

**The Hon Greg Hunt MP
Minister for Environment
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Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600**

**HMAS Warrnambool (I)
Nomination under the *Historical Shipwreck ACT 1976***

We wish to nominate the wreck of HMAS Warrnambool (I) to the Australian National Shipwreck Register under the Historical Shipwreck ACT 1976.

HMAS *Warrnambool* (I) was an Australian corvette constructed during World War II as part of the Commonwealth Government's wartime shipbuilding programme. During the war she spent the majority of her deployments in Pacific waters and along the coast of Australia on anti-submarine patrols, coastal and convoy protection. During the initial bombing of Darwin on 19 February, 1942, HMAS Warrnambool narrowly escaped damage from aerial bombing. Following the war, HMAS Warrnambool was still involved in defence activities sweeping the coastal waters of the Great Barrier Reef clear of submerged mines laid during hostilities. In 1947, while on operations in the vicinity of Cockburn Reef, she hit a mine and sank with the loss of four lives and twenty-nine injured. These casualties were the last in naval wartime operations during World War II.

The wreck of HMAS Warrnambool is now resting in 25 metres of water, accessible to casual divers and organised charter companies who visit the site on a regular basis. As such the site is vulnerable to damage and illegal salvaging. A further threat is damage by fishing craft anchoring on the wreck. Currently it has no statutory protection to mitigate its vulnerability.

HMAS Warrnambool is part of Australia's wartime heritage, and as such we ask you, as the Minister concerned, to declare the site for consideration as a historic wreck and afford it protection under the *Historical Shipwreck Act, 1976* Act.

Yours sincerely



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