Lake Eildon
Houseboat License Agreement and Operational Rules
Background

Goulburn Murray Water (GMW) is responsible for the management of Bulk Water Services assets, the delivery of bulk water services, irrigation water, domestic and stock supplies and drainage services throughout 68,000sq kilometres in Northern Victoria and is Victoria’s Constructing Corporation for the Murray-Darling Basin Commission. GMW also undertakes a number of natural resource management activities for government related to salinity, water quality and water resource management.

This document is aimed at assisting GMW and houseboat owners in developing and implementing sustainable water use and house boating practices at Lake Eildon.

Policy rules and guidelines have been developed in regard to houseboat activities on the lake that address potential environmental public health and safety impacts that need to be carefully and co-operatively managed.

The importance of continuous improvement in regard to environmental and catchment management, both within and adjacent to Lake Eildon, requires that management, key stakeholders, users and the community develop an intimate understanding of the Lake and surrounding lands environment and bio-diversity.

The Environment and Risk Management

In March 1999 the Board of GMW endorsed an Environmental Policy. The purpose of the policy was to set a strategic direction for GMW’s use and management of the environment and to document the principles to guide and improve environmental performance.

The objectives of the policy included establishing a framework for action and the setting of environmental targets and goals, and codifying a commitment to continuous improvement in environmental performance. Therefore, the establishment of partnerships to develop, implement and manage a range of agreed initiatives is vital to the successful implementation of environmental risk reduction programs.

Environmental protection and enhancement will therefore be a prime consideration in evaluating the future use of the Lake and its environs for house boating and recreational purposes, the development and maintenance of recreational facilities, of lease tenure and governance.

The operating rules and licence conditions have also been developed to ensure a common understanding of GMW’s position in relation to standards of design, construction, installation and maintenance of houseboats at Lake Eildon.

It is imperative that houseboat activities do not threaten the ecological sustainability of Lake Eildon and do not affect the water quality adversely.

Good Governance and Risk Management

Houseboat owners should recognize that there is a need for good governance including enhanced self management in accordance with this licence agreement, operating rules, by-laws and regulations.

Houseboat owners need to promote to their families and friends the safe use of the houseboat with respect to all activities that occur thereon and should actively promote the safe use of water for consumption and the safe use of swimming and boating areas.
Acts and Regulations

Lake Eildon and perimeter land surrounding the Lake under the control and management of Goulburn Murray Water has been gazetted to be part of the Lake Eildon Recreational Area under section 122ZA of the Water Act 1989.

Houseboats are permitted to operate and are licensed to operate on Lake Eildon in accordance with the Water (Lake Eildon Recreational Area) (Houseboats) Regulations 2013 (The Houseboat Regulations). The Houseboat regulations are made under sections 122ZF and 324 of the Water Act 1989.

The Houseboat Regulations provide for management of houseboat including;
1. Application, issue and transfer of licenses
2. Numbers and types of houseboat licenses
3. Control of waste, including standards for black and greywater treatment
4. Fees for administration of licenses

Houseboat owners are also required to comply with By-Law No. 1/2013 Recreational Areas (The By-laws). The By-Laws are made under section 287ZC of the Water act 1989.

The objectives of the By-Laws are to prescribe provisions for;
1. The control, management and use of land services and facilities
2. The protection of the land service and facilities
3. The protection of people in the area from injury or nuisance
4. The conservation and preservation of plants, animals, flora, fauna and habitat
5. The control of the introduction of any new plants or animals
6. To prescribe provisions for the management, protection and use of lands, waterways and works in a recreational area

Copies of the complete Houseboat regulations and By-Laws can be downloaded from the GMW web site.


Houseboats on Lake Eildon

There are approximately 700 private houseboats on Lake Eildon and a person cannot bring a new or used houseboat onto the lake without first submitting an application form and a licence being issued by the Corporation. GMW is currently working with representatives of the Houseboat Industry to review requirements to allow an increase in the number of licensed houseboats on the lake.

