

Flag Control Policy and Guidelines

Yarriambiack Shire Council encourages a working environment which promotes gender equality and models non-violent and respectful relationships.

1 Objective

This policy identifies the basis upon which Council enables the flying of flags at the Yarriambiack Shire Council office. It also gives guidance with respect to flags flown as an expression of Council's governance responsibilities, including the requirements for the flying of flags at half-mast.

2 Responsibility

The Manager People and Culture is responsible for the implementation of this policy. Direction from the Manager will be for the raising and lowering of the flag on various occasions.

Yarriambiack Shire Council is only responsible for flags flown at the Shire Council Office site.

3 Policy Statement and Scope

Yarriambiack Shire Council will ensure the flags displayed are acknowledged with due diligence, dignity and attention to position.

3.1 Flying the Australian Flag on Government Buildings

The Commonwealth Government has directed that the national flag be flown on its buildings during normal working hours on normal working days. This varies on days of mourning, when the flag is flown at half-mast and on days of national commemoration.

All organisations and individuals are encouraged to fly the Australian flag, particularly post offices and principal government buildings. It is important to observe correct protocol when flying the Australian National Flag. The flag should always be flown aloft and not used to cover a statue, monument, or plaque for an unveiling ceremony. It should not be used to cover a table or seat or to mask boxes, barriers or the space between floor and ground level on a dais or platform.

Currently Yarriambiack Shire Council flies the flag 24 hours per day and 7 days per week all year round. It is only moved to half-mast position on receipt of an email message which comes from Protocol & Special Events Branch – Department of Premier and Cabinet and on occasions such as Anzac Day and Remembrance Day or the passing of significant person.

3.2 Flying the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Flag

Council flies both the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags along with the Australian flag. Council recognises the significance and diversity of culture within the community and is committed to learning and better understanding the attributes and variable that impact on Aboriginal communities and culture today.

All three flags are being flown from poles of the same height. The Australian National Flag is displayed on the flag pole to the far left (when looking at the building) with the other two flags to the right as per the Australian National Flag Protocols.

3.3 Flags of other significance

Yarriambiack Shire Council installed a fourth flagpole to acknowledge and recognise other periods of significance, these include events such as;

- a) Flying the Yarriambiack Shire Council flag when Councillors are sitting. For example; Scheduled and Unscheduled Meetings of Council and Forums.

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- b) The Rainbow Flag during International Days recognising Homophobia, Biphobia, Interphobia and Transphobia (IDAHABIT) and International LGBT Pride Day.

4 Flags are flown in the half-mast position as a sign of mourning.

Times when flags are flown at half-mast:

- a) Death of Sovereign (King or Queen) – from the time of the announcement of the death up to and including the funeral.
- b) Member of Royal Family dies.
- c) Governor-General dies (or a former Governor-General).
- d) Distinguished Australian Citizen (as directed by Government).
- e) Death of Head of State of another country with which Australia has diplomatic relations (as directed by Government).
- f) On the death of a local citizen or on the day, or part of the day, of their funeral (eg a past Councillor).
- g) Anzac Day (25 April) Flag to be flown at half-mast until noon then raised to the peak.
- h) Remembrance Day (11 November) Flag should be flown at the top of the flagpole 8:00am to 10:30am then at half-mast 10:30am to 11:30am, after 11:30am raise to top of flagpole.

5 Australian National Flag Guidelines

The following guidelines apply to the Australian National Flag:

- a) The flag should be raised briskly and lowered ceremonially.
- b) The flag should be treated with the respect and dignity it deserves as the national emblem.
- c) The flag should not normally be flown in a position inferior to that of any other flag or ensign. Nor should its size be smaller than that of any other flag or ensign.
- d) In Australia, the Australian National flag takes precedence over all other national flags.
- e) The flag should always be flown aloft and free and not allowed to fall or lie on the ground.
- f) The flag should not be used to cover a statue, monument, or plaque for an unveiling ceremony; to cover a table or seat; to mask boxes, barriers or the space between floor and ground level on a dais or platform.
- g) When the flag is raised or lowered, or when it is carried past in a parade or review, all persons present should face the flag and remain silent. Those in uniform should salute.
- h) Do not fly the flag upside down, not even as a signal of distress.
- i) When the flag is presented, for example, as an illustration for commercial or advertising purposes:
 - i. it should be used in a dignified manner and reproduced accurately,
 - ii. it should not be defaced,
 - iii. it should not be covered by other objects, and
 - iv. all symbolic parts of it should be identifiable,
- j) The National flag may be displayed at night, but only when properly illuminated. Street lighting or outside house lighting may be adequate.

6 Flag Disposal

When a flag has worn out, it should be disposed of privately and in a dignified manner. Cutting into small unrecognisable pieces is one method. Beware of burning, as most modern flags are made from polyester which could be toxic when burnt.

7 References

- a) *Equal Opportunity Act (2010)*
- b) *Human Rights Charter*
- c) Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet
<https://pmc.gov.au/government/australian-national-flag/australian-national-flag-protocols>

8 Consistency with Governance Principles Local Government Act 2020

Governance Principle	Section of policy where covered
(a) Council decisions are to be made and actions taken in accordance with the relevant law;	Section 1 - Objective
(b) priority is to be given to achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community, including future generations;	Policy as a whole
(c) the economic, social and environmental sustainability of the municipal district, including mitigation and planning for climate change risks, is to be promoted;	Policy as a whole
(d) the municipal community is to be engaged in strategic planning and strategic decision making;	Policy as a whole as community discussions led to the fourth pole being installed
(e) innovation and continuous improvement is to be pursued;	Section 3.3 – Flags of Significance. Fourth flag pole has been installed for the use of flags of significance to be flown at special times.
(f) collaboration with other Councils and Governments and statutory bodies is to be sought;	Policy as a whole
(g) the ongoing financial viability of the Council is to be ensured;	Policy as a whole.
(h) regional, state and national plans and policies are to be taken into account in strategic planning and decision making;	Policy as a whole
(i) the transparency of Council decisions, actions and information is to be ensured.	Policy as a whole

In giving effect to the overarching governance principles, a Council must take into account the following supporting principles—

- (a) the community engagement principles;
- (b) the public transparency principles;

- (c) the strategic planning principles;
- (d) the financial management principles;
- (e) the service performance principles.

9 Review of Policy

This policy is to undertake a review cycle every three years.

Council Approved Policy

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