

Flag Flying Policy



Policy Type:	Organisation
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Service Unit	CEOs Office
Directorate:	CEOs Office
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1. Introduction

The Australian Flag should be treated with respect and dignity as it is the nation's most important national symbol. Protocols for flying and handling the Australian Flag are detailed in the Australian flag booklet produced by the Department of Premier and Cabinet. These protocols must be applied to other flags flown at Council locations in the Shire. See Attachment 1.

Flags must be handled ceremoniously at all times, which means taking time to handle them formally, carefully and respectfully and avoiding sudden movements when raising and lowering flags. Flags must never fall to or be laid on the ground.

Flags must never be flown if they are damaged, faded or dilapidated. When the material of the flag deteriorates to a point where it is no longer suitable for use, it should be destroyed privately in a dignified way. For example, it may be cut into small unrecognisable pieces then disposed of with the normal rubbish collection.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this Flag Flying Policy is to:

- (i) Outline the proper use of flags, providing guidance to Shire employees who manage the flying of flags at Council Offices;
- (ii) Identify flagpole locations and the flags flown at each site; and
- (iii) To provide a framework for considering requests to fly flags at times outside Council's Annual Flag Schedule.

3. Definitions

For the purposes of this policy, Council facilities are limited to sites where Council has a direct responsibility for managing and maintaining flagpoles.

Civic Flagpoles	Flagpoles erected for the purpose of displaying flags set out in the Flag Schedule
Principal Office	15 Stead Street, Ballan
Civic Office	182 Halletts Way, Darley

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4. Scope

This policy applies only to flagpoles at Council facilities set out above and does not apply to flagpoles located at other Council locations or on private property.

5. Non-Compliance

Violations of this policy may lead to disciplinary action.

6. Policy Principles

Flags are flown by the Shire at Moorabool Council offices. The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet releases flag notification for special occasions, or occasions when flags should be half-masted and publishes *Australian Flags – Part 2: The protocols for the appropriate use and the flying of the flag*. The Department of Premier and Cabinet notifies Victorian organisations when there is an occasion that involves the flying of the national flag or state flag.

6.1. Flying Flags at Council Offices

Council Offices are located at:

- 15 Stead Street, Ballan
- 182 Halletts Way, Darley

The principal office in Ballan has three flagpoles. The civic office in Darley has four flagpoles.

Each office must fly the following flags during business hours:

- Australian National Flag
- Victorian State Flag
- Australian Aboriginal Flag
- Moorabool Shire Pennant is flown at the Civic Office, Darley

6.2. Flying the Aboriginal Flag

The Aboriginal Flag will be flown at Council offices throughout the year in recognition of Aboriginal people as the traditional owners of the land on which Moorabool is located.

6.3. Flag Schedule

Council will fly flags in accordance with its Annual Flag Schedule (Attachment 3).

6.4. Request to Fly Other Flags

Requests by community organisations to fly flags other than those listed above will be considered once an application (Attachment 4) is received. The application will be reviewed by the Chief Executive Officer or delegate in consultation with the Mayor.

Such requests will not be approved where the flying of the flag may cause offence to sectors of the community, or if highlighting an issue, cause or group would be inconsistent with Council's values and commitment to inclusiveness. The Governance team will manage requests from community groups to fly other flags, including seeking the approval of the Chief Executive Officer and communicating the Chief Executive Officer's decision.

Where a request to fly another flag is approved, the Australian National Flag will not be replaced with the other flag for the specific event or timeframe.

Where a request to fly another flag is approved in Ballan, the Victorian State Flag will be replaced with the other flag for the specified event or timeframe.

Where a request to fly another flag is approved in Darley, the Moorabool Pennant will be replaced with the other flag for the specified event or timeframe.

6.5. Flying Flags at Half Mast

The Department of Premier and Cabinet is responsible for notifying Victorian organisations when there is an occasion that involves the Australian National Flag and the Victorian State Flag. Flag notifications relating to the half-masting of flags or an instruction to fly specific flags will be received from the Department of Premier and Cabinet and are mandatory and must be followed by the Shire.

6.6. Commemorating Local Elders

The Traditional owners of the land in which the Moorabool Shire sits are the Wadawurrung Tribe in the south and west, the Dja Dja Wurrung Tribe in the northern ranges and the Wurundjeri Tribe in the east. The Shire is also home to many significant Indigenous cultural sites including the resting place of Bunjil.

Following a request from the relevant local Aboriginal community organisation/s the Aboriginal Flag will be flown at half-mast as a sign of mourning after the death of a local Aboriginal elder or significant community member. The Governance team will advise the CEOs Office when Aboriginal Flags must be flown at half-mast to commemorate the death of a local elder or significant community member.

The Chief Executive Officer may direct that the Moorabool Shire Pennant be flown at half-mast on the day of the funeral of a former employee, Councillor or community leader. The Governance team will advise the CEOs Office when the Moorabool Shire Pennant must be flown at half-mast for such a commemoration.