The operation of houseboats is closely monitored by staff at Eildon to ensure compliance of licence conditions and regulations.

A copy of licence application and transfer forms can be obtained by contacting the GMW Eildon office or downloaded from the GMW website Lake Eildon Houseboat webpage www.gmwater.com.au/houseboats

Houseboat Impacts on Water Quality

While the issue of sewage removal from houseboats on Lake Eildon had been addressed with the introduction of houseboat regulations back in 1970, sullage disposal directly into the lake is still universal. The Corporation has been actively seeking ways to address the issue of sullage discharge to the lake.

Since 2003 GMW has been advising houseboat owners that in the future a sullage containment or treatment system will need to be installed on every houseboat.

Greywater is water that has been used for washing, laundring, bathing or showering, but not for toilet flushing. This includes water containing dissolved or undissolved by-products such as fat and oil, food scraps that contain nutrients, household chemicals, soaps and detergents rich in phosphate, nitrates and biological pathogens (eg bacteria and viruses).

With the introduction of AS4995-2009 Greywater treatment systems for vessels operated on inland waters by Standards Australia in September 2009, and the commercial availability of treatment units which can meet the discharge standards specified in AS4995-2009, GMW initiated implementation of on-board grey water treatment for Eildon houseboats.

The first stage of implementation was the compulsory fitting of treatment units or installation of full containment of grey water to all new houseboats from 1 September 2010. GMW in consultation with industry and users planned to develop a proposal to phase in the introduction of greywater treatment systems for all existing private and hire houseboats.

At the time EPA South Australia, who is responsible for management of houseboats on the SA section of the Murray River, had already introduced greywater management requirements for houseboats on their inland waters. From 1 January 2009, all newly constructed vessels were required to have grey water treatment systems or full containment. Compliance of hire vessels was required from 1 January 2010 with all other vessels to comply by 1 January 2011.

The NSW Maritime Authority administers the Marine Pollution Regulation 2006 which applies to NSW Waters. This regulation contains specific provisions, including a requirement for all commercial vessels built after 1 January 2005 and used on the Murray River or Sydney Harbour to be fitted with greywater containment tanks.

From 30 September 2011 NSW Maritime Authority approved the use of on-board grey water treatment systems compliant with the discharge standards required in AS 4995-2009.

The Water (Lake Eildon Recreational Area) (Houseboats) Regulations 2013 were introduced in June 2013 and require all houseboats to be fitted with on board grey water treatment units which can meet the minimum discharge criteria for treated greywater specified in AS4995-2009 Greywater treatment systems for vessels operated on inland waters, namely;

Suspended solids to be less than 50 mg/L.
Total grease content shall be less than 25 mg/L.
Total nitrogen content shall be less than 10 mg/L.
Total phosphorus content shall be less than 1 mg/L.
Enterococci concentration shall be less than 40 cells per 100 m/L.

GMW will not endorse, approve or recommend any particular make of treatment unit. The new requirements require existing houseboats to have a grey water treatment unit fitted by 2020. A grace period until 1 July 2015 is also provided to vessels being transferred to a new owner. All new houseboats licensed to operate on Lake Eildon must now have a compliant grey water treatment unit fitted.
Size of Houseboats
(Except approved commercial (hire and drive) vessels)

The maximum size for a houseboat allowed on Lake Eildon is 18.3 metres in length and 7.25 metres in width.

These houseboat dimensions are inclusive of all structural components of the houseboat, which includes;

- Walkways
- Duckboards
- Ski platforms
- Handrails
- Bumpers
- Eaves
- Motors

Houseboat Mooring

All houseboats must have a mooring at one of the designated and approved marinas operating on the Lake. The mooring of houseboats around the shoreline is permitted for recreational purposes but owners will be required to move around to avoid long-term impacts on water quality from recreational activities associated with houseboat activities.

Houseboats must ensure that they do not moor close to diversion pumps used by adjacent landowners for stock and domestic water. This is clearly a health issue.

