

EX-HMAS HOBART DIVE SITE

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR VISITORS



Photo: Walter E Frost

The ex-HMAS *Hobart* (D39), an Adams Class guided missile destroyer formerly in the Royal Australian Navy, was scuttled and sunk in 2002 at Yankalilla Bay, South Australia to create a world class recreational diving site. Marine life at the site is fully protected and a thriving artificial reef has formed, making the *Hobart* one of the most spectacular diving attractions in South Australia.

Extensive preparation work was carried out to ensure the *Hobart* is a safe and enjoyable diving experience. Shipwreck diving can, however, potentially be dangerous. Divers should consider the basic safety information in this code of conduct and plan their dive carefully to address foreseeable risks. Divers should dive within the limits of their level of training and qualifications.

Site Management

Lying in open, exposed waters 4.2 nautical miles from Marina St Vincent (Wirrina Cove), the *Hobart* is located at Latitude 35° 28.9' South and Longitude 138° 09.5' East.

The *Hobart* and the surrounding waters of Encounter Marine Park are managed by the National Parks and Wildlife Service, South Australia. Management effort is focussed on ensuring the protection of the wreck and marine life, and the amenity and safety of the diving experience.

Marine park rangers patrol the site regularly, ensuring divers and boat users adhere to the site protections, listed below. Boat moorings and diver descent lines are regularly maintained and signage is installed at boat ramps. Other information is available on the marine parks website: www.environment.sa.gov.au/marineparks/enjoy/diving/diving-the-hmas-hobart



Government of
South Australia



Commercial dive tours may only be conducted by holders of a marine park commercial tour operator permit. Recreational divers may choose to dive with a professional dive tour operator, or dive from their own private vessel. Recreational divers do not require a permit to dive the *Hobart*.

Site Protections

Shipwreck

The *Hobart* is a declared historic shipwreck under the *Historic Shipwrecks Act 1981*. To protect the wreck and the diving experience, a person must not:

- remove, interfere with, damage or dispose of any part of the wreck or a historic relic.

Boating

An area bounded by a circle extending 0.5 of a nautical mile from the *Hobart* was declared a Restricted Area under the *Harbours and Navigation Act 1993*. To help ensure the safety of divers, snorkelers and other boat users, within the Restricted Area a person must not:

- Operate a vessel at a speed greater than 4 knots, or in a planing attitude.
- Ski, aquaplane or be towed in any other manner by a vessel.
- Swim or bathe except for purposes connected with scuba diving or snorkelling.
- Moor or anchor a vessel except at a permanent mooring facility established in the waters.

Environment

The *Hobart* lies within the Rapid Head Sanctuary Zone, Encounter Marine Park, under the *Marine Parks Act 2007*. To protect marine life in the sanctuary and enhance the diving experience, a person must not:

- Deposit litter.
- Remove or harm any plant, animal or habitat - therefore **fishing is not permitted**.
- Feed or interfere with a wild animal (including berleying).
- Establish an unauthorised mooring.
- Conduct commercial tourism or scientific research, unless authorised.
- Discharge wastewater from a vessel.

Key Diving and Boating Safety Considerations

Potential hazards and risks

While the *Hobart* can be a spectacular and rewarding dive, it can also be challenging and potentially dangerous. Some of the hazards and risks to divers could include:

- Discarded line and rope resulting in entanglement or injury.
- Penetrating internal spaces in the shipwreck, resulting in disorientation and entrapment.
- Exceeding depth/time limits, resulting in decompression sickness or other medical condition.
- Tidal currents causing diver fatigue.
- Naturally occurring hazards (e.g. sharks).

Most risks can be managed through appropriate training, dive planning and suitable equipment. If in doubt, seek the advice or services of a professional diving tour operator.

Diving qualifications

Divers with all levels of diving qualifications may dive at the *Hobart*, but there are some important safety considerations.

Divers should adhere to the limits of their training and qualifications (see guide below).

Snorkelers do not need a recognised diving qualification, but should consider the general safety guidance provided here.

The following is an indicative guide to areas of the wreck accessible to different levels of diver qualification. Divers are responsible for not exceeding the limits of their training and qualifications.

Qualification	Areas of the <i>Hobart</i> you can access
Open water diver certification	Outside the wreck to a depth of 18m.
Advanced open water certification	Outside the wreck to a depth of 30m.
Wreck/technical/cave/penetration certification	Outside the wreck and penetration of internal spaces, according to the limits of your training.

