

# Code of Practice

For visitors to the Fleurieu Reef (the former HMAS Hobart) Issued under section 15 of the *Historic Shipwrecks Act 1981*.

The former HMAS Hobart, an Adams-class guided-missile destroyer in the Royal Australian Navy (DDG 39), was sunk to create the Fleurieu Reef (Reef) at Yankalilla Bay, South Australia, for the specific purpose of recreational diving. The Reef was declared an historic shipwreck and all the articles associated with the Reef (Relics) are historic relics under the Historic Shipwrecks Act 1981. The area surrounding the Reef being that portion of the waters of Gulf St Vincent bounded by a circle having a radius of 550 meters and centered on the intersection of latitude 35° 28.9" south and longitude 138° 09.5" east has been declared a protected zone under the Historic Shipwrecks Act 1981 (Protected Zone). Entry into the Protected Zone is prohibited without a permit.

A larger area, extending half a nautical mile from the Reef has been established as a Restricted Area under the Harbors and Navigation Act 1993.

A reference in this Code of Practice to the Protected Zone is to be taken to include the Restricted Area.

In addition, the Protected Zone is located within the Rapid Head Sanctuary Zone (Encounter Marine Park). For more information about marine parks including maps, zone coordinates and other information, please visit [www.marineparks.sa.gov.au](http://www.marineparks.sa.gov.au).

## APPLICATION

### To whom does the code apply?

This code applies to any person who enters the Protected Zone.

### Compliance

Agreeing to comply fully with the code is a pre-condition to access. Each person entering the Protected Zone must acknowledge that they have read and understood this code and sign the Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources (DEWNR) application and risk indemnity form prior to entering the Protected Zone.

### Site Controls

Persons under the age of 18 are not permitted to dive the Reef.

All persons entering the Protected Zone must comply with all legislative requirements at all times. The legislative requirements are subject to addition and/or amendment from time to time but include the following:

- A person must not (unless previously approved in writing by DEWNR):
- Undertake any of the following recreational activities in the Protected Zone: swimming, bathing, recreational boating, or kayaking.
- Ski, aquaplane or be towed in any other manner by a vessel.
- Swim or bathe except for purposes connected with scuba diving or snorkeling.
- Remove, interfere with, or dispose of a wreck or any part of the wreck or a historic relic.
- Damage or destroy the shipwreck or a historic relic.
- Bring into the Protected Zone:
  - equipment constructed or adapted for the purposes of salvage or recovery operations; or
  - explosives, instruments or tools, the use of which would be likely to damage or interfere with the shipwreck or a historic relic situated within the Protected Zone.
- Use within the Protected Zone any such equipment, explosives, instruments or tools.
- Cause a ship carrying such equipment, explosives, instruments or tools to enter, or remain within, the Protected Zone.
- Dive or engage in any other underwater activity, within the Protected Zone.
- In addition, the following procedures are recommended practices to be observed by persons entering the Protected Zone:
- Check and record tank pressures upon entering and exiting water (if diving).
- Check equipment before entering water to verify that the person has all necessary equipment and that it is operational.
- Any damage or unsafe wear to the moorings or wreck should be reported to DEWNR.
- Check weather forecasts and only enter the Protected Zone if safe.

Note that within the Rapid Head Sanctuary Zone all animals, plants and habitats (including shells, rocks and similar materials) are protected from removal or harm.



Therefore, fishing and all other extractive activities are prohibited within the Rapid Head Sanctuary Zone. For regulations relating to marine park zoning please visit [www.marineparks.sa.gov.au](http://www.marineparks.sa.gov.au).

## DIVER COMPLIANCE AND GUIDANCE

### General

Persons diving in the Protected Zone must only dive to their level of training and depth limitations imposed by the diver's training organization.

While the site is intended primarily for divers, it may also be used by snorkellers. Divers must be aware, therefore, that others – perhaps with little understanding of their method of operating – may be visiting the site at the same time.

This is not a site suitable for divers with little or no post-course experience, unless supervised by an in-water guide. Divers that are new to the site should gain the services of a suitably-qualified in-water dive guide to escort them on preliminary dives.

It is recommended that all divers conduct orientation dives before venturing into any overhead sections, regardless of their level of experience and qualifications.

All persons entering the Protected Zone should understand and comply with:

- The recommended equipment requirements as set out in Attachment 1.
- The safety considerations for diving in the Protected Zone as set out in Attachment 2.
- The guidelines for avoiding decompression illness as set out in Attachment 3.

