



**WELLINGTON**  
DRAGON BOAT FESTIVAL

**WELLINGTON DRAGON BOAT FESTIVAL**  
**WHAIREPO LAGOON**  
**39 JERVOIS QUAY**  
**WELLINGTON WATERFRONT**

[WWW.DRAGONBOATFESTIVAL.ORG.NZ](http://WWW.DRAGONBOATFESTIVAL.ORG.NZ)

# OPERATING PROCEDURES

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## SECTION 1 – ABOUT WELLINGTON DRAGON BOAT FESTIVAL

The Wellington Dragon Boat Festival operates annually for an eight week season starting in January and running to the Festival in the first or second weekend of March. Wellington Dragon Boat Festival hosts weekday afternoon/evening training sessions for dragon boat teams, a fun regatta in February, and its main regatta in March.

Every dragon boat has seats for 20 paddlers, 1 sweep (who stands on the back and steers the boat), and 1 drummer (a person who sits on the front as a caller). Sweeps are trained and certified by the Central Dragon Boat Association. They are always in charge of and responsible for their dragon boat, and have the final say on where their boat goes during training. When training, Sweeps always have a VHF radio on them so they can communicate with each other and the Rescue Crew.

We are the biggest dragon boat festival in New Zealand with a training programme to suit all dragon boat teams – whether they are from a club, corporate, or school.

Whenever a dragon boat is out on the water during Wellington Dragon Boat Festival activities, so is a rescue craft. These Operating Procedures detail how we do things.

## SECTION 2 – TRAINING ZONES

Official Training Zones are as detailed in this graphic, prepared in conjunction with the Central Region Dragon Boat Association (“CRDBA”).

### Wellington Dragon Boat Festival & CRBDA Training Areas

| Wind  | Training Area   |
|---|---|
| N>14Kn or S>19Kn<br>(25km/hr N or 35 S)     | No Harbour Training   |
| N 11-14Kn<br>(20-25km/hr)                   | Area 1: Ferg's – Bridge   |
| N<11Kn<br>(<20km/hr)                        | Area 2: Queens Wharf – Chaffers, or Area 3: South of the container terminal, staying inside the markers for the shipping channel. |
| S 11-19Kn<br>(20-35km/hr)                   | Areas 1 and 2: Ferg's – Chaffers  |
| S<11Kn or N<6Kn<br>(20km/hr S or 10km/hr N) | Areas 1, 2 and 4<br>Queen's Wharf – Oriental Bay – Chaffers   |

**Rules**

- Wind conditions are maximums
- Always confirm with safety crew that training areas are safe before heading out
- Safety Crew Management may restrict areas at anytime
- If training in Area 3 is permitted, boats must wait for a rescue boat to escort them across the shipping channel, before travelling to or from Area 3.
- Always report how many crew you have on board before leaving the lagoon.
- Stay safe and have fun!

It is the Festival Manager or Festival Director's call on each training day which zones will be used.

This decision will be made on weather forecasts, a site visit prior to training to assess physical conditions on the harbour, and discussion with senior Sweeps and Coaches based on their extensive experience.

No team has to train in the harbour if they do not want to. The lagoon is always available to paddle in. Teams are not pressured to paddle out into the harbour, this is the call of the Sweep.

Note that the location for measuring wind conditions is onsite. There is a hand held anemometer onsite to do this with. Often the wind will be more intense out on the water than at the dragon boat shed, and this is where Rescue Crew and experienced Sweeps must use common sense to make a judgement call on training in high wind conditions. As wind conditions in Wellington are extremely changeable and often vary based on location and proximity to shelter on the waterfront, it is almost impossible to have set limits of wind speed, and instead we rely on real time assessment of the on-water conditions to ensure training can safely occur.

Note that the CRDBA use more conservative wind speeds to cancel trainings vs the Wellington Dragon Boat Festival, as they do not have the Rescue Crew capability of our event.

However, we will not operate when there are sustained wind speeds (not gusts) of over 50km/hr on the racecourse. Note we are exposed to the prevailing northerly and/or nor-wester more than the southerly.

### Training Zone 3

Training Zone 4 is only to be used in a Southerly, or very light Northerly (-10km/h). The proximity of training zone 4 to Mount Victoria means it is a safe and calm place to paddle during a Southerly, as the wind will not reach this part of the course.

### Procedure for using Training Zone 3

- Crews request permission from the Rescue Supervisor to train in these zones at the start of their training session.
- The rescue crew are aware of the ferry schedules and copies are pinned up in the Festival Office. They are also constantly listening to radio channel 14..
- Dragon boats must wait in the lagoon until a rescue craft is ready to accompany them to the zone and must return to lagoon when instructed to do so by the rescue crew.
- Sweeps are to keep in radio contact at all times and follow rescue boat instructions. The Rescue Crew will have one radio on channel 77 talking to the Sweeps and another on channel 14 which the ferries use.
- The rescue boat will collect all the training crews 15 mins before the end of the training session. If crews want to return earlier they must radio the rescue crew via channel 77.
- In case of a swamping or capsize, call the rescue boats. One craft will stay with the dragon boat and paddlers while the other ferries paddlers to safe land. Paddlers who are happy to stay with the boat can and so should the Sweep. Once all paddlers who need to be ferried to safe land have been, the rescue craft will tow the swamped boat (with a sweep on board to steer) back to the lagoon.
- If more than 1 boat was training in the area, they must return accompanied by the rescue craft who will be towing the swamped boat (with a sweep on board) to a safe area.
- Radio channel 16 can be used if anyone needs urgent medical assistance.

