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MEDIA RELEASE

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Plenty for Everyone this Weekend at 175th Birthday Festival of Sails

Australia's biggest celebration of sailing right here in Geelong is in full sail this weekend with the 175th anniversary Festival of Sails. This year a total of 304 boats will participate, the largest fleet since 2012, and more than 2500 competitors.

Starting on Australia Day, Friday, January 26, and running through to Sunday, January 28, the iconic Festival is Australia's oldest sporting event and will see a feast of first class racing as Australia's finest battle on Corio Bay for trophy honours.

Large crowds are again expected to enjoy the lively Waterfront Festival with its three days of live entertainment, activities, market stalls and fantastic food. Entertainment is free, but after 5pm wristbands are needed to enter the yacht club precinct and the Regatta Village. Due to unprecedented demand, the free ticket allocation for access to Regatta Village has been exhausted, however there is plenty of entertainment on Steampacket Gardens and Transvaal Square that does not require a ticket.

The spectacular Melbourne to Geelong Passage Race is Friday, with the best views of the finish line in front of the Royal Geelong Yacht Club from Eastern Beach near Ritchie Boulevard throughout the afternoon. Once the bulk of the fleet arrives in Geelong, an *Off The Beach* series will showcase junior sailing.

With hot weather on the way, festivalgoers are reminded to slip, slop, slap and stay hydrated throughout the weekend. Free water is available from the Barwon Water Drinking Station on Transvaal Square and sunscreen will be available from first aid stations in Steampacket Gardens and the Regatta Village, the Festival of Sails Regatta Office, and the Events Geelong marquee in Fairnie Park (outside the Yacht Club). There will be extra shade in outdoor areas and organisers encourage visitors to plan ahead and drink plenty of water!

More information: www.festivalofsails.com.au

Full program: <http://festivalofsails.com.au/full-schedule-of-events-and-activities> or on the Festival of Sails app, available from the App Store and Google Play.

Ends

Media contacts over the Festival weekend:

- Jess Gabites 0412 784 587 jessicagabites@gmail.com
- Leigh McClusky 0411 711 870 leigh@mccogroup.com.au
- Lisa Ratcliff 0418 428 511 lisa@occ.net.au