



BOULIA SHIRE COUNCIL

Flag Flying Policy

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Responsible Officer:	Administration Supervisor
Legislation:	Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet – Excerpt from the booklet Australian flags – Part 2: The protocols for the appropriate use and the flying of the flag Flags Act 1953

PURPOSE

The objective of this policy is to provide Council staff with guidelines on the protocols surrounding the flying of flags so that staff members can carry out flag raising duties accordingly.

WHEN FLAGS ARE FLOWN

Bouliia Shire Council currently has a number of flag poles located in Bouliia.

- The Australian National Flag, the Australian Aboriginal Flag and Bouliia Shire Council's Flag is to be flown each working day.
- The Australian National Flag shall be flown on the middle Flag pole in Herbert St.

FLAG RAISING AND DISPLAY

The following protocols should be adhered to when raising or displaying flags:

- Flags should be raised briskly and lowered with dignity. Flags should always be flown aloft and free, as close as possible to the top of the flag mast and the rope should be tightly secured.
- Flags should be raised no earlier than first light and lowered no later than dusk. The flying of a flag at night is only permitted if it is illuminated.
- Two flags should not be flown on the same flag pole.
- Flags should not be flown upside down, even as a signal of distress.
- Unless all flags are being raised simultaneously, the Australian National Flag should always be raised first and lowered last.
- The canton is the position of honour on the flag and should be in the uppermost left quarter as viewed by a person facing the flag. This applies whether the flag is displayed flat against a surface (horizontally or vertically), on a staff or flagpole or suspended vertically in the middle of the street. For example, when flying the Australian National Flag, the Union Jack should be seen in the top left quarter of the flag (even when being hung vertically although it may appear to be back to front).
- If the Australian National Flag is being displayed alone behind a speaker, it should be positioned on the right of the speaker as they face the audience.
- When flying the Australian National Flag with other (National) flags, all flags should be of the same size and raised on flag poles of the same height.
- When flying the Australian National Flag with other flags the order of the flags should follow the rules of precedence.

FLYING THE FLAG AT HALF MAST

Flags are to be flown at half-mast

- As directed by the Australian Government
- As directed by the Mayor/CEO/DWO/DCS

To bring the flag to the half-mast position, the flag must first be raised to the top of the mast, then immediately lowered slowly to the half-mast position (this position is estimated by imagining another flag flying above the half-masted flag). The flag must be lowered to a position recognisably half-mast so that it does not simply appear to have slipped down from the top of the flagpole. When lowering the flag from a half-mast position, it should first be raised briefly to the top of the flag pole then lowered ceremoniously.

Flags should not be flown half-mast at night, even when illuminated. When flying the Australian National flag with other flags, all flags in the set should be flown at half-mast.

The following protocol is to be followed on Remembrance and ANZAC Day:

Remembrance Day (11th November) On Remembrance Day, flags are flown at the top of the mast from 8 am, then at half-mast from 10.30 am to 11.02 am and then at the top of the mast again from 11.02 am.

ANZAC Day (25th April) On ANZAC Day, flags are flown at half-mast until noon then at the top of the mast until close of business.

RULES OF PRECEDENCE

In Australia, the Australian National Flag takes precedence over all other flags where more than one flag is being flown. When flown in the company of other flags the rules of precedence are:

1. Australian National Flag
2. National Flag of other nations
3. State and Territory Flags
4. Other Flags prescribed by the 'Flags Act 1953' including the Australian Aboriginal Flag and the Torres Strait Islander Flag; the Defence Ensigns (order of precedence for the Defence Ensigns is the Australian Defence Force Ensign, the Australian White Ensign, the Royal Australian Air Force Ensign)
5. Other Ensigns and pennants (i.e. local government flags; Commonwealth, State and Territory agencies; non-government organisations)

Flags should be flown in the above order. In the absence of a flag/s higher in the order, the next flag is flown in accordance with its position in the rules of precedence (for example, the Australian Aboriginal Flag can follow the Australian National Flag if there is no other National Flag or State/Territory Flag to be flown).

The order of precedence may be varied on Commonwealth occasions; Aboriginal or Torres Strait Island occasions for their peoples and military occasions.

FLAG HANDLING AND APPEARANCE

- Flags should not be allowed to fall or lie on the ground
- Flags should be folded in half then quarters when being removed from the flagpoles each evening.
- The Australian National Flag should not be used to cover a statue, monument or plaque for an unveiling ceremony, to cover a table or seat or to mask boxes, barriers or the space between the floor and the ground level on a dais or platform.
- Flags should not be flown when in a damaged, faded or dilapidated condition. When the condition of a flag is no longer suitable, it should be destroyed privately and in a dignified manner.

For further information and explanations on flag flying protocols, staff should refer to the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet's Excerpt from the booklet Australian flags – Part 2: The protocols for the appropriate use and the flying of the flag.