### Snorkellers

Snorkellers may swim within a ten (10) metre radius of the mooring being used by their vessel. They are not permitted to swim within ten (10) metres of any other mooring or vessel, nor swim into the inner area bounded by the buoy moorings. They need to be made aware that a medium current at times runs across the site. They may dive towards the wreck but are not permitted to touch or enter any section of the wreck.

### Open water diver

Open water divers may swim over the outside of the wreck but should not enter any section of the wreck that does not allow direct vertical access to the surface. They should also restrict their dive to a maximum depth of 18 metres, dive well within no-decompression limits and carry out a safety stop at the end of every dive.

### Advanced open water diver

Advanced open water divers may swim over the outside of the wreck but should not enter any section of the wreck that does not allow direct vertical access to the surface. They should also restrict their dive to a maximum depth of 30 metres, dive well within no-decompression limits and carry out a safety stop at the end of every dive.

They should restrict their penetration to a level commensurate to their training and experience.

### Wreck diver (recreational agency trained)

Wreck-certified divers may swim over the outside of the wreck and may enter sections of the wreck that do not allow direct vertical access to the surface, providing they stay within the light zone. No entry of the wreck should be attempted during hours of darkness. They should also restrict their dive to a depth commensurate with their training and experience, stay well within no-decompression limits and carry out a safety stop at the end of every dive.

### Wreck diver (technical diving agency trained)

Wreck-certified divers who have successfully undertaken a wreck-diver program that specifically teaches the techniques of wreck penetration may penetrate all areas of the wreck, providing they are properly equipped and have made adequate preliminary orientation dives on the site. They should restrict their penetration to a level commensurate with their training and experience and limit their decompression times.

### Cave/penetration diver (technical diving agency trained)

Cave or penetration-certified divers who have successfully undertaken a basic wreck diver program or have equivalent experience in wreck diving may penetrate all areas of the wreck, providing they are properly equipped and have made adequate preliminary orientation dives on the site.

They should restrict their penetration to a level commensurate with their training and experience and limit their decompression times.

Note: For those undertaking decompression dives, adequate decompression gas should be available at deco stop for use during safety stops or planned decompression dives.



# ATTACHMENT 1

## Recommended dive equipment requirements

All persons must comply with Australian Standard AS 2299:3 (Occupational Diving Operations: Recreational Industry Diving and Snorkelling Operations) as the minimum level.

Semi-penetration dives (light zone factor)

It is recommended that each diver undertaking dives within the light zone in the Protected Zone be equipped with the following minimum equipment:

- Mask and snorkel
- Fins
- Suitable thermal protection – either wet or dry suit
- Gloves
- Buoyancy compensator (scuba fed)
- Cylinder of appropriate capacity for the planned dive
- Regulator consisting of one first stage, two second stages, cylinder contents gauge and a low pressure inflator hose
- Depth and timing device capable of recording maximum depth and elapsed time
- One light source (if not entering wreck)
- Two light sources (if entering light zones of wreck)
- Knife
- Safety sausage (diver inflatable signal device) and whistle.
- The additional following items are not essential but are recommended:
  - Reel and guideline (for any dives where direct vertical access to surface is not possible)
  - A redundant air supply (for any dives where direct vertical access to surface is not possible)
  - The use of mixed gas rebreathers
  - Dive computer or slate with pencil.

Consideration should be given to decompression diving requirements particularly those undertaking technical diving requiring staged compression in accordance with AS 2299:3

## Penetration dives

It is recommended that each diver undertaking penetration dives on Fleurieu Reef be equipped with the following minimum equipment:

- Mask and snorkel
- Fins
- Suitable thermal protection – either wet or dry suit
- Gloves
- Buoyancy compensator of suitable design for application
- Redundant air source, twin system or bailout system
- One depth and timing device capable of recording maximum depth and elapsed time
- One primary and two back-up light sources
- Two knives or other devices capable of cutting line etc (preferably stored on upper body)
- Compass
- Slate and pencil
- Decompression tables
- Primary reel line
- Safety reel (for lost line searches etc). Note that access warning signs have been placed at various places on the reef without the certification level specified "one not to penetrate further into the wreck at those points".
- Dive computer
- Safety sausage (diver inflatable signal device) and whistle.





## ATTACHMENT 2

### Safety Considerations for Diving on the Reef

Strong tidal currents may be experienced in this area. To minimise the effects of tidal currents divers should plan their dives around a 30-40 minute window either side of the turning tide.

