



Council Policy

FLAG PROTOCOL

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to state Council's position on flag protocol, particularly with regards to the flying of flags at half-mast as a sign of mourning.

Colac Otway Shire Council recognises the significance of certain flags connected to its governance responsibilities. The flags that are to be flown permanently at its Rae Street Colac Offices, pursuant to this policy, are the Australian National Flag and the Aboriginal Flag, except in inclement weather.

Flags flown in response to Council's governance responsibilities will be flown in accordance with the relevant legislation and protocol guidelines in force at the time.

SCOPE

From time-to-time, it is requested of Council that one or both flags are lowered to half-mast to mark the death of a community member or to commemorate the anniversary of their death. This policy will state Council's position on the lowering of flags in order to remove uncertainty for officers when asked to make such a decision.

REFERENCES

Flags Act 1953

Attached:

Australian flags – Part 2: The protocols for the appropriate use and the flying of the flag

Commonwealth of Australia 2006

GUIDELINES/POLICY DETAILS

The most common request of Council with respect to flying the flag is as a sign of mourning.

Even though the national reference resource (as above) states on page 20:

Flags in any locality may be flown at half-mast on the death of a local citizen or on the day, or part of the day, of their funeral...

unless specifically instructed to do so by the Chief Executive Officer, the Council flags will only be lowered to half-mast on occasions when direction is given by the Australian Government or the State Government for all flags to be flown at half-mast.



These include but are not limited to:

- On the death of the Sovereign (King or Queen);
- On the death of a member of the royal family;
- On the death of the Governor-General or a former Governor-General;
- On the death of a distinguished Australian citizen;
- On the death of the head of state of another country with which Australia has diplomatic relations; and
- On days of national commemoration such as Anzac Day and Remembrance Day.

Requests from members of the public for variances to this protocol will be referred to the Chief Executive Officer for a decision to be made at his or her discretion.

More broadly, Council will follow the protocols set out in the attached reference published by the Commonwealth of Australia.

CARE AND CONTROL OF FLAG POLE AND FLAG

The Customer Service division is responsible for the control of all flags under Council's care and control.

Flags flown under Council's care and control should never be flown when in damaged, faded or dilapidated condition.

The care and control of the flag pole / flag on non-Council owned buildings is the responsibility of the building owner.

FILE MANAGEMENT

Policy owner	Manager, Governance & Customer Service	Division	Corporate Services
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