

NOTICE TO MARINERS

GIPPSLAND PORTS



The following Notice to Mariners is published for general information.

AUSTRALIA - VICTORIA

No.007 OF 2021

PORT OF MALLACOOTA INLET

BAR CROSSING WARNING

**TO VESSEL OPERATORS INTENDING TO RISK BAR CROSSINGS AT THE
ENTRANCE TO MALLACOOTA INLET**

DATE: 6th January 2021 – Effective Immediately

DETAILS: Mariners are advised that a recent Marine Incident has occurred with the capsizing of a recreational vessel attempting to cross the Mallacoota ocean entrance Bar. Mallacoota Inlet entrance is currently influenced by the flow of the ebb and flood tides.

Mariners are also advised that there has been no bathymetric survey of the entrance, the Bar or the offshore approaches to the entrance. There are no aids to navigation established at the entrance or the offshore approaches to assist the mariner to navigate across the Bar.

Navigation advice in general;

Mariners are reminded that **the ocean entrance to Mallacoota Inlet is dynamic and continuously changes in position and depth** and can do so over a very short period.

Bar Crossings are regarded as extremely dangerous and can cause serious personal injury or death when unfavorable environment and safety conditions exist, including;

- **Inexperienced vessel operators;**
- **Experienced persons operating unfamiliar vessels;**
- Large swells created by recent weather events that close off the bar entrance with breaking surf;
- **The run of the ebb tide** which lifts and shortens sea conditions on the bar **increasing risk of swamping or capsizing;**
- Poor visibility, which may include the position of the sun relative to the vessels position when attempting to cross the bar;
- Changes in sea and swell conditions from the time of

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departure to the time of arrival and on a day to day basis. Sea conditions can change from long distance weather events centered in the Tasman Sea or Bass Strait;

- The presence of other vessel operators.

Passage through the entrance and bar is not recommended by Gippsland Ports and should not be attempted by inexperienced persons. Any attempts should only be at times of fair weather, smooth sea conditions at higher water with no influence from the ebb tide.

Bar crossing advice and safety equipment requirements can be found in the Victorian Recreational Boating Safety Handbook. Vessel operators should take extra care during vessel equipment checks and conduct a safety briefing to passengers prior to departure.

There are no aids to navigation to guide vessel operators through the Mallacoota Inlet entrance or across the Bar and the best available water may be different from one day to the next.

Gippsland Ports recommends vessel operators achieve Ocean access by launching and retrieving at the Bastion Point Boat Ramp as the alternative to a bar crossing.

Vessel operators are advised to exercise extreme caution before and during any decision to attempt a bar crossing considering the advice previously described.

“IF IN DOUBT – DON’T GO OUT”

**CHARTS
AFFECTED** Aus. 805

**PUBLICATIONS
AFFECTED:** Victorian Recreational Boating Safety Handbook,
Gippsland Ports Waterways Online Web map available at;
<https://www.gippslandports.vic.gov.au/boating/waterways-online/>

**CAPT. BEVIS HAYWARD
HARBOUR MASTER**