



# MEDIA ALERT

19 April 2017

## Captain Cook Memorial Jet off due to elevated levels of blue green algae in Lake Burley Griffin

The National Capital Authority (NCA) advises that the Captain Cook Memorial Jet will not operate for the near future due to extreme levels of blue-green algae measured in water tested at Central Basin of Lake Burley Griffin yesterday.

The Captain Cook Memorial Jet in Central Basin will remain off as winds can create fine mists and cause lake water to travel to foreshore areas, potentially exposing the public to blue-green algae. The extreme blue-green algae levels, as defined by the ACT Guidelines for Recreational Water Quality, can cause a range of health issues.

“Blue-green algae is naturally occurring in fresh water but the increased levels of blue-green algae we are seeing may be due to cool nights and bright sunny days. Given the right conditions, blue-green algae numbers can increase quickly,” National Capital Authority Chief Executive, Malcolm Snow said.

“We remind the public that by keeping gutters and drains clean of leaf waste and grass clippings, less nutrients are washed into the lake. Over time green waste increases the nutrient load which often aids blue-green algae growth.”

The Captain Cook Memorial Jet will start operating again when the blue-green algae have reduced to safe levels. The NCA is monitoring the conditions by undertaking regular sampling and monitoring.

The Summer Recreational Season has closed and Primary Contact recreation (swimming and bathing etc) is not advised during colder months as water temperatures pose a high risk of causing hyperthermia.

Secondary contact recreation such as rowing, fishing, boating and canoeing will still be permitted, noting ACT Health's advice below:

- Symptoms of blue-green algae exposure may include skin/mucosa irritation, flu-like symptoms, and gastrointestinal illness;
- There is an increased risk of adverse health effects from water exposure for secondary contact recreation;



- People should not engage in secondary contact recreation unless:
  - They are experienced;
  - They are informed of the algal risks and what to do if contact occurs;
  - They do not engage in primary contact during the recreation; and
  - Showering facilities, with suitable water, are available for washing after the recreation.
- Water users should shower after water contact;
- Water users should look for algae warning signs indicating the current alert level at major water entry points as algal levels can change quickly depending on the weather and water nutrient levels.

Pet owners should not allow their animals to swim in or drink lake water in areas where there are algal scums.

Visit the NCA's website for Lake Burley Griffin water quality information at [lbgwq.nationalcapital.gov.au](http://lbgwq.nationalcapital.gov.au).

For more information on the ACT Guidelines for Recreational Water Quality, visit <http://www.health.act.gov.au/public-information/public-health/recreational-water-quality>.

**WHAT:** Central Basin, Lake Burley Griffin closed to Primary Contact and Captain Cook Memorial Jet is not operating.

**WHERE:** Central Basin, Lake Burley Griffin.

**WHEN:** Until further notice.