Upon formal application (online form on Council's website), Council will consider requests from members of employees or the community to fly a flag at the Civic Centre to acknowledge a significant celebration, festival, community organisation or event.

7.1 National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC) Week - July

NAIDOC week celebrates the history, culture and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. NAIDOC is celebrated not only in Indigenous communities, but also by all Australians from the broader community. The Aboriginal Flag and the Torres Strait Islander Flag are already flown at the Civic Centre.

7.2 International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia, Intersexism and Transphobia (IDAHOBIT) Day – 17 May

The Progress Pride Flag will be flown from the fourth flagpole on IDAHOBIT Day, and for the duration of the Midsumma Festival.

7.3 Community Requests

Requests by community organisations to fly a flag other than those listed in 7.1 and 7.2 will be considered by the CEO, in accordance with this Policy, and after consultation with the Mayor.

Such requests will not be approved where the flying of the flag is inconsistent with Council's values and commitment to inclusiveness. Where approval is granted by the CEO to fly a community flag the requestor must supply the flag and if requested provide appropriate resources to educate the community regarding the flag and the reason for the request to display it.

8. Procedure and Protocols

Procedures and protocols for flying and handling the Australian Flag are detailed in the Australian Flag Booklet. These protocols must be adhered to by Council employees when managing flags flown at the Civic Centre and other Council facilities.

9. Roles and Responsibilities

Table 2 – Roles and Responsibilities

Chief Executive Officer (CEO)	Approve, in consultation with the Mayor, requests from community organisations to fly flags other than the Australian, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags, in accordance with this Policy and the protocols as outlined in the Australian Flag Booklet. Direct that the flags be flown at half-mast on the day of the funeral of a current or former Councillor, member of Council employees, or any other significant funeral at their discretion. Direct that the national flag of another nation be flown during officially sanctioned visits of representatives of the nation or to acknowledge a significant event of that nation.
Governance Team	Manage enquiries about this Policy and ensure this Policy is implemented and reviewed. Manage requests for new flags or changes to flag flying as indicated by the Commonwealth Government. Promptly communicate flag notifications to the appropriate employees and advise when the Australian National Flag must be flown at half-mast. Ensure the appropriate employees are maintaining the flagpoles, area surrounding and replacement of flags in accordance with the Australian Flag Booklet and Commonwealth Flag Network notifications.
Communicartion team	Manage enquiries about this Policy relating to the Brand Guidelines and the digital or print publication of flags.

10. Related Documents

- Flags Act 1953
- Australian Flags Booklet – the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet.
- Council's Brand Guidelines – this document provides guidance relating to Council's selected publications that display digital or print flags and the Acknowledgement of Country Statement.

11. Monitoring and Evaluation

The Manager Organisational Performance and Integrity oversees the monitoring and evaluation of this Policy. This includes periodic reviews by the Governance Team to ensure compliance with guidelines, assess flag usage appropriateness, and identify opportunities to improve the Policy's effectiveness in promoting respectful flag practices.

12. Policy Review

From time to time, circumstance may require minor amendments be made to this Policy. Where this does not materially alter the Policy, such amendments may be made administratively by the Manager Organisational Performance and Integrity.

Any amendment which materially alters the Policy must be approved by resolution of Council.