

	<h1>Civic Flag Policy</h1>
<b>Version No.</b>	Version 1.0 April 2023
<b>Endorsement</b>	Policy Review Panel, 29 June 2023
<b>Authorisation</b>	Council, 31 July 2023
<b>Review date</b>	April 2027 The policy will be reviewed upon change to legislation, national flag protocols or Council direction.
<b>Responsible officer</b>	Head of Governance
<b>Policy owner</b>	Coordinator Governance

## 1. Purpose

To provide guidance on flying flags at civic facilities and events, and to guide decision-making in the consideration of requests to fly other flags that are of significance to the City of Melton community.

## 2. Scope

This Policy applies to permanent exterior and floor-mounted portable flagpoles managed by Council at civic facilities and floor-mounted portable flagpoles used at civic events.

This Policy should be read in conjunction with the *Flags Act 1953* (Cth) (the Act) and the Australian Flags Booklet.

This Policy does not apply to Council's promotional flagpoles located in gateways and major precincts across the City of Melton, or to the use of images of flags in communications or promotional flag placements and uses.

This Policy does not apply to banners which may contain an image of a flag.

### 3. Definitions

Word/Term	Definition
Aboriginal Flag	<p>The Australian Aboriginal flag was proclaimed as a flag of Australia under Section 5 of the <i>Flags Act 1953</i> on 14 July 1995. The symbolic meaning of the flag colours (as stated by its designer and Aboriginal elder Mr Harold Thomas) are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Black: Represents the Aboriginal people of Australia</li> <li>• Red: Represents the red earth, the red ochre, and a spiritual relation to the land</li> <li>• Yellow: Represents the sun, the giver of life and protector.</li> </ul>
Australian National Flag	<p>The Australian National Flag is the chief national symbol and was raised for the first time on 3 September 1901 in the presence of the first Australian Prime Minister, Edmund Barton. This symbol of nationality stands for the democracy which allows Australians to discuss its meaning and origins. The flag has three elements on a blue background:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Union Jack: represents the history of British settlement</li> <li>• Commonwealth Star: has seven points representing the unity of the six states and the territories of the Commonwealth of Australia</li> <li>• Southern Cross: is a constellation of five stars that can only be seen from the southern hemisphere and is a reminder of Australia's geography.</li> </ul>
City of Melton Flag	<p>The City of Melton Flag is based on Council's logo. It reflects a stylised representation of the landscape of the Melton municipality. It has three elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• light blue representing the sky</li> <li>• the golden shapes representing undulating hills</li> <li>• a surrounding blue that communicates receding hills.</li> </ul>
Civic Facility	Melton Civic Centre and Caroline Springs Library and Learning Hub.
Council	City of Melton
Flagpoles	Exterior flagpoles outside Council's civic facilities as well as the floor-mounted portable flagpoles used for Council Meetings and civic events.
Half-mast	The flying of the flag a third of the distance down from the top of the flagpole to indicate mourning.
Torres Strait Islander Flag	<p>The Torres Strait Islander Flag was created as a symbol of unity and identity for Torres Strait Islander peoples, designed by the late Bernard Namok from Thursday Island. The flag was recognised by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission in June 1992 and given equal prominence with the Aboriginal flag. The flag was proclaimed as a flag of Australia under Section 5 of the <i>Flags Act 1953</i> on 14 July 1995.</p>

## 4. Policy

### 4.1. Flying of Flags

Council will fly flags in accordance with the Act and *Australian Flags*, Part 2: The protocols for the appropriate use and the flying of the flag.

The flags that are to be flown at Council's civic facilities on its four permanent exterior flagpoles at the front of the civic facility are the:

- Australian National Flag
- Aboriginal Flag
- Torres Strait Islander Flag
- City of Melton Flag

The flag to be flown at Council's Melton civic facility on its single permanent exterior flagpole is the Australian National Flag.

The City of Melton Flag may be substituted with other flags to commemorate or celebrate visiting dignitaries or important dates in accordance with Council's adopted Dates of Significance.

The Australian National Flag, Aboriginal Flag, Torres Strait Islander Flag, and the City of Melton Flag will be displayed in the Council Chamber.

### 4.2. Request to fly community flags

Each year Council will adopt a Dates of Significance Schedule which will set out the dates the City of Melton Flag will be substituted to fly a flag to acknowledge a significant celebration, event, or date.

The acknowledgement of a significant celebration, event, or date by flying a flag must be consistent with Council's values and commitment to diversity and inclusion.

This Schedule will be developed in consultation with the community.