6.7. Flying Flags of other Countries

Council may consider flying the national flags of other countries during Council sanctioned visits by dignitaries of the country at the discretion of the CEO. The Governance Service Unit will advise the appropriate officers when this protocol applies.

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7. Related Legislation

Flags Act 1953.

8. Council Plan Reference

Objectives: A Council that listens and adapts to the needs of our evolving communities
Context: Facilitate opportunities for the community to gather and celebrate

9. Responsibilities

9.1 Chief Executive Officer

The CEO (or delegate) is responsible for:

- Considering and approving applications to fly an alternative flag at one of Council's facilities, in line with this policy.
- Determining when/if it is appropriate to refer an application to fly a flag to Council for a decision.

9.2 Governance Service Unit

The Governance Service Unit is responsible for:

- Receiving and considering requests for the flying of flags and the half-masting of flags.
- Maintaining a register of all flag arrangements for the flagpoles.
- Preparing Council Reports where a Council decision is required.
- Conducting periodic reviews of the Flag Policy.
- Maintaining a supply of those flags included on the Annual Flag Schedule and requesting timely replacement of damaged flags where a flag is rendered unsuitable for display.
- Maintaining a subscription to the Department of Premier and Cabinet and the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet's Commonwealth Flag Network email notification services.

9.3 Customer Service and Asset Management

The Customer Service and Asset Management teams are responsible for:

- Monitoring the condition of the flags and flagpoles and reporting any maintenance issues as required.
- On receiving advice from the Governance Service Unit, arranging the flying of flags in accordance with this policy and the Australian Government's protocols.

10. Review

As a minimum, this policy will be reviewed every second year.

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11. Approval

This policy will come in effect once signed by the CEO.



Derek Madden
Chief Executive Officer

October 2022

Attachment 1 – Australian National Flag Protocols

As one of Australia's most important symbols, the flag should be used with respect and dignity. These protocols will assist when flying or using the flag, including as part of flag-raising ceremonies.

More information on flag protocols is available in part two of the booklet Australian Flags, which can be obtained from the local Federal Member of Parliament or Senator.

This attachment will be updated in line with advice from State and Federal Government.

Source: <https://pmc.gov.au/government/australian-national-flag/australian-national-flag-protocols>

Flying the Flag

- Raise the flag briskly and lower it ceremoniously.
- Do not raise the flag earlier than first light or lower the flag later than dusk.
- When the flag is raised or lowered or is carried in a parade or review, everyone present should be silent and face the flag, people in uniform should salute.
- The flag should always be flown freely and as close as possible to the top of the flagpole with the rope tightly secured.
- The Australian National Flag should be raised first and lowered last, unless all other flags at the ceremony are raised and lowered simultaneously.
- When the Australian National Flag is flown with flags of other nations, all flags should be the same size and flown on flagpoles of the same height.
- The Australian National Flag should fly on the left of a person facing the flags, when it is flown with one other national flag.
- Do not fly two flags from the same flagpole.
- Only fly the flag at night when it is illuminated.
- Do not fly the flag if it is damaged, faded or dilapidated.
- When the material of a flag deteriorates it may either be placed in a permanent place of storage or should be destroyed privately and in a dignified way such as cutting it into small unrecognisable pieces, placing it in an appropriate sealed bag or closed container and then putting it in the normal rubbish collection.
- Do not fly the flag upside down, even as a signal of distress.
- Do not allow the flag to fall or lie on the ground or be used as a cover (although it can be used to cover a coffin at a funeral).
- Information on the protocols for displaying and folding the flag can be found in Part 2 of the booklet Australian Flags, which is also available from the local Federal Member of Parliament or Senator.

Order of Precedence

- When the flag is flown in Australia or Australian territory it takes precedence over all other national flags and should be flown in the position of honour.
- After the Australian National Flag, the order of precedence of flags is: national flag of other nations, state and territory flags, other Australian flags prescribed by the Flags Act 1953, ensigns and pennants.
- The flag should not be flown in a position inferior to any other flag or ensign and should not be smaller than any other flag or ensign.
- Further guidance on the correct order of precedence can be found in the Australian Flags booklet.

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Flying the Flag at Half-Mast

- Flags are flown at half-mast as a sign of mourning.
- The half-mast position will depend on the size of the flag and the length of the flagpole. The flag must be lowered to a position recognisably half-mast to avoid the appearance of a flag which has accidentally fallen away from the top of the flagpole. An acceptable position would be when the top of the flag is a third of the distance down from the top of the flagpole.
- There are times when direction will be given by the Australian Government for all flags to be flown at half-mast and email notifications can be received by registering for the Commonwealth Flag Network.
- Flags in any locality can be flown at half-mast when someone local dies, or on the day of their funeral.
- When lowering the flag from a half-mast position it should be briefly raised to the peak and then lowered ceremoniously.
- The flag should never be flown at half-mast at night even if it is illuminated.
- When flying the Australian National Flag with other flags, all flags in the set should be flown at half-mast.

