

Events Policy

Bells Beach Surfing Recreation Reserve

Bells Beach Surfing Recreation Reserve – Event Approval & Management Policy	Document No:	DO NOT USE
	Approval Date:	
	Approved By:	
	Review Date:	
Responsible Officer:	Manager Environment and Community Safety:	
Authorising Officer:	Chief Executive Officer	

This policy was developed in 2015 following extensive community engagement on the issues around event management. All events and event proposals will be assessed and managed in accordance with this policy.

1. Purpose

The policy is designed to give clarity to event management in the Bells Beach Surfing Recreation Reserve (the Reserve) and to assist with the improved sustainability of events.

2. Scope

The policy applies to the Council-owned and managed land in the Bells Beach Surfing Recreation Reserve as shown in Appendix 1. The Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, and Parks Victoria manage the offshore waters, and the approval of these agencies is required for any event taking place in waters they manage.

The policy covers the approval and management of all events within the Reserve, both surfing and other non-surfing events.

3. Application

The policy aims to guide the approval and management of all events within the Reserve. It directs Surf Coast Shire Council officers in approving and overseeing the management of events within the reserve, and it informs management advice by the Bells Beach Committee.

It is noted that, while the policy applies generally to the Rip Curl Pro Easter surfing competition, a separate, legally binding licence agreement for this event is already in place. In the case of any inconsistencies, the licence applies. In the future, when either document is reviewed, amendments will be made to ensure their consistency.

4. Definitions

a. The Reserve

Bells Beach Surfing Recreation Reserve

b. Competitive surfing event

Formal surfing competition run by Surfing Victoria or Torquay Boardriders Club

c. Council

Surf Coast Shire Council

d. Surfing Victoria sanctioned event

Surfing event at the Reserve run by Surfing Victoria or its delegate

5. Purpose

To provide clear direction on the:

- Need to ensure events do not adversely impact upon the natural environmental, indigenous heritage and surfing cultural values of the Reserve.
- Involvement of community interest groups in the review and planning of events.
- Number and type of surfing events conducted in the Reserve each year including:
 - allocation of surfing events
 - timing of surfing events
 - types of events other than surfing that can occur in the Reserve, and appropriate approvals and management conditions
 - permit and licence requirements for each event, and
 - post-event inspection processes.

6. Policy

6.1 Objectives

- a) Ensure the natural environment, indigenous heritage and surfing values of the Reserve are respected and protected during events.
- b) Continually work towards improved event management, including reducing the impacts of event set up and pack up.
- c) Ensure the impacts of events on non-participating reserve users are minimised.
- d) Enable an agreed number of competitive surfing events to take place at Bells Beach.
- e) Provide opportunities for surfers with a range of abilities to compete.
- f) Provide opportunities for junior surfers to surf competitively at Bells Beach.
- g) Allow events through the Reserve that use the Surf Coast Walk, subject to appropriate management conditions.
- h) Enable community events with a connection to the Reserve, such as environmental working bees and cultural ceremonies.
- i) Publicise event dates well in advance.
- j) Recognise Torquay Boardriders Club as the 'home' competitive surfing club at Bells Beach.
- k) Direct all revenue raised from events to improvement works within the Reserve.
- l) Annually review events in regard to permits and event management plans.
- m) Clarify the types of events that are inappropriate within the Reserve.

6.2 Surfing Events

a) Surfing event number and allocation

The maximum total number of competitive surfing events each year will be **nine**. These consist of:

- i) One Easter contest (currently known as the Rip Curl Pro, conducted in accordance with a separate licence)
- ii) Four Surfing Victoria sanctioned events
- iii) One additional Surfing Victoria sanctioned event, subject to consultation with the Bells Beach Committee, and
- iv) Three Torquay Boardriders Club events.

If the opportunity to host an additional World Surfing League event was to arise, an event proposal would be submitted to the Bells Beach Committee for consideration and advice, including on the event and its use of surf breaks.

b) Surfing event timing

The timing of events will be coordinated to:

- i) Not occur on any weekend or outside normal weekday business hours for a period of four weeks after the final of the Rip Curl Pro Easter contest, and
- ii) Ensure a minimum 10-day gap between each event.

c) Use of surf breaks

The following conditions apply:

- i) The Rip Curl Pro Easter contest can utilise one of either the Bells (the Bowl or Rincon) or Winkipop (Uppers and Lowers) breaks.
- ii) Surfing Victoria sanctioned events are limited to the Bells breaks (the Bowl or Rincon).
- iii) Torquay Boardriders Club may hold one event on the Winkipop breaks (Uppers and Lowers). The remaining two events must be on the Bells breaks (the Bowl or Rincon).
- iv) Surfers not participating in the event may use the surf breaks in the Reserve that are not in use for the event.

d) Setting of surfing event dates

In November each year, Council officers and representatives of Surfing Victoria and Torquay Boardriders Club will meet and draw up an events calendar for the coming year. Council will discuss the proposed events calendar with community interest groups to obtain feedback and seek input into opportunities to link community outcomes with events (eg cultural activities associated with the Indigenous Surfing Titles).

When finalised, the events calendar will be made easily accessible to the broader community to limit inconvenience to reserve users. As a minimum, the events calendar will be available on the Council, Surfing Victoria and Torquay Boardriders Club websites. Use of other sites such as SwellNet is also encouraged. The Bells Beach Committee will review the events calendar and its accessibility each year.

e) Flexibility of surfing event dates

While it is desirable to adhere to the events calendar, it is recognised there may be a need to have some ability to change event dates to fit in with other competitions or forecasted unfavourable conditions. Flexibility within the following guidelines will be allowed:

- i) Surfing Victoria sanctioned event dates will generally not be subject to change. If a change is required, a request to change the date must be made at least three months prior to the listed date in the annual events calendar.
- ii) Torquay Boardriders Club may nominate a contingency date for each of their three events, which will be included on the events calendar. Five days notice must be given if the contingency date is to be used as an alternative to the preferred date.
- iii) The Torquay Boardriders Club contingency date and the Surfing Victoria requested date change must adhere to the conditions set out in 6.2 (b).

f) Encourage junior competition opportunities within approved surfing events

Event organisers are encouraged to look for opportunities that allow juniors to surf at the Reserve during approved event days (eg as currently occurs at the Rip Curl Pro), and to encourage juniors to participate in events.

