

1. PURPOSE

To govern the flying of National, State and International flags at Council owned properties and to establish a mechanism to consider requests for flying of flags of significance to the Horsham Rural City Council community.

2. INTRODUCTION

This policy has been prepared to specify locations where Council regularly flies the Australian, Aboriginal and Council flags on Council owned buildings and property.

3. SCOPE

This policy applies to flag poles managed by the Horsham Rural City Council, but excludes those managed by other organisations, such as the Returned Services League.

4. PRINCIPLES

4.1 Regular locations for flying flags

This policy applies to the flagpoles at the following Council locations:

Location	Flag Poles	Flags Flown
Horsham Civic Centre	3	Australian National Flag, Australian Aboriginal Flag and Torres Strait Islander Flag
Horsham Civic Centre Courtyard	1	Australian National Flag
Horsham Aquatic Centre	4	Australian National Flag, Australian Aboriginal Flag, Victorian Flag and Horsham Rural City Council Flag
Baillie Street, top end of Firebrace Street	3	Australian National Flag, Victorian Flag and Horsham Rural City Council Flag
Firebrace Street top end	1	Darwin Defenders Flag
Council Depot, Selkirk Drive	2	Australian Flag, Horsham Rural City Council Flag
Roberts Place	2	Australian National Flag and Aboriginal Flag
Jung Reserve cenotaph area	1	Australian National Flag
Horsham Aerodrome	1	Australian National Flag
Natimuk rotunda cenotaph	1	Australian National Flag
Horsham Senior Citizens	1	Australian National Flag

Council will fly these flags in accordance with the *Australian Flags* protocols, with the Australian National flag taking the position of 'honour'.

4.2 Other flag poles

Council's approach to other flag poles:

Location	No.	Comments
Stawell Road	8	Australian National Flag flown at each end. International flags are flown at the six central stations. The flying of these flags is determined by the number of international visitors registering at the Visitor Information Centre.
T & G Building, cnr Firebrace and McLachlan Streets	1	This is not Council property but the flag is maintained by Council. The Australian National Flag is flown.
Horsham Art Gallery	2	Due to OH&S limitations, no flags are flown from the Horsham Art Gallery

4.3 Requests to fly other flags

Normally, it is sufficient to fly either:

- Just the Australian flag
- The Australian and Aboriginal flags
- The Australian, Aboriginal and Council flags.

On some occasions it may also be desirable to fly the Victorian flag, e.g. when the Governor of Victoria is visiting Horsham.

On occasions where a direction or recommendation is received from Federal or State Government, an alternative flag to the Aboriginal Flag will be flown (e.g. the United Nations Flag or the Victorian State Flag).

Requests by community organisations to fly flags other than those listed in 4.1 and 4.2 above will be considered by the Chief Executive Officer 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.

Any request from the community to lower a flag to half-mast or to fly an alternative flag should be addressed to the CEO.

4.4 Flying flags at half-mast (Flag Notifications)

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 to be flown at half-mast.

Flag notifications relate to the half-masting of flags or an instruction to fly specific flags including:

- The passing of a significant Australian
- A state funeral or memorial
- Days of national commemoration (such as Anzac Day)
- Acknowledgement of an international day (such as United Nations Day).

Notifications from the Department of Premier and Cabinet are mandatory and must be followed by the Council.

Upon request from local Aboriginal organisations such as Goolum Goolum Aboriginal Co-operative and Barengi Gadjin Land Council, the Aboriginal flag will be lowered to half-mast as a sign of respect on the death of a local Aboriginal Elder or on the day (or part of the day) of their funeral. When this occurs, all other flags will be joined at half-mast as a sign of respect and solidarity.

4.5 Flying Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Flags

The Aboriginal flag will be displayed with the Australian and Horsham Rural City Council flags at all significant Council events. At events where these flags are displayed, and in accordance with Australian Government Flag Protocols, they will be placed from left to right from the audience in the following order – Australian flag, Aboriginal flag, Horsham Rural City Council flag, with the exception of NAIDOC and National Reconciliation Week, where flags will be placed in the following order – Australian flag, Aboriginal flag, Victorian flag, Horsham Rural City Council flag. *(Taken from Council Policy – C04/110 Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners at 4.3 Flags.)*

The Torres Strait Islander Flag will be flown during Reconciliation Week and National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC) Week, replacing the Horsham Rural City Council Flag.

National Reconciliation Week commemorates the referendum on 27 May 1967 to make laws for Aboriginal peoples and include Aboriginal people in the Census and the Mabo High Court decision on 3 June 1992. NAIDOC Week is held in the first week (Sunday to Sunday) of July.

4.6 Flags Officer

Council will assign the responsibility for the raising and lowering of flags and the observation of flag protocol in accordance with this policy to a flags officer. HRCC have two flag officers, the Co-ordinator Facilities Management and Team Leader Streetscapes and Botanic. Council will ensure that there is a contingency in place should the flags officer be unable to perform their duties on any given day.

The flags officer will be responsible for monitoring the condition of the flags and flagpoles and reporting any maintenance issues as required.

5. COMMUNICATION

This policy will be available on the Horsham Rural City Council intranet and website.

6. RESPONSIBILITY

Policy Owner: Chief Executive Officer

7. DEFINITIONS

Term	Meaning
Council	Horsham Rural City Council
Official Flags	Flags of countries, states or those formally proclaimed by the Governor General in accordance with the Flags Act 1953.
Civic Flagpoles	Flagpoles erected on council property for the purpose of displaying the flags

8. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Document	Location
Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners Policy – C04/110	Intranet/Website
Australian National Flag Protocols	https://pmc.gov.au/government/australian-national-flag/australian-national-flag-protocols
Flag Notifications and Protocol (Dept Premier and Cabinet)	https://www.vic.gov.au/flag-notifications
The Australian Flags Booklet (part 2)	https://www.pmc.gov.au/resource-centre/government/australian-flags-booklet-part-two

9. DOCUMENT CONTROL

Version Number	Approval Date	Approval By	Amendment	Review Date
01	15.02.2022	EMT	New Policy	15/2/2026
1.1	March 2023	n/a	New logo	15 February 2026