## SECTION 3 – RACE DAYS

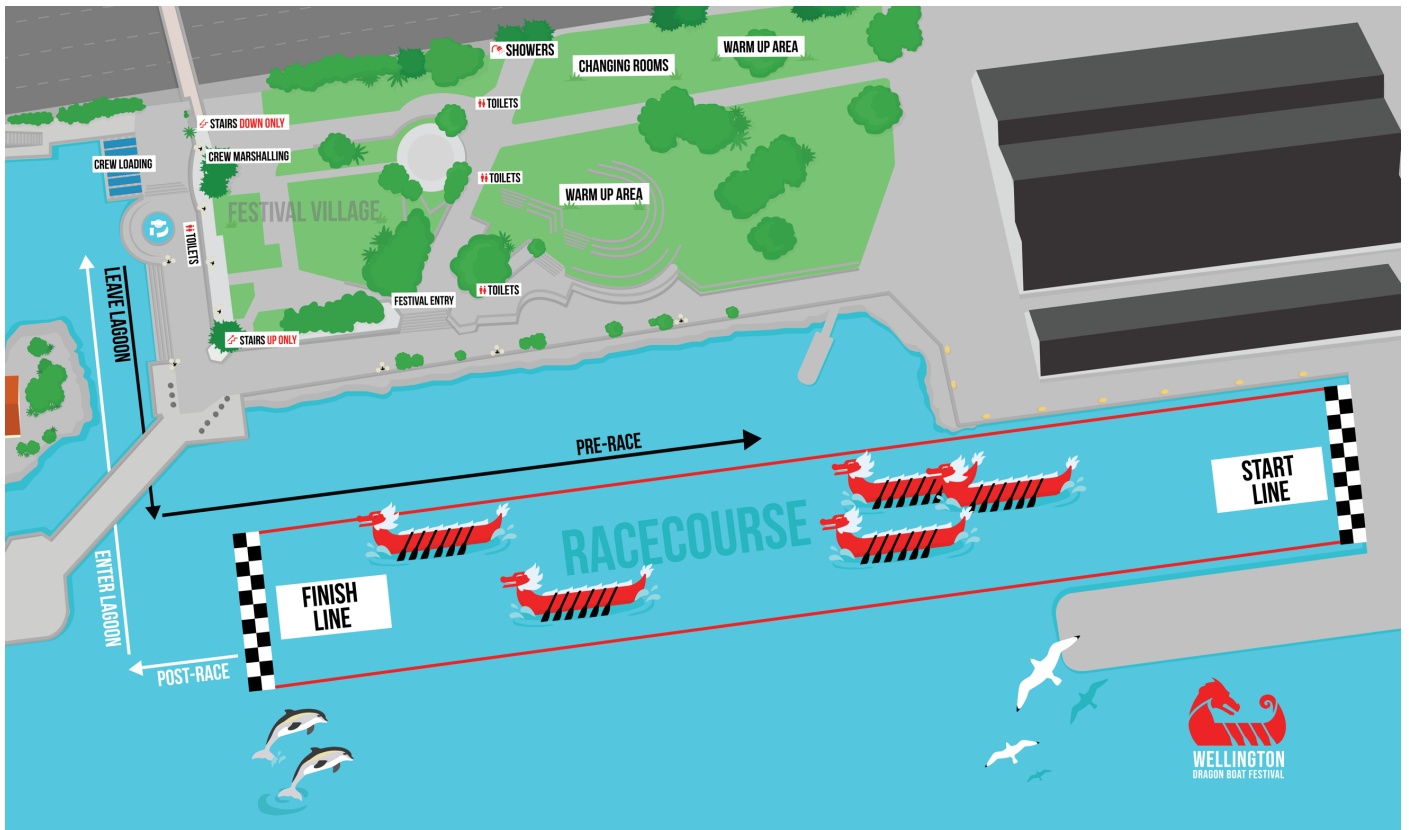
Our race course is from inside the inner T at Queen's Wharf down towards Te Papa. It is inside Training Zone 1.

On race days teams load into dragon boats as usual at the ramp. 5 dragon boats are racing while another 5 are getting ready in the lagoon for their race.

The crew loading team direct teams on when they can and cannot go onto the race course. Sweeps are briefed on the day about the procedure and whether crews are allowed to paddle to the start line (away from the race course) depends on the conditions of the day. If permitted to go out while another team is racing, sweeps must take a tight left turn out of the lagoon and the team must paddle up the land-side of the race course. No team is ever allowed to paddle on the race course while a race is ongoing.

When teams have finished their race, they must keep left when coming back into the lagoon. Sweeps are briefed at the start of the day on directions for coming back in.

The rule is always to keep left.