Compulsory Houseboat Slipping

All houseboats will be progressively slipped at the request of GMW for an inspection of the sewerage system and general condition.

Houseboat owners may organize their own slipping inspection with a GMW approved inspector when they slip their houseboat for maintenance or repairs. This will avoid having to undergo a costly slip to comply with GMW’s slipping program. Details of requirements for inspection are available from the GMW Lake Eildon Office.

Houseboats with identified problems will not be permitted to return to the Lake without making the necessary repairs or modifications.

The intent of the slipping program is to have all houseboats slipped every five to seven years.

Failure to comply with a GMW notice to slip your houseboat for a compulsory inspection may result in cancellation of your houseboat licence and direction to remove the houseboat from Lake Eildon.

Houseboat Licenses and Licence Fees

Houseboat licenses are issued annually and the payment of the annual houseboat licence fee constitutes an acceptance of the GMW offer of a one year licence to operate a houseboat on Lake Eildon.

The number of houseboat licenses issued by GMW for Lake Eildon is capped at current numbers. For a newly constructed houseboat to be licensed to operate on Lake Eildon an existing houseboat must be removed to allow the licence to be transferred to the new houseboat.

The current annual houseboat licence fees and current value of fee unit can be located on the GMW website Lake Eildon Houseboat webpage – www.gmwater.com.au/houseboats

Constructing a New Houseboat

Approval must be obtained from GMW prior to the construction of any new houseboat.

As the total number of licenses will not be increased for Lake Eildon, a houseboat owner or builder must remove a licensed houseboat from the Lake Eildon Recreational Area in order to replace it. A houseboat may need a number of inspections during construction prior to final approval for operation on the Lake.

Fees for the inspection of the plans and on-site inspections apply and must be paid in full before a final approval and issue of a houseboat licence.

Transferring a Houseboat Licence

On the condition that a houseboat owner has fully paid the relevant houseboat licence fee, approval will be given to transfer a houseboat licence following the sale of that houseboat to a new owner. Completion of the licence transfer will also require the new owner to complete a licence agreement.

Houseboat owners arranging transfer of their houseboat licence should contact GMW’s Eildon Office.

Transfers of houseboat licenses from 1 July 2015 will only be considered if the vessel has a compliant greywater treatment unit fitted.

Houseboat Renovations

Any structural alterations or sewerage system alterations must have prior approval from GMW before works commence. Alterations to sewerage installations must also comply with the specifications set out in schedule 1 of the Houseboat Regulations.

All boat maintenance must be carried out in a manner which prevents waste material entering the lake. Boat owners should consult with their marina operator regarding containment requirements.
Sanitation Stations

Two Sanitation Stations are provided by GMW on Lake Eildon for use by all houseboat owners to pump out effluent from their houseboats holding tank. Stations are located at Jerusalem Creek and Point Worner (outside Eildon Boat Club). The cost for GMW operation of the Sanitation Stations, Jerusalem Creek transfer barge and sewerage lagoons are covered by your annual houseboat licence fees.

Care must be taken to ensure that the pumps are operated as per Sanitation Station operational guidelines (written instructions on each pump cabinet / barge) and these must be observed at all times.

CAUTION: Always wear Personal Protective Equipment (e.g. gloves & eye protection) when using Sanitation Station pump out equipment.

Should any individual sanitation station pump(s) fail to start, move to another pump or relocate your houseboat to a new mooring position next to a working pump (no red lights-flashing).

To notify GMW of pump failure please call GMW Recreation & Land Management duty officer on 0418 968 992.

Mooring To GMW Sanitation Stations

Houseboat operators need to take care when mooring their houseboat. Here are some simple suggestions for mooring to GMW Sanitation Stations:

1. When possible moor your boat on the windward side of the station
2. Always tie the bow (front) of the boat to the station first (the stern (back) of the boat can still be controlled by the engine).
3. Always ensure houseboat engine is running before releasing mooring ropes.
4. Always release the stern (back) mooring line first (if the wind gets your boat you then have the engine for control).
5. Passengers should be kept well clear of the side of the boat being moored to the station and crew involved in tying off mooring ropes should stay clear of the side of the boat until it is stationary. The licensed boat operator is responsible for the safety of all passengers.

