



BOI Etchells Regatta 2026

Russell Boating Club

Event dates: 7th & 8th March, 2026.

Reserve dates: 14th & 15th March, 2026

REGATTA HEALTH & SAFETY PLAN

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1. INTRODUCTION

This Health & Safety Management Plan has been developed in accordance with best-practice guidance issued by Yachting New Zealand. The plan specifically addresses risk assessment, emergency procedures, and crew training requirements, as detailed in Yachting New Zealand's recommendations, ensuring a comprehensive approach to on-water safety management.

This plan applies to:

- All on-water racing and support operations.
- Volunteers, race officials, competitors and visitors.

The Russell Boating Club is committed to:

- Providing a safe environment for all participants.
- Identifying, eliminating, or minimising risks so far as reasonably practicable.
- Ensuring adequate rescue capability.
- Maintaining clear emergency response procedures.
- Reviewing and improving safety practices after each event.

The Race Officer and members of the Race Committee are the people responsible for executing this plan. Skippers will acknowledge that they have read and understood the plan when entering the race series.

The main points of this plan will be explained to participants as part of the event safety briefing on the morning before the first race.

There is safety equipment as per [Appendix B](#) on board all Safety RIB's and the committee vessel.

This H&S Management Plan is accessible on the [Etchells page](#) of the Russell Boating Club website and will be emailed to all skippers prior to the event.

2. ORGANISING AUTHORITY

The Organising Authority for the BOI Etchells Cup Regatta is the Russell Boating Club Inc ("the Club") Sailing Committee.

Regatta Coordinator – Stephen Pepperell. Phone 021 185 8306

Email – etchells@russellboatingclub.org.nz

The event base is the Russell Boating Club, 46 Matauwhi Road, Russell.

3. EVENT SAFETY MANAGEMENT ORGANISATION

Key Safety Personnel

Responsibility	Contact Person	Contact
Race Officer/s (RO)	Tony Hanlon	027 273 6387
	John Hare	027 436 8717
Safety Officer	Stephen Pepperell	021 185 8306
Committee Vessel	Bruce Mitchinson	021 682 136
Safety RIB 1	Tony Dunlop	021 824 827
Safety RIB 2	Phil Sweetapple	027 900 0385
Safety RIB 2	Steve Allan	021 962 287

4. EVENT COMMUNICATIONS

Regular communications will be maintained via:

- VHF Channel 77 for on the water event communications. The race officer may request a shift to another channel in the event of congestion on channel 77.
- VHF Channel 16 for emergencies.
- Mobile phone – backup to channel 77.
- WhatsApp RBC Skippers Group –for general event information.

If the first point of contact from an incident is from a phone, it is vital that the phone number is recorded for further communication.

The Race Officer will have a complete list of contact details for all vessel skippers and volunteer helpers.

A full list of contact details for maritime and shore based emergency services is listed in [Appendix A](#) of this document.

5. RESPONSIBILITIES

Lines of Responsibility

- The Organising Authority retains overall responsibility.
- The RO may postpone or abandon racing if safety is compromised.
- The Safety Officer coordinates all emergency responses.

- Skippers remain responsible for the decision to participate or continue racing (RRS Fundamental Rule 3).

Skippers

- To read the RBC NoR, SI's, the H&S Management Plan and any amendments.
- Make their own decision whether to race.
- Are responsible for the safety of their boats and must always act in a professional and careful manner.
- Are responsible for the wellbeing of their fellow competitors regardless of whether a safety or committee boat is in the vicinity to assist.
- To comply with their vessel safety requirements as detailed in the NoR, Appendix A for this event.
- Must complete a safety briefing with their crew prior to the event.
- Should complete a MOB drill prior to the first race. The drill must begin while the vessel is under full sail.
- Must keep a list of crew including names, contact details and emergency contact numbers.
- Ensure crew understand that if they need help on the water, they should inform their skipper who will follow the procedures as detailed in this document.

Race Officer (RO)

- Obtain and review weather forecasts.
- Decide whether to start or continue a race. Refer to paragraph 6 for assistance on how to make this decision.
- Communicate any reasons for possible cancellation of a race or the event.
- Oversee the running of the racing.
- Lead the race management team.
- Communicate with the on-water team.
- Monitor the fleet.

Safety Officer

- Coordinate emergency responses.
- Develop and maintain the Safety Plan.
- Liaise with Race Management team regarding any on-water incidents.

- Organise briefings for sailors and volunteers.

6. DECISION TO RACE

Weather forecasts will be obtained from available sources including MetService, PredictWind and Coastguard.