## SECTION 4 – RESCUE CREW OPERATION OVERVIEW

The rescue boats represent major investment and an essential safety component of the Wellington Dragon Boat Festival. This Operating Procedure contains detailed information on how the Rescue Boats are to be operated and maintained and the duties of the Wellington Dragon Boat Festival Director, Wellington Dragon Boat Festival Manager, and Wellington Dragon Boat Festival Rescue Crew.

The Wellington Dragon Boat Festival has the following rescue craft:

| Rescue Craft   | Known as  | Where kept            | Type, Motor & Specs   | Use & Restrictions  |
|--|-----------|-----------------------|---|---|
| Main rescue craft – Red and black boat<br><br><i>MNZ# 143548</i>     | Red boat  | Wellington Waterfront | OceanPro 5.3 metre<br><br>Outboard. Mercury 4 stroke, 115HP | Water training & race days. Main craft.<br><br>Minimum 2 crew on board.<br><br>Max in case of a dragon boat rescue is 8 pax.                          |
| Secondary rescue craft – Black and red ski<br><br><i>MNZ# 143407</i> | Jet ski 1 | Wellington Waterfront | Seadoo RXT-X 300rs  | Water training & race days. Secondary craft.<br><br>Minimum 1 crew on board<br><br>Max with rescue sled attached – 3 on ski and 2 on rescue sled      |
| Back up rescue craft – Black ski<br><br><i>MNZ# 143408</i>           | Jet ski 2 | Wellington Waterfront | Seadoo GTI  | Water training & race days. Only a back up craft,<br><br>Minimum 1 crew on board<br><br>Max with rescue sled attached – 2 on ski and 2 on rescue sled |

## RULES & RESPONSIBILITY

As a driver of a rescue craft, it is your responsibility to act sensibly, and follow the instructions given to you by the Festival Manager and the Festival Director. Rescue craft operating in the inner harbour are also answerable to the Harbour Master, Maritime Police, and Coastguard.

- Rescue craft are to be used only for dragon boat safety and are not to be used in any other capacity or at any other time other than training or race times. Outside of training and race times these are recreational craft and can be used as such with permission from the Wellington Dragon Boat Festival.
- Rescue craft 200m from the shore must not exceed the 5 knot speed limit except in an emergency.
- While Wellington Dragon Boat Festival is responsible for dragon boats on the water, a rescue craft must be on the water until the last dragon boat has come into the lagoon.
- 1 rescue craft may take care of up to 5 dragon boats and once a 6<sup>th</sup> dragon boat has left the lagoon, there should be 2 rescue craft out.
- All rescue crews must be approved by the Festival Director and Festival Manager, and be familiar with the Operating Procedures within this document.
- Persons under 15 are not to drive the rescue crafts
- Persons under the influence of alcohol or drugs must not drive the rescue crafts or be working as a rescue crew member.
- Life jackets must be worn by all persons on the rescue craft, whether a driver or a crew member. There are no exceptions to this rule at any time.
- While the Red Boat is in use as a rescue craft there must be at least two persons on the boat for safety reasons. The second person is required to assist and act as a lookout.
- The only exception to the two person rule is the delivery of the boats to or from the berth.
- At all times, the radio should be on and set to channel 08, and another radio must be onboard at all times set to channel 16 while also listening to Beacon Hill on channel 14.
- Equipment on board the boats must be left in good order. Nothing to be removed.

## SECTION 5 – RESCUES, EMERGENCIES & HAZARDS

### Scope

This safety procedure and protocols are for ensuring the safety of dragon boat crews, and recovery of dragon boats in the event of a mishap/incident. Non-compliance with this safety protocol can result in crews being barred from future training sessions or Sweeps losing their accreditation.

### General

Boat crews must comply with all relevant Maritime Rules as published on <http://www.maritimenz.govt.nz/> as well as any Wellington Harbourmaster requirements and local by-laws that may be in force from time to time.

All crew must wear a life jacket when on the water anywhere in the harbour area, including the lagoon. PFD's and their use must follow [NZDBA PFD Policy](#).

Sweeps must be NZDBA accredited - or be supervised by an accredited sweep - and follow *NZDBA Sweep Accreditation Scheme (SAS) and Sweep Guidelines* and carry a whistle to signal for help if needed.

Only trained Wellington Dragon Boat Rescue Crew can operate the rescue boats.

### Key Risks

Capsize or swamping due to sea conditions, wakes from other boats, and collisions with other craft. See *Hazard Register* as part of Wellington Dragon Boat Festival - Health & Safety Plan for more detail of risks and their management.

### Radios

We use VHF Marine Radios and every sweep must have one when they go out. Please see image below showing the proper use "Do's and Don'ts" while operating a Marine Radio.

## Crew Responsibilities

While the driver of the rescue boat must take care to watch the water in the direction of travel, it is the second crew member's responsibility for the wider picture. Both need to be vigilant at all times for any dragon boats in trouble and assist where needed.

## Following distances

Do not follow any boats directly astern of them. If a dragon boat capsizes you risk the possibility of running onto it and the paddlers. The momentum of a boat is such that it will not stop like a car does when you use the brakes! It is best to stay well away from a dragon boat not in trouble unless you are directly involved with assistance or coaching.

## Capsize/Swamping of Dragon Boat

A dragon boat swamps when it has taken on too much water from either waves or a heavy crew. An uneven weight distribution of paddlers is another cause, along with an inexperienced sweep. Look out for any of these possibilities prior to teams entering the harbour and send teams back into the lagoon if one or more of these conditions exists.