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Attachment 2 – Current Flag Protocols

Principal Office – 15 Stead Street, Ballan

There are three flagpoles at the Principal Office at 15 Stead Street, Ballan. The flags are flown Monday to Friday and include:

- Australian National Flag
- Victorian State Flag
- Australian Aboriginal Flag

If Australia Day, Anzac Day and Remembrance Day fall on a weekend, flags at the Ballan Office are flown.

Requests to fly flags at half-mast are received from the Department of Premier & Cabinet, and in accordance with flag protocols all flags and ensigns at each flag station are flown at half-mast during daylight hours.

Flags may also be flown at half-mast on the death of a Councillor, and on the day of their funeral.

Civic Office – 182 Halletts Way, Darley

There are four flagpoles at the Civic Office at 182 Halletts Way, Darley. The flags are flown Monday to Friday and include:

- Australian National Flag
- Victorian State Flag
- Australian Aboriginal Flag
- Moorabool Shire Pennant

If Australia Day, Anzac Day and Remembrance Day falls on a weekend, flags at the Darley Civic office will be flown.

Requests to fly flags at half-mast are received from the Department of Premier & Cabinet, and in accordance with flag protocols all flags and ensigns at each flag station are flown at half-mast during daylight hours.

Flags may also be flown at half-mast on the death of a Councillor, and on the day of their funeral.

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Attachment 3 – Annual Flag Schedule

Council will fly flags in accordance with this annual schedule. In the case of any of the following days occurring over weekends, flags may not be flown per the details below.

Australia Day – 26 January

On Australia Day we celebrate our nation's place in the world – a proud, ancient, multicultural nation built on shared values that allow us to enjoy the freedoms and opportunities to which other nations aspire to. It is a day to reflect on our nation's true history, which began tens of thousands of years ago with the First Australians, the world's oldest living culture. It reflects on our modern history and the waves of immigration that shaped us into one of the world's great multicultural success stories. Requests to fly other flags on this day will not be considered.

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. Requests to fly other flags on this day will not be considered.

International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia (IDAHOBIT) - 17 May

The International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia, and Transphobia (IDAHOBIT) raises awareness of discrimination against LGBTIQ communities and encourages support for members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and gender diverse and intersex communities. The Rainbow Flag will be raised on 17 May. Requests to fly other flags during this period will not be considered. On sites where there is only one flagpole available, the Rainbow Flag will not replace the Australian National Flag.

National Sorry Day - 26 May

National Sorry Day acknowledges and raises awareness of the history and continued effect of the forced removal of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people from their families, communities and culture. The Australian Aboriginal Flag will be raised on 26 May. Requests to fly other flags on this day will not be considered. On sites where there is only one flagpole available, the Australian Aboriginal Flag will not replace the Australian National Flag.

National Reconciliation Week - 27 May to 3 June

The Australian Aboriginal Flag is already flown from Council Offices. Requests to fly other flags during this period will not be considered. If there is only one flagpole available, the Australian Aboriginal Flag will not replace the Australian National Flag.

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 Australians from all walks of life. The Australian Aboriginal Flag is already flown from the Council Offices. Requests to fly other flags during NAIDOC week will not be considered. On sites where there is only one flagpole available, the Australian Aboriginal Flag will not replace the Australian National Flag.

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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 at the peak of the flagpole from approximately 8.00am until precisely 10.30am (local time) when it should be adjusted to the half-mast position.

At 11.02am the Australian National Flag should be moved back to the peak 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.

Requests to fly other flags on this day will not be considered.

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Attachment 4 – Flag Flying Application Form

Applications must be received a minimum of 45 calendar days prior to the proposed date/s to allow time for any necessary approvals.

Applicant Details

Name:	Date:
Position:	Business Unit (internal):
Organisation (external):	Directorate (internal):
Contact Number:	Email address:

Flag Details

Type and description of flag to be flown: Proposed Date/s:

Location of Flags (tick boxes):

Darley Civic Offices

Ballan Civic Office

Background Information:

Please outline why you are requesting the flag to be flown and attach any supporting documentation.

Please note:

- **Where an application to fly a flag/s is approved, it is the responsibility of the applicant to provide Council with the required number of flags of an appropriate size (dimensions 1800 x 900 mm) prior to the date/s the flag/s are to be flown. Flags must be in an appropriate condition for flying (i.e. not torn or faded).**
- **Council's annual flag schedule will take precedence over any requests to fly other flags.**

Privacy Collection Notice

Moorabool Shire Council is committed to protecting your privacy. The personal information you provide on this form is being collected for the primary purpose of assessing your request to fly a flag at Council's facilities in accordance with Council's Flag Policy. Where required, your identity and the information you have provided in this form will be provided to Moorabool Shire Council staff and/or contractors to enable them to consider your application. Your personal information will not be disclosed to any other external party without your consent, unless required or authorised by law.