

## Aids to Navigation (AtoN) - Clarkes Beacon & Marcus Hill Beacon – Bellarine Peninsula

Maritime Safety Victoria is seeking your assistance as part of a process to review the requirement for the ongoing installation and operation of two navigational aids on the Bellarine Peninsula, namely Marcus Hill Beacon and Clarkes Beacon. **(Attachment A)**

These land beacons create a day marked lead line that extends offshore towards the south east across the entrance to Port Phillip. **(Attachment C)**

On available historical evidence it is believed that the existing lead line was established to cross the Port Phillip Heads fairway from the east and *“be used only when fairway is clear, during flood Marcus Hill beacon should be kept open to westward of Clarkes beacon”* The Sailing Directions Victoria, 1970.

The beacons are not listed in the Admiralty of List of Lights & Fog Signals, both are unlit.

The beacons are known as ‘useful marks’ in the Admiralty of Sailing Directions (Australia Pilot Volume 2, NP14 2019 pg.113).

### Useful marks 4.32

Marcus Hill Beacon (white column, black diamond topmark 14m in height Clarkes Beacon black and white, elevation 33m

“Cruising Victoria: A guide to cruising Victoria, the Bass Strait Islands and Northern Tasmania, 2014” refers to the beacons as Clarkes/ Marcus Hill Transit p48 and has an associated map on p 49. The publication notes that *“the beacons are extremely difficult to see after noon”* and advises to *“follow the transit until well clear of Corsair Rock and then turn to starboard”*

Nick McGuigan RBYC refers in “Getting Through the Rip”

*Approaching the Rip from the east, lining up Clarkes Beacon with the lead on Marcus Hill and staying to the left of it will keep you off Corsair. The Marcus Hill lead is a little hard to see (see photograph at the bottom of the previous page) so sometimes it is better to just use a clearing bearing on Clarkes Beacon.*



There are 3 Special Mark Buoys installed within Lonsdale Bay. The buoys south east of Clarkes Beacon have a nominal light range of 2-3 nm (Sealite SL-70). The light range of the most easterly buoy at 2 nm is to a point south of Point Nepean and Beacon Rock. The 3nm range is almost to end of marked transit. **(Attachment B and C)**

Both Marcus Hill Beacon and Clarkes Beacon have been adopted to also mark the extents of the offshore (southern) boundary of the Point Nepean section, and the eastern boundary of the Point Lonsdale section, of the Port Phillip Heads Marine National Park in the 2002 amendment of the *National Parks Act 1975*.

**(Attachment B)**

Currently both beacons require significant work to maintain their structural integrity.

MSV is seeking your assistance to:

- Gain an understanding of the current navigational use and importance of these beacons,
- Whether given advances in technology (boating apps, electronic charts etc.) and navigational practices whether the beacons are still required for safe navigation noting they are both unlit and difficult to see.
- What the impact on users, and navigational safety might be if the beacons were decommissioned.
- Should they be considered important for navigational safety what alternative navigational aids may be appropriate.

In seeking your assistance, the focus is on navigational safety rather than the dual role the beacons serve in delineation the southern boundary of the Port Phillip Heads Marine National Park.

**Attachment A**

**Marcus Hill Beacon**



Beacon was originally established by Ports & Harbours, then maintained by the Port of Melbourne Authority from October 1986.

## Clarke Beacon



Limited history is available. The structure comprises a 21.5m high guyed tower supporting what is suspected to be a steel frame daymark with timber slats.



**Attachment C**  
Extract of Chart

