

LOCAL NAVIGATION WARNING

GIPPSLAND PORTS



The following navigation warning is published for general information.

AUSTRALIA - VICTORIA

LNW No.1 OF 2021

GIPPSLAND PORTS NAVIGATION ADVICE

OCEAN ACCESS BAR CROSSINGS ARE DANGEROUS

DATE: Tuesday 9th March 2021

PREVIOUS NOTICE: Local Navigation Warning No10 of 2018 is referred.

DETAILS: A recent Marine Incident has occurred at McLoughlins Beach ocean access entrance highlighting the risks involved for vessel operators attempting to make passage through and across ocean entrance sand bars.

Gippsland Ports is the Local Port Manager for 5 Local Ports; Each of the following ports is a recognised Bar Port.

- Port of Corner Inlet and Port Albert
- Port of Gippsland Lakes
- Port of Anderson Inlet
- Port of Snowy River (Marlo)
- Port of Mallacoota Inlet.

Only the Ports of Corner Inlet, Port Albert and the Gippsland Lakes (Lakes Entrance Bar) have recognised aids to navigation to guide the Mariner through and across their respective ocean entrance sand bars. The entrances to these ports remain open at all times, however sound local knowledge and favorable environmental conditions are required to make a safe passage.

The Port of Snowy River (Marlo), Port of Mallacoota Inlet and Port of Anderson Inlet are dynamic in nature with ever changing channel configuration and depths. Ocean access can be closed off at Marlo and Mallacoota during times of drought. There are no aids to navigation to guide the mariner through and across their respective ocean entrance sand bars.

Lake Tyers - Sydenham Inlet and Tamboon Inlet, all remain closed until sufficient back up of water creates an ocean access entrance.

LOCAL NAVIGATION WARNING

GIPPSLAND PORTS



Other ocean access entrances are encompassed within the Waterways managed by Gippsland Ports; They include;

- Shallow Inlet – Waratah Bay entrance continuously remains open.
- Shoal Inlet (Mann’s Beach) - entrance continuously remains open.
- Mcloughlin’s and Kate Kearny entrances (near Port Albert) entrance continuously remain open.

There are no aids to navigation to guide the mariner through and across their respective ocean entrance sand bars. At all times the ocean access at these entrances remains dynamic in nature with ever changing channel configuration strong tidal flows and shallow depths.

The navigability of these entrances is unreliable and considered extremely dangerous.

Bar navigation in general

Mariners are reminded that bar crossings are regarded as extremely dangerous and can cause serious personal injury or death when unfavorable environmental conditions exist, including;

- Poor weather conditions with strong winds making the bar entrance hard to distinguish
- 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 capsize.
- 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 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.

Other contributing factors that heighten bar crossing risks include;

- Inexperienced vessel operators
- Experienced persons operating an unfamiliar vessel
- Under prepared vessels and voyage planning.

Passage through an entrance and sand bar should only be attempted by experienced persons with sound local knowledge at times of fair weather, smooth sea conditions at higher water with no influence from the ebb tide. Operating vessels through an entrance and sand bar at times of heightened risk should be avoided.

LOCAL NAVIGATION WARNING

GIPPSLAND PORTS



Vessel operators should take extra care during vessel equipment checks and conduct a safety briefing to passengers prior to departure or arrival.

Wear a Life Jacket

Information regarding Bar crossing advice, safety equipment requirements, vessel preparation checks and voyage preparation checks can be found in the Victorian Recreational Boating Safety Handbook available online at;

https://transportsafety.vic.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0020/29540/Handbook-2020.pdf

Mariners transiting along the Gippsland Coast are advised to consult the most recent and corrected Navigation Charts, Publications and Notices, which form the basis of sound passage planning and voyage preparation.

Vessel operators are advised to take extra precaution before and during any decision to attempt a bar crossing taking into account the advice previously described.

“IF IN DOUBT DON'T GO OUT”

Mariners are invited to contact the Harbour Master on 0427 610 025 should they wish to discuss port entry for any Ports under the Management of Gippsland Ports. (see website for details);

www.gippslandports.vic.gov.au

FURTHER NOTICE: No further Notice shall be issued.

**CAPT. BEVIS HAYWARD
HARBOUR MASTER**