In the event of a capsize the following procedures should be followed;

- Immediately radio Beacon Hill on Channel 14 to let them know what has occurred, if it is not an emergency requiring assistance outside of the Rescue Crew. Stay in touch with Beacon Hill ensuring they know after the event that the dragon boat is under control, out of the water, and all PoBs are accounted for.
- If the situation requires the assistance of emergency services make your radio call on VHF Channel 16.
- The Rescue Craft will use the space near the front five seats to manoeuvre in close and tie up to the dragon boat without hitting any paddlers, deploying a trained Rescue Crew swimmer into the water if necessary to make the rope connection between the Dragon Boat front eyelet and the Rescue Boat tie line.
- Rescue Crew to communicate clearly to the sweep, paddlers need to keep quiet at this time.
- The Rescue Crew will identify the sweep and ask for a status report: Number in the boat, any missing, distressed, injured people. Paddlers in distress are taken out first and can either come aboard the Red Boat (use ladders), be put onto back of Jet Ski 1, or hold onto Rescue Sled on the back of the Jet Ski 1.
- Once everyone has been counted as safe in the water the Red Boat will tow the dragon boat in. The sweep will sit in the dragon boat and help steer with the sweep oar or a paddle.
- Dragon boaters (who have not come out of the water onto a rescue craft) will stay with the dragon boat at all times, either in the water holding on to the gunnels/side of the dragon boat, or sitting in the dragon boat if it is submerged enough to let this occur.

Dragon boaters are encouraged to use the bailers to bail as much water out of the dragon boat as possible. Additional bailers are available in the Rescue Crafts.

- After the paddling crew is on land, it is their responsibility to bail out the water from the boat immediately after it is brought into shore.
- In the event of the boat being towed back with some/all of the Crew holding onto the gunnels, ensure Crew does not push down (creates a huge drag and can prevent the rescue boat from moving the dragon boat). The rescue boat will take the boat into the lagoon, or lagoon entrance.
- In extreme conditions paddlers will be taken to the nearest sheltered land, with Dragon Boats returned to the lagoon as soon as practicable.
- On race days rescued paddlers need to be taken to the pontoon on the finish line to be counted off. This is also an easy access point for event First Aid professionals to attend a medical emergency on race days, as they will have an ambulance parked at the Jervois Quay bus stop/carparks nearby.

## Missing Paddler(s)

- If during the count of paddlers, the Persons On Board (PoB) does not match that listed with the Shore Crew on the Dragon Boat Shed whiteboard we may have a missing paddler situation. This becomes an immediate priority.
- The Rescue Crew will take over the search, with Shore Crew keeping watch with the binoculars from the Watch Tower position.
- If the paddler is not immediately found the Shore Crew makes a distress call on VHF Channel 16. When MAYDAY is not warranted but urgency is required for the safety of the vessel or person, the urgency signal PAN PAN should be used. Distress and urgency calls and messages must be cancelled if assistance is no longer required or when the incident is over.
- The New Zealand Police are responsible for coordinating Category I incidents, which include many maritime search and rescue missions close to shore. We are likely to only ever have a Category I incident while Dragon Boating in the harbour. This will be attended by the Coastguard and/or Maritime Police.

- All Rescue Crew boats, support boats, and all other dragon boats out on the training area must immediately prioritise the search for a missing paddler(s). This will be coordinated by the Shore Crew with the Rescue Crew boat(s) on the water heading the search. If the dragon boat has tipped upside down the likely location of the paddler will be under the boat, where they could be stuck or trapped. If this occurs the Rescue Crew will deploy a swimmer into the water immediately to check under the boat.

#### Back onshore

Crew reassembles at our boatshed for a head-count (remember to include the members guiding boat into the lagoon). Sweep advises the Rescue Crew that all are present (or of any missing / injured).

- If time and conditions permit the Crew may reload the dragon boat and finish their training session.
- Team Manager and Sweep to debrief Rescue Crew, complete the capsized report and return it to the Festival Office.

#### Paddles

Have paddlers let go of their paddles prior to coming onto the rescue boats. They can be secured by hooking under the seats of the submerged dragon boat or clumping them together in a pile, to slow their drift. The oar should be kept in the rowlock if possible or hooked under a seat.

At no time should paddlers demand that the Rescue Crew take their paddles, or throw paddles into the Rescue Craft when it arrives. The Rescue Crew should attempt to retrieve paddles once your Crew is safe. The Rescue Crew and Festival Management are not responsible for any paddles that go astray.

#### When the rescue boats need rescuing

In the event of a rescue boat breakdown, collision or other emergency much similar steps are taken as in assisting the dragon boats and paddlers:

- Rescue boats are to be on lookout for all other water users including the other Rescue Boat
- In the first instance driver to use VHF to inform Shore Crew of need of assistance.
- Shore Crew to assess if second rescue boat can assist, or other craft (Jetski or inflatable) or emergency services to be called
- When calling emergency services dial 111 from a cell phone, ask for Police and let them know the situation.
- In the event of an unresponsive person call 111 and ask for an Ambulance. First Aider to apply CPR until ambulance arrives.