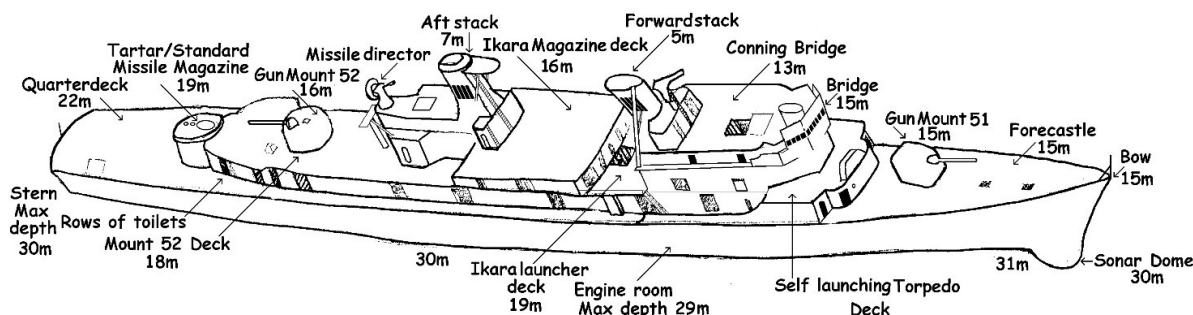
Note: qualified divers under the age of 18 should be accompanied by an appropriately qualified adult diver.

Location, sea conditions and depths

The *Hobart* is located in open, exposed waters 4.2 nautical miles (7.8 kilometres) from the nearest boat ramp at Marina St Vincent (Wirrina Cove).

Sea conditions in this area are highly variable and are directly influenced by wind and tide. Boat operators should obtain a current weather forecast before leaving the boat ramp.

The *Hobart* lies at a maximum depth of approximately 30m, with the uppermost structure approximately 5m below the surface.



Safety for yourself and others

The *Hobart* can be a challenging dive. Plan all aspects of your dive carefully.

Ensure you are aware of the limitations of your qualifications, training, gear, fitness and abilities.

The *Hobart* is not suited to inexperienced divers or those who have not dived for some time. These divers should seek the services of a professional diving tour operator.

Strong tidal currents occur in this location. Plan the timing of your dive carefully. To minimise the effects of tidal currents, divers should plan dives around the 'slack water' period at the turning of the tide. If in doubt, seek the advice or services of a professional diving tour operator.

Only appropriately qualified and trained divers, with suitable equipment, should attempt to penetrate internal spaces on the *Hobart*. If you are uncertain whether your qualification enables you to penetrate the wreck, seek advice from a professional diving tour operator, or your dive training provider.

Silt is present in many of the internal spaces. Avoid stirring up silt wherever possible, as visibility will be impacted, potentially causing disorientation.

Boating and moorings at the dive site

Boat operators should watch carefully for divers and snorkelers in the water as they approach the site and observe speed limits (4 knots).

Take care around buoys to avoid propellers fouling on, or damaging, the mooring ropes.

Boats must fly the internationally recognised 'Diver below' flag whilst moored at the site.

Red buoy moorings are attached to concrete blocks on the seafloor. Dive boats should moor (attach) to the red buoy moorings at the site.

White buoy moorings are attached to various sections of the *Hobart* wreck. Divers should use these lines to descend and ascend.

Boats should not use white buoy moorings as their primary mooring point.

Ensure a competent boat operator remains on your boat at all times in case of mooring failure or other emergency.

Diving Emergency

In the event of a diving emergency, contact the **Diving Emergency Service on 1800 088 200**.

For medical emergencies, **call Triple Zero (000)**.

The nearest hyperbaric unit is located at the Royal Adelaide Hospital, in the Adelaide central business district, a distance of 87 kilometres, or approximately 1hr 20min travel time by vehicle from the boat ramp, via Main South Road.

Reporting Damage, Safety Issues or User Misconduct

Please report the following to the National Parks and Wildlife Service, South Australia:

- Damaged or loose parts of the *Hobart* structure that may pose safety hazards for divers.
- Missing moorings or damaged mooring hardware.
- Damaged or missing boat ramp signage relating to the *Hobart*.
- Incidents of unsafe diver or boat operator behaviour.
- Incidents of fishing, harming or harassment of marine wildlife.
- Removal of any part or relic of the *Hobart*.

A 'contact us' form can be found at: www.environment.sa.gov.au/marineparks/contact

Alternatively, call the Duty Officer on 0427 556 676.

Disclaimer

The Government of South Australia accepts no liability or responsibility in relation to diving the *Hobart*. Divers dive the *Hobart* at their own risk.