Rubbish

As Lake Eildon reached record low water levels during 2000/01 and 2002/03, a large amount of rubbish was exposed. The predominant volume of rubbish was bottles and cans, some going back a number of years. It was disappointing to find large amounts of houseboat hardware, ranging from fridges, washing machines, handrails and batteries. However, on a more positive note was the amount of current houseboat owners who continue to pick up rubbish from around the foreshore.

GMW provides Cleanaway bulk bins at Darlingford Waters Boat Club, Jerusalem Creek Marina, Eildon Boat Club and Lake Eildon Marina. GMW monitors rubbish collection at all these locations to ensure bins are cleared to meet levels of use.

Should you have batteries, white goods or houseboat construction/renovation materials or waste to dispose of, please consult your marina operator to arrange appropriate disposal.

Penalties apply for illegal dumping of rubbish.

Blue-Green Algae

Blue-green algae are naturally occurring bacteria that have the potential to be harmful as they can make people and animals sick. Low levels of blue-green algae are present in the water all the time; however, the Department of Environment and Primary Industries and the Department of Health set a maximum level considered safe. Warnings are issued when the level of blue-green algae exceeds safe levels and GMW is required to warn the public.

The ideal conditions for blue-green algae to grow are:

- An excess of nutrients (both Phosphorus and/or Nitrogen).
- Warm water temperatures.
- Calm, non-turbulent conditions in the water column, arising from a lack of wind mixing.
- Low turbidity of the water column, allowing sufficient light for photosynthesis.

High levels of blue-green algae can also occur in water bodies where these conditions aren’t present.

Reactions

Blue Green Algae can be potentially toxic to humans and animals. People with sensitive skin, asthma, hay fever and other allergies are more likely to be affected by the contact irritant toxins present in all types of blue-green algae. All species of BGA have toxins that may cause skin irritation, diarrhea, conjunctivitis and vomiting. Some types of blue-green algae have additional toxins that attack the liver, kidneys and nervous systems. These toxins will make everyone sick when ingested, not just sensitive people.
Warnings

During a Blue-Green Algae warning GMW will erect warning signs at particular Lake Eildon locations to advise of the high levels and the risks to people and animals.

Information and current warnings can also be found on the GMW website www.gmwater.com.au/bluegreenalgae-alert

Boating Safety Information

GMW has produced a boating guide for Lake Eildon which shows boat zoning and general facilities and information about safe boating on the lake. The Guide is available to download from the GMW website or can be picked up at the Lake Eildon office.

Boat zoning on Lake Eildon includes, Open water zones, 5 Knot zones, No Boat zones and No Wash zones. Houseboat operators must meet vessel registration and boat operator licensing requirements and ensure that boats are operated in accordance with general marine boating safety rules and regulations.

Rooftop Mapping Services also publish the Lake Eildon Boating Map. This map was produced with assistance from GMW, Parks Victoria and Transport Safety Victoria. The map contains information regarding boat zoning and points of interest around the lake. The back of the map contains useful boating and fishing information as well as an index and GPS references for most natural features on the lake. Copies of the map are available for purchase from most businesses around the lake or from Feathertop mapping services; http://www.ftmaps.com/ftms/ftms/home/contacts.php

Boating Hazards

Water levels and boating conditions at Lake Eildon may vary daily with storage inflows or as a result of irrigation releases. Standing and floating timber and submerged landforms exist within this storage and can be hazardous to boating.

Boat Ramps (see Appendix 2)

Public and private commercial boat ramps are positioned at a number of locations around Lake Eildon. These ramps operate at varying lake levels. The attached table lists boat ramps and operating levels for boat ramps at Lake Eildon.

