

The Mornington Peninsula Shire shares significant community concerns that have been raised about the increased presence of Personal Watercraft (PWC), specifically jet skis, in shared boating and swimming zones where riders often fail to observe the five-knot speed limit and where riders are frequently entering swimming only zones.

## What assistance is needed

Council is calling on the Victorian Government to introduce a range of measures to address community and Council concerns regarding personal safety, amenity and threats to marine wildlife. These include:

### Greater physical separation of PWC and swimmers

- Expansion of the Swimming Only Zones along the Mornington Peninsula
- Introduction of a trial PWC-only pathway zone past the five-knot shared waterway zone
- Implementation of trial PWC exclusion zones adjacent to Rye Foreshore, The Pillars and Safety Beach Foreshore
- Implementation of trial PWC only zones (excluding all other users) at Rye and Safety Beach to allow PWC users to access foreshore areas
- Increase required distance between operation of a PWC and persons on coastal waters to 25 metres

### Regulatory changes

- Separate regulation of powered-PWC, to align road safety legislation with waterway legislation including anti-hoon legislation (for example demerit points)
- Simplify the Wildlife (Marine Mammals) Regulations 2009 to ensure they can be easily enforced for the protection of marine wildlife
- Strengthen the Marine Safety Regulations 2012 in relation to on-beach fuelling, and restrict/limit the locations for on-beach refuelling

### Licensing restrictions

- Change licensing to mirror vehicle registration power-to-weight ratio requirements
- Ban persons under the age of 18 from being able to operate a PWC, even under supervision
- Cancel all existing restricted licences issued to persons between the ages of 12 to 16 years and remove the supervised operation exemption
- Require that PWC users undertake a practical licence test (in addition to the existing knowledge test) and improve training standards for testers

### Greater education and enforcement

- Additional resources for Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP), Parks Victoria and the Water Police to undertake increased surveillance, patrolling and enforcement during the peak summer period
- Maritime Safety Victoria to empower Mornington Peninsula Shire to manage and enforce together with all other proper authorities the use of powered PWC and zones
- Implement a targeted education and enforcement campaign for the safe operation of PWC along the southern end of the peninsula in association with jet ski clubs
- Trial CCTV camera enforcement program

## Why this is important?

During the summer months on the Peninsula's beaches, many swimmers and PWC-riders share the water; often at close proximity, raising significant safety issues on the Peninsula's beaches. In 2012, a man swimming in Port Phillip Bay was struck and killed by a jet ski being driven at high speeds. This is what we want to avoid on the waterways of the Mornington Peninsula.

Not only do we want to protect human life, but we want to protect our marine wildlife. The potential impacts of PWC on marine wildlife is a major concern for the community and Council. The dangers posed by these watercrafts through non-compliance to zones, speed limits, fuel pollution, noise disruptions, engaging in unsafe behaviour all have a negative impact on our marine wildlife.

## What our Community is telling us?

In response to community concerns 177 submissions both written and oral transcripts were sent to Maritime Safety Victoria, Parks Victoria and the Water Police. Submissions received from the community outline safety concerns associated with increased usage and non-compliant activity of PWCs, especially jet skis. Of particular concern was speed, noise, pollution and potential injury to wildlife. The community consistently stated that current enforcement, patrolling and current zoning is not satisfactory in addressing safety concerns.

Submitters also indicated that the current Boating and Swimming Zones are not considered effective in managing the use of PWCs (particularly jet skis) along Mornington Peninsula beaches.

## Supporting Strategies

### State Government

- *Victorian Coastal Strategy 2014*

### Mornington Peninsula Shire

- *Council Plan 2017-2021*