

# Mornington Peninsula Local Water Safety Plan

*Prepared in alignment with the Bass Coast and Mornington Peninsula Cross Council Water Safety Framework. Reference to the CDRP (3.2.1 and associated actions to report)*

## 1. Executive Summary

The Mornington Peninsula Local Water Safety Plan provides a coordinated, evidence-informed and partnership-based framework to reduce drowning incidents, strengthen community preparedness and promote the safe enjoyment of beaches, inlets and waterways across the municipality.

The Plan adopts the Safer Systems Approach and is structured under three strategic objectives:

1. Safer Aquatic Users – Education and awareness
2. Safer Aquatic Activities – Innovation and advocacy
3. Safer Aquatic Environments – Infrastructure and response

The Plan will be reviewed and updated annually

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## 2. Purpose

The purpose of this Plan is to:

- Reduce drowning and near miss incidents.
  - Improve preparedness and early response capability.
  - Strengthen collaboration between Council, water safety experts, emergency services and community networks.
  - Support safe participation in aquatic activities by residents and visitors.
  - Embed innovation and advocacy to ensure long-term sustainability.
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## 3. Strategic Alignment

This Plan aligns with:

- Council Plan 2025–2029 – People Objective 2.1; Prosperity Objective 3.2
- Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025–2029 – Priority Area 6 (Objectives 6.1, 6.2); Priority Area 8 (Objective 8.1)
- Bass Coast and Mornington Peninsula Cross Council Water Safety Framework
- Victorian Water Safety Strategy 2021–2025

- Australian Water Safety Strategy 2030

## **4. Governance and Accountability**

### **4.1 Governing Body**

The Plan is governed by the Mornington Peninsula Water Safety Alliance (MPWSA).

### **4.2 Membership**

The MPWSA comprises representatives from:

- Mornington Peninsula Shire
- Belgravia Leisure
- Life Saving Victoria
- Parks Victoria
- Victoria Police
- Ambulance Victoria
- SES and CFA
- Local surf lifesaving clubs
- Surfing Victoria
- Coastguard
- Representatives from CALD, youth and tourism sectors
- Community and volunteer representatives

### **4.3 Reporting**

- The Alliance meet quarterly.
- Yearly Report will be published to track success
- The Annual Plan will be updated and published on Council's website.

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## **5. Long-Term Strategic Directions**

To strengthen our local plan's alignment with regional framework priorities.

### **5.1 Future Roadmap Development**

Extend planning beyond 2026 to incorporate emerging risks, evolving community needs and innovative prevention strategies.

### **5.2 Funding and Grants**

Identify grant programs and funding opportunities to empower and local groups to deliver tailored water safety initiatives.

### 5.3 Technology and Data Integration

Embed digital tools including push notifications, QR-coded signage, VicEmergency alerts and BeachSafe App promotion to enhance multilingual education and real-time risk communication.

### 5.4 Expanded Monitoring and Evaluation

Establish cross-agency data sharing protocols and consistent incident tracking to inform evidence-based decision-making.

### 5.5 Legislative and Policy Advocacy

Advocate for access controls, compliance measures and mandatory safety infrastructure at identified high-risk locations.

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## 6. Strategic Objectives

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### OBJECTIVE 1 – Safer Aquatic Users (Education)

#### Goal

To provide clear, inclusive and accessible water safety education for all residents and visitors.

#### Outcomes

- Increased understanding of water safety information.
- Strengthened partnerships delivering consistent safety messaging.
- Improved preparedness and early response capacity.

#### Key Initiatives

##### 6.1.1 Community Education

Training for Tourism Centre staff, foreshore volunteers and local ambassadors.

Measure: Number trained; pre/post survey results.

##### 6.1.2 Inclusive Education Programs

Targeted programs for children, older adults and CALD communities.

Measure: Minimum 500 residents reached annually.

##### 6.1.3 Local Workshops

Three local community workshops annually.

Measure: Participation and evaluation outcomes.

##### 6.1.4 World Drowning Prevention Day

Annual public event celebrating water safety advocates.

Measure: Attendance and engagement metrics.

##### 6.1.5 Local Water Safety Campaigns

Seasonal and targeted campaigns addressing peak risk periods.

Measure: Message recall, engagement analytics and awareness indicators.

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## **OBJECTIVE 2 – Safer Aquatic Activities (Innovation and Advocacy)**

### **Goal**

To strengthen partnerships, embed innovation and lead advocacy that supports safer aquatic participation.

### **Outcomes**

- Increased community-led participation in preparedness initiatives.
- Improved collection and analysis of local water safety data.
- Advocate for funding to enable delivery of Objectives

### **Key Initiatives**

#### **6.2.1 State and Federal Advocacy**

Advocacy strategy to secure funding and support aligned to this Plan.

#### **Actions include:**

- Engagement with Ministers and local Members of Parliament.
- Joint funding submissions with regional partners.
- Advocacy for infrastructure, education and innovation funding streams.

Measure: Funding submissions lodged; meetings held; funding secured.

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#### **6.2.2 Reporting**

#### **This initiative will:**

- Partner with Surfing Victoria and local surf and lifesaving clubs.
- Improve recognition of community-led rescues.
- Strengthen data collection to inform prevention strategies.
- Support statewide advocacy efforts.

Measure: data captured.

#### **6.2.3 Communication Expansion**

##### **CALD Community Camping Weekend**

#### **Actions:**

- Deliver an annual culturally inclusive camping weekend in partnership with CALD community groups, Foreshore Camping and water safety agencies.

- Provide practical, hands-on water safety education including rip awareness, safe beach behaviour, emergency response basics and use of public rescue equipment.
- Deliver multilingual safety resources and peer-led discussions to improve understanding and confidence around coastal environments.
- Promote BeachSafe App usage.

**Measure:** Number of participants attending; Participant feedback and pre/post confidence surveys; Expand multilingual QR codes; QR scans; local BeachSafe engagement data.

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#### 6.2.4 Surf Cam and Emerging Technology Review

Review the integration of local surf camera feeds within the Emergency Dashboard to enhance real-time risk monitoring and situational awareness.

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#### 6.2.5 Community Preparedness Partnerships

Strengthen partnerships with surfing groups, boating clubs, tourism operators, Coastguard and volunteer networks.

**Measure:** Number of formal partnerships; joint initiatives delivered annually.

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### OBJECTIVE 3 – Safer Aquatic Environments (Infrastructure)

#### Goal

To identify, implement and promote infrastructure and systems that reduce risk and enhance emergency response capability.

#### Outcomes

- Enhanced signage and safety infrastructure.
- Increased public confidence in emergency response.
- Reduction in preventable incidents.

#### Key Initiatives

##### 6.3.1 Temporary Water Safety Signage

Seasonal installation of safety signage at beaches and high-risk inland sites.

**Measure:** Number installed; biannual review.

##### 6.3.2 Public Rescue Equipment (PRE) Expansion

Advocate and fundraise for installation of public rescue equipment at identified high-risk locations.

**Measure:** Equipment installed; usage reports; community feedback.

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## 7. Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting

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### **7.1 Annual Review**

**Review led by MPWSA with cross agency and community input.**

### **7.2 Public Reporting**

**Annual Plan published on Council's website.**

### **7.3 Key Performance Indicators**

- **Reduction in drowning and near-miss incidents.**
  - **Number of residents trained or reached.**
  - **Infrastructure improvements delivered.**
  - **Increase in community awareness and confidence (survey data).**
  - **Funding secured to support Plan implementation.**
  - **Innovation pilots delivered and evaluated.**
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