Internet Web Sites of Interest

Goulburn-Murray Water www.gmwater.com.au
Transport Safety Victoria www.transportsafety.vic.gov.au
Bureau of Meteorology www.bom.gov.au
Energy Safe Victoria www.esv.vic.gov.au
Lake Eildon Web Site www.lakeeildon.com
Parks Victoria www.parkweb.vic.gov.au
Department of Environment, Land, Water & Planning delwp.vic.gov.au
Country Fire Authority www.cfa.vic.gov.au
GMW Contacts

Eildon Office

For advice regarding houseboat licence applications, houseboat licence transfers, construction permits, slipping program information, houseboat inspection, sanitation barges and general lake use issues contact the Eildon Recreation & Land Staff:

Telephone  03 5774 3900
Facsimile   03 5774 3990
Email    laurinda.bellman@gmwater.com.au

For updated daily Lake Eildon storage information 03 5774 3928

Tatura Office

For account inquiries or other GMW information contact:

Telephone  1800 013 357
Facsimile   (03) 5826 3334
Website   www.gmwater.com.au

Emergency Contacts

Police       000
Ambulance   000
Fire Brigade 000

Government:

Local Police:

Alexandra  03 5772 1040
Eildon     03 5774 2104
Jamieson  03 5777 0505

Eildon Chemist:  03 5774 2393
Alexandra Chemist: 03 5772 2153

Alexandra Hospital     03 5772 0900
Murrindindi Community Health Service  03 5774 2404
Alexandra Veterinary Clinic    03 5772 1600
Eildon Information Centre: 1800 003 713

Department of Environment, Land, Water & Planning  03 5772 0200
Mansfield Shire    03 5775 8555
Murrindindi Shire  03 5772 0333
Parks Victoria     13 19 63

Marine Contacts

Alltype Plumbing    0418 340 779
Anchorage Houseboats P/L 03 5774 2705
Anchorage Houseboat Sales 03 5774 2702
Boatworx           0419 306 747
Darlingford Marina  03 5774 2414
Designer Houseboats 0439 911 930
Eildon Boat Club    03 5774 2040
Eildon Outboard Service 03 5774 2132
Eildon Service Station 03 5774 2220
Faster Plumbers     0417 155 699
Grant Simms Plumbing 0428 576 002
Harbourside Restorations 0405 691 526
High Country Houseboat Sales 0417 588 455
Houseboat Sales Lake Eildon 0499 990 024
Houseboat Sales      0419 476 498
Jerusalem Creek Marina 03 5774 2585
Lake Eildon Houseboat Sales 0427 007 907
Lake Eildon Marina   03 5774 2107
Linden Marine        03 5977 3353
M & A Dean Builders  0417 505 521
Peppin Point Marina  03 5778 7338
Status Luxury Houseboats 0418 320 673
Status Slipping & Maintenance 03 5774 2400
The Houseboat Factory 0409 321 380
Travis Capp Plumbing  0419 558 803
TLS Plumbing - Greg Lund 0412 549 382
Unique Houseboats    0427 837 385
Guidelines

You can help protect Lake Eildon and enhance the enjoyment and safety of others by following these simple guidelines:

• Help keep areas around Lake Eildon clean and protect the environment by taking your rubbish home with you.
• Vehicles and motorbikes may be used on roads open to public vehicles. All vehicles must be registered and drivers licensed. Abide by speed limits.
• All plants, animals and historical sites are protected by law and must not be removed or disturbed.
• Your safety is important. If you require emergency assistance take note of your location according to the grid numbers on this map.
• A Motor Boat Licence is required when operating a motorised boat in Victorian waters.
• Water is not suitable for human consumption.