The club will not commence racing if MetService has issued a Gale Warning for the BOI Recreational Marine area for the period when racing is scheduled. A Gale warning assumes sustained wind strengths or frequent gusts will exceed 33 knots.

The club may commence racing under a Strong Wind Advisory as issued by MetService for the BOI Recreational Marine area however the Race Officer must take at least the following factors into account. A Strong Wind Warning assumes sustained wind strengths of over 25 kts or wind gust of 33 kts.

- Forecast average wind speed for the area where racing will take part.
- Forecast strength of gusts
- Forecast wind direction
- Forecast sea state and swell
- Proposed location of the racecourse

Racing Suspension and Abandonment Criteria

- Wind strength exceeds safe limits as detailed above.
- Visibility significantly reduced (fog, heavy rain or low light levels).
- Lightning detected in close proximity to the race course.
- Rescue capacity insufficient for fleet size.
- Multiple simultaneous incidents occur.

IMPORTANT: It is the sole and exclusive responsibility of the skipper of each yacht to decide whether to start or continue the race.

The Race Officer will decide if the Y flag is required, indicating that the wearing of PFD's is mandatory.

Should a race be abandoned, the decision will be communicated to all skippers via VHF channel 77.

7. EMERGENCY RESPONSE PROCEDURES

General Emergency Protocol

1. Incident reported via VHF or cell phone.
2. Rescue vessel dispatched immediately.
3. Race Officer notified.
4. Safety Officer assumes coordination.
5. If required, and if not already done by the Skipper, contact emergency services. VHF channel 16 or dial 111.
Refer to [Appendix A](#) for a full list of Emergency Services contract details.

IF LIFE IS A RISK, USE VHF CHANNEL 16 AND/OR DIAL 111

Mayday call on VHF channel 16, if a vessel or person is in grave and imminent danger and requires immediate assistance.

Mayday Procedure

1. VHF Channel 16
2. MAYDAY MAYDAY MAYDAY
3. This is (vessel name) 3 times
4. Callsign once
5. MAYDAY (vessel name) once
6. State vessel's position
7. State the nature of distress and assistance required
8. Any other information including number of persons on board
9. OVER

Pan Pan Call

Use a Pan Pan call (VHF channel 16) when not in grave or imminent danger or for an urgent safety message concerning safety of the vessel or a person.

If the Race or Safety officer requires more general on-water assistance which is not life threatening, contact Coastguard *500 or Channel 04, or another competitor on VHF 77.

8. INCIDENT REPORTING

Accidents or serious harm injuries must be reported, as soon possible, to Maritime New Zealand. Follow this [link](#) to determine what must be reported and how to report it.

Skippers must also complete the Club's Incident Report form for any incidents, accidents or mishaps occurring on the water during a Club run event. Incident forms are available from the Russell Boating Club website and must be submitted to the Race Officer or member of the racing committee.

An Incident Report Form can also be found in [Appendix C](#) of this document.

Note: It's important the club committee are notified of all incidents and can debrief on the situation in a formal setting (i.e., at a committee meeting) to discuss lessons learnt and modify the risk management register and safety plans.

Any serious incidents will be investigated as soon as practicable by the flag officers and relevant bodies notified if required.

9. BRIEFINGS

Mandatory Safety Briefings include:

- Skipper's Briefing including safety and emergency procedures.
- Race Officials and RIB crews.
- Volunteer Briefing.

10. ALCOHOL & FATIGUE MANAGEMENT

- No alcohol should be consumed on the morning before racing or during racing.
- Volunteers and race officials will be monitored for fatigue during extended race days.

11. PLAN REVIEW

This plan will be:

- Approved by the Russell Boating Club Sailing Committee.
- Reviewed annually.
- Reviewed after any significant incident.

APPENDIX A – EMERGENCY CONTACTS

Maritime Emergency Contacts

NAME	PHONE	VHF
Emergency VHF Channel		Ch 16
BOI Coastguard	021 446 446	Ch 04
Russell Radio	021 841 131	Ch 63
Harbourmaster Opua	0800 504 639	
Maritime NZ	0508 225 522	

Emergency Services Contacts

NAME	PHONE	Comments
Emergency number for Police, Fire and Ambulance	111	
BOI Hospital	09 404 0280	24 hours
Russell Medical Centre	09 403 7690	Monday to Friday
Paihia Medical Services	09 402 8407	Monday to Friday

APPENDIX B – RIB'S SAFETY & EQUIPMENT

- PFD'S must be worn by all crew while on board.
- The motor kill cord must be attached to the driver whenever the RIB is exceeding 5 kts.
- Safety RIB's must be ready and on standby when Etchells are sailing.
- Each RIB to have safety gear as detailed in the below check list.