On water Rescue Supervisor or crew will make VHF contact with the shore based rescue crew stationed at the lagoon. Failing VHF a cell phone can be used. Shore based rescue crew can make easy visual on what the situation is as rescue boats and dragon boats should be in site.

On shore rescue crew can call emergency services using a cell phone to help assist in an emergency.

Nearest defibrillator is at the Lagoon on the harbour side of the pedal boat shed. This may be collected and used by the rescue crew prior to emergency services arriving.

#### Emergency examples and how to deal with them:

##### Person Overboard

In particular a sweep may fall off. They are to be picked up by a rescue craft and assessed for injury. Then put back on the dragon boat or taken to shore.

In the event of a rescue crew falling off the rescue boat, they too can be picked up by the boat they just fell off or the other rescue boat. Assessed for injury and if necessary returned to shore particularly if they are cold.

##### Assisting other vessels in distress

As part of the inner harbour we are responsible for the wellbeing of dragon boats and keeping a look out for rowers, yachts, kayaks, swimmers and any other man powered aquatic sport. At all times assist another person in distress. See SOP Section 4 – On the water.

##### Firefighting

Use the fire extinguisher on the back of the centre console chair. If unable to put out fire abandon ship and swim to safety. Do not try to retrieve anything on the boat or stay any longer than necessary. Move as far away from the boat as possible. Move crowds and other boats where necessary. Have shore based rescue crew call for emergency services.

##### Capsized of Rescue Boat



A capsizing in the small rescue boats will likely happen very fast. Crew are to jump free of boat then make their way back to boat to hold onto or better still climb on the upturned hull. Await rescue from other rescue boat or coast guard.

#### **Abandon ship on Rescue Boat**

Make VHF contact with shore crew to advise you are abandoning ship and why. Jump free of boat and swim to shore or await pick up from other rescue boat.

#### **Medical Emergency for Rescue Crew**

Make VHF contact with shore crew to advise medical situation. Shore crew to call emergency services 111. Rescue boat to come into lagoon immediately to take hurt person off the boat to apply first aid and await emergency services.

#### **On conclusion of an accident or incident**

The Director must be contacted on the night of any incidents concerning the rescue boats. Call Joshua Mossman on 027 522 0556.

Directors or supervisor must contact Maritime NZ initially on 0508 222 433 to report incident then report online at [www.maritimenz.govt.nz/report-online](http://www.maritimenz.govt.nz/report-online).

#### **Accidents and incidents that require reporting to Maritime NZ**

A person is seriously harmed as a result of:

- Being on the rescue boat
- Direct contact with the boat or interaction between two boats
- The wake of the boat
- Being involved in the rescue of the boat or a dragon boat

The rescue boat sustains damage or structural failure that:

- Affects the seaworthiness of the boat
- Would require a major repair or replacement of the affected component or poses a threat to the safety of the crew on the rescue boat or dragon boat
- Complete or partial failure of machinery or equipment

Loss of potential harmful substance from the boat

- That may result or has resulted, in serious harm to any person
- Or may pose a risk to other boats or property in the area

A person is lost at sea, whether or not subsequently found or is missing or the rescue boat is foundering, capsizing, being abandoned, stranding, missing, been in a collision, or has had a major fire on board.

Any accident, incident or mishap that has:

- Caused serious harm to a person
- Or in different circumstances, might have caused serious harm to a person
- Serious harm includes death and any condition that results in loss of bodily function or temporary severe loss of bodily function.

#### **Hazard Management**

Looking out for hazards is an intrinsic part of the rescue management. A list of obvious hazards are listed in the Hazard Management Report. But at the same time Rescue Crew and all crew, sweeps, coaches and paddlers should be looking out for new or unforeseen hazards and noting how to deal with them.

Rescue Crew should be communicating to the Supervisor who in turns discusses with directors any hazard potential. A solution is to be worked through and documented in the Hazard Management report. Following a solution the rescue crew are updated in the next briefing prior to training or racing.

Note Hazard Register as part of Wellington Dragon Boat Festival - Health & Safety Plan.

Note policies as part of Wellington Dragon Boat Festival - Health & Safety Policy.



### Officer in Charge

The Sweeps are responsible for the safety of their crew and must follow the Rescue Crew's safety instructions. The Festival Manager and/or Director may cancel or restrict scheduled training sessions at any time if conditions are deemed not suitable, crews have not followed this safety protocol, or for any other reason.

The Rescue Crew and Shore Crew will listen to channel 14 and inform crews about relevant harbour operations such as divers operating, swimmers etc. and may restrict the training area to minimise risks.

### Acceptable conditions for training

Weather conditions and harbour activities (e.g. rowers, ferries, sailing races) will be the main consideration for deciding whether training takes place and what training area to use. The table above showing training zones lists wind conditions for each training area based on the reading at the Dragon Boat shed. A call will be made on the day based on conditions viewed onsite, rather than weather reports only.

The Rescue Crew may determine that conditions are not suitable for training if the crew determines that conditions are such that they are not confident a rescue and boat recovery can be carried out safely.

For wind forecasts and real-time conditions use the various online options available.

