

23 January 2009

Mr Steven Scott  
City of Port Phillip

ST KILDA

Dear Mr Scott

Thank you for the opportunity to brief City of Port Phillip on proposed changes to improve the safety of Boating Zones on Port Phillip Bay.

The purpose of this letter is to affirm key discussion points from our Thursday 22 January 2009 at the St Kilda municipal offices.

1. The 5 knot -200 metre Zone is applied to the shore of all Victorian coastal & enclosed waters. Swimmers using Port Phillip Bay have this fundamental level of protection and all vessels, including Personal Water Craft (PWCs) jet skis, must keep a good look out for swimmers and avoid an unsafe situation. Independent of the zones along the shore all vessels must always slow to 5 knots when within 50m of a swimmer or 100m of a Code A "diver below" flag.
2. As suggested by the City of Port Phillip, and further to the current proposal as provided on Thursday, Parks Victoria will add a further No Boating Zone between Nimmo and Wright Streets for the benefit of Middle Park residents and visitors to the section of beach between Kerferd Rd Pier and the St Kilda Harbour. This zone will be slightly larger and more centrally positioned than the existing zone between Nimmo and McGregor Streets This will ensure beach users generally have a short walk to an area that excludes all vessels.
3. There is a very substantial increase in the proposed the total area of in No Boating Zones between Lagoon Pier and the St Kilda Marina. Four smaller No Boating Zones have been substantially extended to provide a higher level of protection for swimmers. The current zones are a complex mixture of Small No Boating Zones and No PWC Zones. Boats of all types other than PWCs may currently enter No PWC Zones. Sailing craft at speed, kite surfers, and powerboats of all sizes also need to be excluded from more areas for improved swimmer safety. Boating activity in the area is increasing due to more vessels in Docklands and the marinas & harbours north and south and larger No Boating Zones will reduce the risk to swimmers.

4. Two 5 knot- 200m still are proposed between the Kerferd Road area and the 5 knot zone associated with St Kilda Harbour. This zone allows boating activity associated with the sailing & angling club at Kerferd road to continue lawfully and provides an opportunity for PWCs and boats to approach the shore slowly at 5 knots and rest, swim or access shore facilities. There is no infrastructure requirement of the City of Port Phillip and little or no shore launching would occur. Boats and PWCs can only access the areas via boat ramps at St Kilda or the Warmies at Newport. There would be some occasional launching of smaller vessels such as kayaks or surf skis from car tops and local residences. Generally this activity is confined to vessels that a person can carry across the sand. Parks Victoria would consider supporting the City of Port Phillip if they wished to further regulate this activity along the shore in some way in the future.
5. The proposed No Boating Zone south of Brookes Jetty is proposed to protect swimmers and keep them out of the very busy entrance to the marina. The Boating Only Zone will be a 5 knot zone. All vessels including PWCs are restricted to 5 knots (walking pace). All vessels will have to maintain 5 knot until 200m clear of the point that protects the mariner entrance. In effect this means vessels leaving this beach need to travel well over 200m before speeding up. Dog play along the shore and in the water will continue. Residents and dog owners are able walk in the water and play with their dogs while standing in the water in this zone. The zone needs to large enough to cope with different sea conditions and extensive vessel queuing at peak times. Vessels including PWCs are currently allowed to access the shore south of Brookes Jetty.
6. It is also proposed that a Water-ski Access Zone currently in place at Elwood will be removed. The current zones enable vessels towing skiers to approach the shore at high speed. The zone is rarely used, if at all.
7. Parks Victoria will provide the City of Port Phillip with mapping of current and proposed Zones and a general summary of the changes under the proposal via our Consultant Beca.

Should you require further advice on this matter please contact Wayne Hill on 5986 3029.

Yours sincerely



Wayne Hill

For Chris Hardman  
Operations Manager  
Bays & Maritime Division