RIB Safety Check List

Boat Name / Description: _____

Date: _____

Inspected by: _____

Item	Check
Motor and Fuel Tank	
Is the motor properly secured to the boat	
Does the gear lever and throttle operate smoothly without binding	
Motor kill cord operates correctly	
Fuel tank tied down	
Is there sufficient fuel on board	
Is the fuel house connected and in good condition	
The motor starts normally	
Boat Condition and Equipment	
Hull and tube integrity	
Oars or paddles for back-up propulsion	
Bailer secured to the boat	
Anchor, chain and rope appropriately secured	
Throw and towing lines available	
Shackle spanner or similar, Screwdriver and knife	
Tube grab lines secured	
Drain bung tied on and drain free of debris	
Suitable fastening for towing	
Two forms of communication - VHF radio and cell phone	

APPENDIX C – RBC INCIDENT REPORT FORM

Event Name: _____

Date: _____ Time: _____

Location: _____

Name(s) of Person(s) Involved: _____

Boat Name & Sail Number (if applicable): _____

Skipper (if applicable): _____

Description of Incident:

Injury Details (if any):

Emergency Services Contacted? YES / NO

Action Taken:

Reported By: _____

Signature: _____

APPENDIX D – HAZARD IDENTIFICATION

Risks are assessed using a Likelihood x Consequence model

Likelihood	Impact / Consequence				
	1 Negligible	2 Minor	3 Moderate	4 Major	5 Catastrophic
5 Almost certain	5	10	15	20	25
4 Likely	4	8	12	16	20
3 Possible	3	6	9	12	15
2 Unlikely	2	4	6	8	10
1 Rare	1	2	3	4	5

Risk Categories

- Low risk (1-4) – Manage by routine procedures
- Moderate risk (4-9) – Actions are to be taken to eliminate the hazard or minimise the risk.
- High risk (10-12) – Actions are to be taken to eliminate the hazard or minimise the risk. Senior review required, implement strong controls.
- Very High risk (15-16) – Actions are to be taken to eliminate the hazard or minimise the risk. Senior review required, implement strong controls.
- Extreme risk (20-25) – The process or activity in question must not occur or must cease until actions are taken to eliminate the hazard or minimise the risk.

Extreme Risk Policy

If any hazard is assessed as Very High or Extreme risk, the Race Officer, in consultation with the Safety Officer and Organising Authority (Russell Boating Club), will:

- Suspend racing immediately.
- Reassess environmental and operational conditions.

- Only resume racing once risk is reduced to High or below and adequately controlled.

Continuous Risk Monitoring

Risk assessment is dynamic. The following will occur during racing:

- Ongoing weather observations.
- Continuous VHF monitoring.
- Regular communication between RO and Safety RIB's.
- Immediate reassessment following any incident.

Hazard ID Register

Hazard	Likelihood	Consequence	Initial Risk	Control Measures	Residual Risk
Boat to boat collision	3	3	Moderate	Experienced race management, adequate start line length, compliance with Racing Rules	Low
Man overboard	2	5	High	Rescue craft positioned, VHF monitoring, crew briefings, thermal blankets	Moderate
Injury from boom/equipment	3	3	Moderate	Safety briefing, mandatory onboard first aid kits	Low
Lightning	1	5	Moderate	Immediate postponement/abandonment policy	Low
Reduced visibility or fog	2	4	Moderate	Check weather F/C's. Stop racing if visibility is severely reduced.	Low
Hypothermia	2	4	Moderate	Rapid retrieval protocol, thermal blankets.	Low
Strong winds/squalls	3	4	High	Weather monitoring, wind limits set by RO, postponement/abandonment procedures	Moderate
Safety RIB failure	2	4	Moderate	Pre-event vessel checks, backup rescue boat available	Low
Capsize or dismasting	2	4	Moderate	Rescue coverage, wind monitoring, abandonment criteria	Low
Vessel Sinking	2	4	Moderate	Vessels have minimum buoyance even when swamped. PFD's available for all crew. Safety RIB's nearby	Low
Entrapment under inverted vessel	1	5	Moderate	Training of vessel and Safety RIB crew to recognise and respond to possible entrapment situations. Vessels/Safety RIB's to carry safety knives	Low

Fire or explosion on board	1	4	Low	Minimise ignition sources on board. VHF and cell phones for assistance call. PFD's to assist with crew floatation until safety RIB arrives.	Low
Boat running aground	3	3	Moderate	Set courses well clear of shoreline. Safety RIB's with tow lines close by to assist.	Low