6.3 Events Other Than Surfing

A number of events have traditionally passed through the Reserve (eg Bells Bash clifftop run and other running events using the Surf Coast Walk) and there are occasionally requests for other events to pass through or to be staged in the Reserve.

For events other than surfing:

- a) Traditional events such as the Bells Bash cliff top run may continue, subject to the relevant approvals.
- b) Events that pass through the Reserve using the Surf Coast Walk may be permitted, subject to a permit being granted and an approved event management plan.
- c) New events that propose to start or finish in the Reserve are not likely to receive approval if they disrupt user activities (eg take up car parking spaces, create congestion). These event proposals can be considered by the Bells Beach Committee, which will evaluate factors such as the impacts on surfing, infrastructure required and number of participants.

- d) Small community events such as conservation or cultural activities (eg working bees, cultural ceremonies) are encouraged, with groups entering into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Surf Coast Shire Council.
- e) Only minimal infrastructure associated with each event will be permitted and it must be located so as not to interrupt the activities of other reserve users.
- f) Private functions such as weddings will not be permitted within the Reserve.
- g) Timing – three months prior to each proposed event, event organisers will submit to Council an event approval application form (including an event management plan), and any fee (if this applies). Council events officers will liaise directly with event organisers and, at least 30 days prior to the proposed event date, will make an in-principle decision on whether or not the event can take place. Council officers must make a final decision on the staging of the proposed event at least six days prior to the proposed event date.
- h) Council's events officers will ensure that the Council events calendar is adjusted if there is any change to the event date.

6.4 Conduct of All Events

Events in the reserve must comply with the following:

- a) Have an event management plan approved by Council in writing prior to the event proceeding (the one exception to this requirement is a minor community event undertaken in line with a Memorandum of Understanding).
- b) Have appropriate insurance—Event organisers must provide evidence of public liability insurance to a minimum value of \$10 million. Note that some community events may be exempt from this requirement, subject to the organising body having a memorandum of understanding with Surf Coast Shire Council and adhering to the conditions of the agreement (eg agreed occupational, health and safety procedures).
- c) Be subject to an environmental audit - As part of working towards improving event management, an environmental audit system will be developed and phased in for events between 2015 and 2018. The environmental audit will include consideration of factors such as transport to the Reserve, materials/products used by vendors during events, waste and litter management, and community education. The Bells Beach Committee will be involved in the development of the environmental audit.

- d) Be conducted in accordance with this policy.
- e) Be conducted in accordance with the Minister's approved Coastal Management Plan (CMP).
- f) Protect and respect the natural environment, indigenous heritage and surfing culture at all times.
- g) Be safe at all times for event participants and the general community.
- h) Not restrict public access to areas of the Reserve unless temporarily in accordance with an event management plan approved by Council.
- i) Not restrict reasonable public access using existing paths to all surf breaks in the Reserve.
- j) Seek to minimise the event set up and take down times, and be conducted over the minimum period required to run the event.

7. Permits, Event Management Plans and Licences

Management of the Rip Curl Pro is controlled by a *Crown Land (Reserves) Act* licence between Council and Surfing Victoria (current until February 2018). This licence sets out the requirements for the event management plan, which covers running of the event in detail. Council and Surfing Victoria will continue to work towards reducing the impacts of the staging of this event on other reserve users. An independent audit of the event bump in and bump out will be undertaken in 2016 to assist with this. When considering potential improvements, comparisons will be made with venues similar to the Reserve, such as Margaret River.

The Rip Curl Pro has a special site inspection prior to Surfing Victoria handing the site back to Council following the bump out. Members of the Bells Beach Committee will be invited to participate in this inspection.

Other surfing events require a Council permit, which will include the need for an event management plan to be prepared. The event management plan must demonstrate compliance with Section 6 of this policy.

For non-surfing events, a Council permit and associated event management plan will be required.

8. Event Management Plan Minimum Requirements

All event management plans must demonstrate compliance with Section 6 of this policy and cover all aspects of event management including but not limited to:

- a) Traffic management including measures to reduce private vehicle use
- b) Car parking arrangements
- c) Emergency plans and procedures
- d) Facility requirements and management
- e) Waste management, including sustainability provisions (follow-up through proposed environmental audit)
- f) Temporary structures
- g) Ancillary operations (eg barbecues, coffee vans or food vans), including sustainability measures
- h) Environmental and cultural management, and
- i) Parks Victoria or Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning approval for the offshore component of the event (if needed).

9 Records

Records shall be retained for at least the period shown below.

Record	Retention/Disposal Responsibility	Retention Period
Completed application form and event management plan for all proposed and approved events	Event Liaison Officer	Ongoing in accordance with Council Records Procedures
Community complaints, ideas for improvement or concerns	Event Liaison Officer	Ongoing in accordance with Council Records Procedures
Any officially-recorded Council minutes relevant to events at the Reserve	Manager, Environment and Community Safety	Ongoing in accordance with Council Records Procedures

Attachments

Boundaries of the Bells Beach Surfing Recreation Reserve

Approval Date:		Approved by:	
Amendment/Review 1:		Approved by:	
Amendment/Review 2:		Approved by:	