Be safe - take care
## Operating levels for Lake Eildon Boat Ramps

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LOCATION</th>
<th>Ramp</th>
<th>Ramp Top AHD</th>
<th>Ramp Top %</th>
<th>Ramp Base AHD</th>
<th>Ramp Depth Below FSL (M)</th>
<th>OPERATIONAL UNTIL</th>
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<td>Eildon Alliance Public Ramp</td>
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<td>Howqua Valley Caravan Park</td>
<td>High Level Ramp</td>
<td>289.00</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>277.20</td>
<td>11.70</td>
<td>278.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low Level Ramp</td>
<td>277.50</td>
<td>60.75%</td>
<td>260.00</td>
<td>28.90</td>
<td>261.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jamieson Public Ramp</td>
<td>Public No 1 High Level</td>
<td>289.00</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>282.20</td>
<td>6.70</td>
<td>283.20</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>N/A</td>
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<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Updated 5 December 2013
Fires and camping around Lake Eildon.

Fires and camping are not permitted in any area around Lake Eildon, except in the designated camping areas (see below).

**Why?**

Unregulated campfires are not only a potential hazard for bushfires, but also create a problem with accumulation of rubbish and pollution to the domestic water supply.

To minimise these impacts, Parks Victoria provides defined areas where camping and fires are permitted.

### Boat-based camping areas

There are three Boat-Based Camping Areas located around the shores of Lake Eildon within Lake Eildon National Park at:

- **Mountaineer Inlet** (top of Aird Inlet)
- **Taylors Creek** (Big River Arm)
- **Coopers Point** (Main Arm)

They are only accessible by boat or foot and provide for a more remote camping experience (see map).

Composting toilets are provided in each area and fires are permitted at Mountaineer Inlet and Taylors Creek only.

### Other camping areas

- **Jerusalem Creek Camping Area.** Good boat access is available into the Jerusalem Creek Inlet. Designated camping sites, basic toilets and fire places are provided. Camping fees apply and permits are available at either end of the camping area. Bookings are available for peak periods. [www.parkweb.vic.gov.au](http://www.parkweb.vic.gov.au)

- **Fraser Camping Area.** Coller Bay. Formal camping facilities are provided (toilets, hot showers, etc) with fires permitted in fireplaces provided. Fees are payable at the Campground Office with bookings required for peak periods. Phone 13 1963.

- **Delatite Arm Reserve.** Basic camping facilities are provided (as for Jerusalem Creek) and fires are restricted to winter months only. Camping fees are collected by Rangers.

**Fire:**

Within the specified camping areas, fires must be contained within fireplaces provided. Please keep fires to a minimum size and gather only fallen, dead timber.

On declared days of Total Fire Ban ALL SOLID FUEL CAMPFIRES, PORTABLE GAS APPLIANCES AND KEROSENE LANTERNS ARE PROHIBITED. This includes all gas stoves, gas lights, and gas fridges (including use inside tents). Fixed gas stoves may be used in houseboats with extreme caution. IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO FIND OUT INFORMATION ON TOTAL FIRE BAN DAYS.

This can be obtained via radio broadcasts, or by contacting the Victorian Bushfire Information Line 1800 240 667.

**Dogs:**

Dogs are not permitted in Lake Eildon National Park, so please be aware of your mooring location if you are taking a dog on board a houseboat. Dogs are only permitted in the Jerusalem Creek Camping Area and Delatite Arm Reserve, and must be under control at all times.

**Motorbikes:**

Trail bike riding is only permitted on formed roadways open to the public (this excludes the shores of the lake). All vehicles must be roadworthy, registered and you must be fully licenced.

**PLEASE RESPECT THE AREA TAKE ALL RUBBISH HOME**

**Further Information:**

Parks Victoria
46 Aitken Street, Alexandra. 3714
Phone: (03) 5772 0200. Fax: (03) 5772 1361.

Lake Eildon National Park
PO Box 211, Alexandra 3714
Phone: (03) 5772 2038. Fax: (03) 5772 2813.

Goulburn-Murray Water
19 High Street, Eildon 3713
Phone: (03) 5774 3900. Fax: (03) 5774 3990.