### Rescue procedure

| Location                              | Rescue procedure  |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Regular training area (areas 1 and 2) | <p>Paddlers hold on to the dragon boat. Rescue boat tows the boat into the lagoon. The sweep steers the boat while the rescue boat tows the dragon boat with paddlers hanging on. If instructed, paddlers may exit the water at wharf ladders on the pontoon near the bridge.</p> <p>If towed to the lagoon, paddlers pull the boat gradually onto the ramp to drain and then bail.</p>   |
| Elsewhere in the harbour              | <p>If convenient, beach the boat, bail and paddle or tow back to the lagoon. If not, one rescue craft will stay with the dragon boat and paddlers while the other ferries paddlers to safe land. Paddlers who are happy to stay with the boat can and so should the Sweep. Once all paddlers who need to be ferried to safe land have been, the rescue craft will tow the swamped boat (with a sweep on board to steer) back to the lagoon.. Attach the tow line and make sure the boat stays clear of danger and is removed from the harbour once the crew is safe.</p> <p>Radio channel 16 can be used if anyone needs urgent medical assistance.</p> |

If conditions are calm, other boats training should remain near the capsized boat. If there is strong wind or significant swell, the other boats go immediately to the lagoon or wait in the nearest sheltered area until the support boat is free.

It is recommended that sweeps practice steering the dragon boat while being towed so that paddlers understand the process and the rescue procedure can be executed quickly and safely.

Do's & Don'ts for using VHF marine radios:

### Operating your marine radio

- ✓ **DO** use VHF channel 16 or the SSB frequency appropriate for your location for distress, safety and calling. On cellphones, call 111 if there is an emergency and you are close to shore.
- ✓ **DO** replace your handset correctly when not in use (open microphones are the main cause of serious interference on VHF channels).
- ✓ **DO** listen before transmitting, to avoid causing interference to others.
- ✓ **DO** use your vessel's name and radio callsign.
- ✓ **DO** use accepted operating procedures and correct procedural words (known as 'prowords'). Remember that the other station may not use English as its first language.
- ✓ **DO** be brief, because marine radio is for shipping business only. If you want to chat, use Citizen Band radio or a cellphone.
- ✓ **DO** speak clearly and courteously.
- ✓ **DO** wait for a reply to calls before transmitting again, or before changing channels or frequencies.
- ✗ **DON'T** make long transmissions. Remember that you are blocking the frequency or channel for other users.
- ✗ **DON'T** transmit false or misleading messages. The transmission of a false distress message is an offence under the Maritime Transport Act.
- ✗ **DON'T** operate your marine radio in a way that endangers or interferes with other people or vessels.

✓ **ALWAYS** keep a listening watch on VHF channel 16.  
The next life saved could be yours.



## SECTION 6 – RESCUE BOATS PREPARATION & CHECKLIST

### Fuel

All craft use 91 – octane fuel. There is no need for mixing oil as the engines are self-mixing. Boats are to be refuelled by the Rescue Supervisor using the BP card provided by the office.

- Check fuel tanks are full
- Check fuel line is attached to one of the tanks
- Prime motor by squeezing bulb in fuel line until resistance is felt
- Open the air bleeder valve on the fuel tank; failure to do this will cause fuel starvation and the engine cutting out
- Check oil compartment. The engine will beep when oil is low and will stop altogether and not start again to oil is replaced

### Batteries

- Turn the power on before use
- Once the battery is turned on check that there is power by either turning the radio on or using the engine tilt switch
- Remember to always turn the battery off after use

### Radios

- All boats are equipped with fixed mounted radios or hand held radios
- The fixed mounted radio on the Red Boat must be set to channel 14. Rescue crew should also have a hand held radio on channel 77 to talk to the Sweeps and Shore Crew. You can switch to channel 16 when in need of urgent medical assistance.
- Check in with Shore Crew.
- The following radio procedures must be used:
  - Listen before you talk to ensure the channel is clear
  - The station being called should be mentioned first followed by the station calling
  - Example; Shore Crew, Shore Crew, this is Red Boat
  - If you are being called respond along the lines of “Red Boat receiving”
  - Once you have finished indicate the fact with “Red Boat out”



## Safety Kits

Rescue boats contain a safety kit containing a knife and a basic First Aid Kit. These are stored in the middle console of each boat. A fire extinguisher is also in there. Crew must:

- Check the emergency kit prior to use of the boat
- Use only in an emergency, and advise the Festival Manager if used so replacement can be arranged

## Painter and Towropes

Each boat has a painter (tow rope attached to bow) and a towrope (attached to stern) for towing other craft and dragon boats. Check these ropes every time before use.

## Lifejackets

Ensure every person on the boat has a lifejacket. Do not go on the water without one.

Lifejackets are normally stored in the centre console of the rescue boats. If need be, a lifejacket from the dragon boat shed can be used.

## Personal Preparation

Rescue crew must be prepared to get wet and cold.