Swimming against even a slight current can quickly cause fatigue. Divers should ensure that they are physically and medically fit prior to commencing any SCUBA diving activities. If they have any concerns about their diving fitness, prior to conducting any dives they should consult their Doctor or the Hyperbaric Medicine Unit at the Royal Adelaide Hospital for a list of Doctors specifically trained in diving medicine.

Increased physical output coincides with increased use of air resources. Divers should regularly check their cylinder contents gauges and plan their dives to allow necessary reserves.

On descending to and ascending from the wreck divers should remain in contact with the buoy line to minimise the risk of drifting off. Observers on board vessels should keep a good lookout for divers that may surface away from buoy lines and have a plan to effect their immediate recovery.

Divers should carry a torch to assist in illuminating interior parts of the wreck to decrease the possibility of disorientation. Divers should only access parts of the wreck that they are qualified to.

Divers that return to the surface and find that they have drifted off of the wreck should try and attract attention of surface vessels by waving their arms and blowing a whistle or inflating some kind of signal device such as a Safety Sausage or similar.

If it becomes obvious that they will not be immediately recovered they should ensure that their vest is inflated and consider removing their weight belt to assist maintaining positive buoyancy. Remain calm. Unless it is possible to reach a vessel or land avoid swimming or physical exertion and huddle into a ball to minimise the potential for hypothermia.

Vessel crews becoming aware of the possibility of a diver not returning to the surface or drifting away should contact Police at their earliest opportunity so that search and rescue measures can be instigated.

A thorough briefing should be delivered prior to commencing any dives so that all members of the party including vessel crew are aware of the proposed dive profile and safety actions.

## ATTACHMENT 3

### Guidelines for avoiding decompression illness

#### Avoiding 'the bends'

The incidence of decompression illness can be greatly reduced if you follow these guidelines:

- Get sufficient rest the night before your dive.
- Excessive alcohol consumption the night before must be avoided as this causes dehydration.
- Ensure you are well hydrated before and after you dive – avoid coffee and tea (caffeine).
- Pack your SCUBA gear the day before in preparation for a relaxed, stress free dive.
- A thorough pre-dive check must be performed before each dive including mask and fin straps.
- Listen carefully to your pre-dive briefing and follow the plan prepared at this briefing during your dive.
- Take special care during your buddy check.
- On ascent to the surface after a 'non decompression dive', do your safety stop as discussed in your dive briefing.
- Do not fly for 24 hours post dive.

#### Know the symptoms

Muscle pain ('pulled muscle'), pain/discomfort around the joints, a feeling of malaise (feeling unwell), lethargy (extreme fatigue), headaches, numbness, tingling sensations, chest pain, occurring within 24 hours of the dive are some of the symptoms which have to be treated as suspect symptoms.

If still on a vessel, report any symptoms to the crew. If in the Marina St Vincent area, report to the office so they can contact Divers Emergency Service (DES) Australia. Otherwise phone DES on 1800 088 200 toll free.

Symptoms can appear the next day so, remember, if you are in doubt about some aspect of your health seek medical advice.

You can do everything 'right' and still get a decompression injury. The important thing is to report the problem quickly so that medical advice can be obtained without delay.



## A diving emergency while on the Reef

If a diving emergency or any medical emergency occurs while diving on the Reef the following procedures should be STRICTLY adhered to:

1. Retrieve the injured diver to the boat.
2. Provide appropriate First Aid.
3. The diver MUST be kept in the HORIZONTAL position and given 100% oxygen. An appropriately trained oxygen provider must be on all commercially operated boats, and all commercially operated boats MUST have an oxygen supply. The trained oxygen provider must not dive on that dive. It is recommended that all other boats have an appropriately trained oxygen provider and carry an oxygen supply.
4. The Divers Emergency Service (1800 088 200) number is to be contacted as soon as possible. This phone is answered initially by the SA Ambulance Service who will contact the on call diving doctor and initiate the emergency retrieval (local ambulance service and retrieval helicopter). State: "This is a diving emergency, we are diving on the HMAS Hobart". Stay on line and await instructions. Keep lines of communication open at all times.
5. The boat is to proceed to the Marina St Vincent where the ambulance will meet them. The diver is to stay on the boat in the horizontal position. The ambulance crew will then lift the diver (keeping the diver flat) onto the wharf and into the ambulance.

