

23 July 2008

### **Safety the focus of temporary changes to traffic management in Yarra River**

A continued commitment to promoting and maintaining safety on the water will see Port of Melbourne Corporation (PoMC) introduce interim changes to Yarra River traffic management as the Channel Deepening Project moves into the next phase.

The essential services that cross the Yarra River need to be either relocated or protected in situ.

The works will occur 24 hours a day seven days a week, and as a result, river traffic management changes are scheduled to be in place from 28 July 2008 until about the end of May 2009.

“The port has been working closely for the past two years in consultation with mariners, port stakeholders, river users and the shipping industry in planning for these temporary changes,” said CEO of PoMC Mr Stephen Bradford.

“These changes are seen as a responsible measure to ensure safety for both recreational and commercial users of the river. Communication will be on-going to ensure operational efficiency.”

Recreational vessels wishing to use the Yarra River will be required to observe specially installed traffic signals which will indicate a three lane system in the Yarra. The signals will advise when recreational vessels can transit and in what lanes. Lane closures and shipping movements will be regulated by PoMC’s Shipping Management Centre.

“People can expect to see dredge equipment working in the Yarra River supported by barges, tugs and survey vessels,” said Mr Bradford. “In the interest of safety we remind all river users navigating near any of these operations to proceed with caution and to reduce speed.”

For commercial shipping, the river will also remain open under specific management procedures:

- The river will be open 16 hours per day seven days a week between 1400 and 0600 hours. Commercial traffic will be required to navigate selected lanes pending the location of dredging plant and vessels (the maximum beam of vessels able to transit during this period is 32.3 metres).
- The river will be closed to all commercial navigation (but not recreational vessels) for eight hours per day seven days a week between 0600 and 1400 hours.

All river users should note the busiest times will be just prior to the river closure time of 0600 and just after reopening at 1400, and are advised to plan accordingly. All vessels with beam of 11 metres or less can transit under specific management procedures i.e. such as when the traffic signals are operating.

The complete management procedures can be viewed in Notice to Mariners 070(T)-08 on the Channel Deepening Project website [www.channelproject.com](http://www.channelproject.com) or for further information call 1800 731 022.