- Adequate clothing and waterproof covering should be worn
- Gloves are an advantage when handling ropes and in the dragon boat shed
- A hat, sunscreen and sunglasses are recommended
- Water and snack food are all recommended, but please remember to remove any coffee cups, bottles or rubbish at the end of the day

## Rescue boat daily equipment check list:

- Life jackets for each crew member
- Bungs and spares
- Anchor chain and rope warp
- Tow rope
- Bailers x 3
- Tools and shackle key of float
- Flares (2 handheld)
- Fire extinguisher
- First aid kit
- Life ring
- VHF radio (fixed or handheld)
- Fuel
- Food and drink
- One crew with wetsuit or similar prepared to get in water for rescue

## Launching the rescue boats

The nearest boat ramp is Evans Bay boat club. Rescue boats are to be launched and retrieved from here at the beginning and end of the dragon boat season. There may be times during the season when the boats will need to be taken out of the water for cleaning and maintenance using the lagoon ramp at high tide.

- Before reversing the boat and trailer down the ramp, ensure that there are no people or boats below the boat. This is a basic safety rule.
- One person reverses the vehicle while the other guides the driver down the ramp
- Lower the trailer to the point where the boat can be rolled off
- Before releasing the boat from the trailer winch, lower the engine into the water and start it to ensure it will start

## Starting Engine

Each boat has a key on the console, which acts as a starter switch and a choke.

- Lower the motor into the water using the tilt switch on the throttle lever just enough so that the prop and water intakes are below the surface
- Ensure the fuel tank is connected and the pump valve full and firm
- Lift the idle lever up and then while pushing the key in (choke) turn in and the engine should start
- If the engine does not turn over, check that the throttle lever is in the middle 'neutral' position



- If the engine refuses to start, do not hold the key in, as this will flood the engine, just turn it. You should only need to choke the engine if it is cold
- Once the engine has started check that water is streaming out of the telltale to ensure it is being cooled, then leave it idling for a minute or so before lowering the idle lever down once it has warmed up
- Once the engine is running, unhook the boat from the trailer and roll it off. Back the boat out to a depth where you can put the engine completely down.

Important: If at any time the engine makes a beeping or whistling noise, there is a serious problem and it should be shut off immediately. The siren sounds if the engine is overheating or does not have enough oil, either way, get a tow home, do not use the engine as it will probably cease and cost a lot to fix.

#### Retrieving the rescue boat

Power the boat from berth to Evans Bay ramp staying within specific speed limits at all times. This is 12 knots out in Lambton Harbour and 5 knots when 200m (or closer) to the shore line.

- Back the trailer into the water to the point that the boat can be rolled back on to it
- Tilt the motor up to the point that the prop and water intakes are still under the water and water is still streaming out of the telltale
- Slowly drive the boat up onto the trailer. This can be difficult in strong winds or wavy conditions. If this is the case, manhandle the boat onto the trailer using the winch wire on the trailer
- Once the boat is secure, make sure the motor is fully tilted up then drive the trailer back up the ramp

#### Clean Down

Before putting boat into storage

- Flush the motor with fresh water.
- Place the earmuffs over the water intakes at the bottom of the engine, and with water flowing, the engine is started and run for a couple of minutes to flush the salt from its cooling system
- Please lower the engine to do this, and then raise it again afterwards. Ensure that water comes out of the engine-cooling outlet when the engine is running
- Completely wash down the hull, trailer and the interior ensuring water is drained by opening the venture and or removing bungs. Don't forget to replace bungs.

Once the boat is finished with

- Tilt the motor up to drive and delivery boat. Then put motor down for storage
- TURN OFF THE BATTERY. Vertical for off. Horizontal for on. Red switch.

## SECTION 7 – ON THE WATER

#### Keeping Watch

During water training sessions there must be one rescue craft for up to 5 dragon boats, and two rescue craft for up to 10 dragon boats. There is to be a maximum of 10 dragon boats on the harbour at any one time. For clarity, if 6 or more dragon boats are on the water then there must be two rescue boats.

The first rescue craft to be deployed is the Red Boat. This should be on the water at all times that there are dragon boats out. The Red Boat can itself supervise 5 dragon boats. Once there is 6 or more dragon boats out, Jet Ski 1 should be out as well. Jet Ski 2 is only to be used when the Red Boat and/or Jet Ski 1 are out of action.

If rescue craft are being supported by other craft these ratios can be altered at the discretion of the Festival Manager and/or Festival Director based on weather conditions and the experience of the sweeps and crews paddling.

- Rescue crew and rescue boats meet at the lagoon 15 minutes prior to start of training time
- The Rescue Supervisor will assess weather conditions and deem it safe or not to have dragon boat training on the harbour.
- New or unforeseen hazard identification to be discussed with entire crew
- A briefing to sweeps about conditions is to be held prior to training
- The first rescue boat must make its way out to the harbour prior to the first dragon boat going out.
- As each dragon boat passes the land based rescue person the sweep or coach advise how many is on board and which team they are. This is then written on the Whiteboard by Shore Crew, and communicated to the Rescue Boat already waiting in the harbour by VHF.