### 4.3. Flying flags at half-mast

#### 1.1.1. The Australian Flag

The Australian National Flag will be flown at half-mast in accordance with protocol in part 2 of the *Australian Flags* booklet and as directed by the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet or Department of Premier and Cabinet. When flying the Australian National Flag with other flags, all flags in the set should be flown at half-mast.

#### 1.1.2. The Aboriginal Flag

Following a request from the local Aboriginal community, and at the discretion of the CEO, in consultation with the Mayor, the Aboriginal Flag will be flown at half-mast to mark the passing of an Aboriginal person who has contributed significantly to Australia, Victoria, or the City of Melton.

#### 1.1.3. The Torres Strait Islander Flag

Following a request from the local Torres Strait Islander community, and at the discretion of the CEO in consultation with the Mayor, the Torres Strait Islander Flag

will be flown at half-mast to mark the passing of a Torres Strait Islander person who has contributed significantly to Australia, Victoria, or the City of Melton.

#### **1.1.4. City of Melton Flag**

Council, or the CEO in consultation with the Mayor, may decide to fly the City of Melton Flag at half-mast on the day of the funeral following the death of:

- a current or former Councillor of the City of Melton
- a member or former member of federal or state parliament who held a seat in an electorate in the City of Melton
- an outstanding local citizen (at the discretion of the CEO).

#### **4.4. Notification**

Where any other flag is flown on the flagpoles or flags are flown at half-mast, a notice indicating the reason will appear on Council's website.

### **5. Protocols on Flying Flags**

Flags are to be flown in accordance with the Australian National Flag Protocols or the *Australian Flags* booklet.

Where Council has resolved to fly a flag on a Date of Significance and all four flagpoles are unable to be utilised, the CEO can elect to remove another flag to allow the flag relevant to the Date of Significance to be flown. The CEO is to notify the Mayor as to any changes made to the flying of flags under this section.

### **6. Variation to the Policy**

Where a situation has not been provided for under this Policy the CEO, in consultation with the Mayor, is authorised to determine the appropriate course of action. Where a matter is urgent and consultation with the Mayor is not possible, the CEO may determine the appropriate course of action and will notify the Mayor of any decisions made.

The CEO is authorised to permit departures from this Policy where adherence to the Policy:

- has financial and staffing implications due to a need to raise or lower a flag outside business hours;
- could cause offence to sectors of the City of Melton community;
- results in a conflict between different policy requirements;
- is warranted due to extraordinary or unforeseen circumstances.

## 7. Responsibility /Accountability

7.1.	<p><b>Chief Executive Officer</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Approve in consultation with the Mayor, requests from the community to fly flags other than the Australian, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags, in accordance with this policy.</li> <li>○ Direct that flags be flown at half-mast in accordance with 4.3 of this policy.</li> </ul>
7.2.	<p><b>Head of Governance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Ensure currency and administration of the policy in accordance with legislation and direction from the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet or Department of Premier and Cabinet.</li> <li>○ Advise employees on the application of the policy.</li> </ul>
7.3.	<p><b>Coordinator Governance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Flag Marshal.</li> <li>○ Maintain a subscription to the Commonwealth Flag Network and Victorian flag notifications.</li> <li>○ Process community and staff requests to fly other flags.</li> <li>○ Provide advice to the CEO and Mayor when considering requests to fly other flags.</li> <li>○ Prepare Council Reports relating to the Policy where a Council decision is required.</li> <li>○ Arrange the flying of flags in accordance with this Policy.</li> </ul>
7.4.	<p><b>Governance Team</b> Assist the Flag Marshal as required.</p>
7.5.	<p><b>Customer Service Team</b> Assist the Flag Marshal with raising and lowering flags at civic facilities.</p>
7.6.	<p><b>Manager Engagement and Advocacy</b> Responsible for coordinating the Dates of Significance Schedule.</p>
7.7.	<p><b>Reconciliation Advisory Committee</b> The Reconciliation Advisory Committee will provide advice to Council and the CEO on the flying of the Aboriginal Flag.</p>

## 8. References and links to legislation and other documents

Name	Location
<i>Flags Act 1953</i> (Cth)	<a href="https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2008C00376">https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2008C00376</a>
Australian Flags Booklet	<a href="https://www.pmc.gov.au/australian-flags-booklet">https://www.pmc.gov.au/australian-flags-booklet</a>
Australian National Flag Protocols	<a href="https://www.pmc.gov.au/honours-and-symbols/australian-national-symbols/australian-national-flag/australian-national-flag-0">https://www.pmc.gov.au/honours-and-symbols/australian-national-symbols/australian-national-flag/australian-national-flag-0</a>