- For example: “Red Boat, Red Boat, this is Shore Crew. Team Cruisers with 22 on board entering harbour” “Received over, Red Boat”
- When on watch move around the training area maintaining a constant watch and check on any all paddlers and dragon boats.
- Ensure dragon boats do not go outside the designated training area. See map in next section.
- Rescue crafts cause a large wake when driven at high speed – this must be avoided at all costs as it becomes dangerous for dragon boats and also other users in the area such as rowers, kayakers and stand up paddle boarders. The maximum speed 200m out from the shore is 5 knots. Further out in Lambton Harbour, the maximum speeds is 12 knots.
- The inner harbour is a high use area for yachts, rowers, kayakers, SUP’s and swimmers. Please respect all other users and maintain a friendly co-operative manner at all times.
- Keeping watch means just that. Stow your cell phones and personal devices away and do not be tempted to use them in times of boredom
- Ten minutes prior to the end of the training hour the Red Boat must sound it’s hooter to indicate this. Dragon boats must be back in the lagoon on the hour.
- A rescue boat will be the last into the lagoon and rescue crew are to assist teams with putting dragon boats away and locking sheds.
- Hazard identification and accident and incident reports to be completed where necessary.

### Trim

When driving the boat, the tilt of the engine affects the way the boat planes in the water. If you have the engine tilter too far up, the nose of the boat will be too high in the air and the boat will bounce a lot. If the engine is too low, then the bow will not ride over the waves as well. Depending on the conditions, you will need to alter the engine tilt to get the best performance from the boat as far as speed and handling are concerned.

### Gear Change

The throttle lever acts as a gear change lever as well. In the middle is neutral, where the engine is running but the gearbox is disengaged and the prop is not spinning. Pushing the lever forward from neutral puts the gearbox into the forward position, and the further forward you push it, the faster the boat will go. If you pull the lever back from the neutral the engine goes into reverse, and likewise, the further back you pull it, the faster you go backward.

You will need to pull the grip under the lever to shift out of neutral. This is to stop it being accidentally shifted into gear if you knock it while doing something else.

Be assertive when changing from neutral into forward and backward. Do not do this slowly or you will hear the gearbox ‘graunch’ just like a car.

This is not good for it.

### Acceleration/Deceleration

When accelerating from still, do so gently. Pushing the lever forward fast will cause the boat to lurch, and you can easily lose control of the boat, especially if the steering is not straight. Gently throttle up, and do not go faster than you need to.

When approaching an object throttle down well before the object as the boat does not have brakes! Let the boat sink back into the water, then idle up to the object.

Sometimes if it is rough or the wind is strong, you need to approach something a bit faster than normal to stay in control. Once you are near the object, use reverse to slow down.

### Cornering

Please do not turn the boat through high speed corners. This is dangerous for a few reasons, the least of which is not the fact that you or your crew may fall overboard and get run over. The steering of the boat can lock in this situation making it hard to recover.

### Approaching an Object

Generally you will approach something downwind and point the nose of the boat into the wind as you come up to the object. If you approach from upwind, you are likely to be blown onto the object, or a wave will push you onto the object.

If you are assisting a dragon boat in trouble, try to get the sweep to point the dragon boat into the wind, then approach from downwind (astern) of the dragon boat. Come alongside the dragon boat on the windward side of the dragon boat. You can see if a paddler is distressed and needs to transfer to your rescue boat. Get your rescue crew to hold the bow of the boat you are assisting, and keep your boat idling up into the wind to prevent the wind or waves from turning you or the dragon boat sideways. Once finished push off dragon boat being careful not to tip it and take distressed paddler to shore.

### Waves

On a nice day with small waves the boats handle very well, and you do not really have to consider too much how you ride over the waves. As the waves get bigger though there are ways of making your journey a little more comfortable for both you and your crew. If you are heading straight into



the waves, the boat will bang across them quite hard at times, and the only way to avoid this is to go slowly. The alternative is to act like a yacht and tack up to the point you want to go to, riding across the waves at a slight angle. All waves are not the same and you soon learn to pick which waves to avoid! This is mainly instructions for when taking boat to and from Evans Bay ramp as all other times you will be travelling 5 knots or less. Coming downwind can prove just as hard in big waves. It's easy to outrun a wave and run into the back of the wave in front and get swamped from behind. Once again, choosing the correct speed and angle to the waves will make things easier.

### Shallow Water

When approaching the ramp or in shallow water (lagoon), tilt the motor up, ensuring that that water intakes are still covered and that water is still coming out of the telltale. Be very careful not to bang the skeg of the motor on the bottom at any time. If you do hit the bottom, please turn off the engine, raise it out of the water and inspect the prop, guards, and skeg for damage before continuing.

## SECTION 8 – MAINTENANCE & FAULT REPORTING

Report any maintenance or fault issues found on the rescue boats to the Festival Office at the dragon boat shed in person, or on 027 522 0556 immediately.

It is important that problems are fixed straight away as having a rescue boat out of action will limit that number of dragon boats that can train on the harbour.

Faults are to be recorded in the relevant rescue boat log or on the online Rescue Crew messaging thread.

### Rescue boats prior to launching

- Follow Operation Procedures for Rescue Boat Preparation and checklist (section 5)
- In addition check Rescue Maintenance log to ensure a full engine service has been done since last summer season
- Launch boats from Evans Bay ramp as per Operation Procedures Section 5 – Launching and Retrieving
- Take boats to berths designated by the Wellington City Council

### Rescue boats maintenance during water training season

- MAC boats are fully moulded marine grade polyethylene one piece doubled skinned plastic pontoon boats. Thus the hull is virtually maintenance free.
- The hulls after one month on the water will require water blasting to clean it of marine growth. Rescue boats to be taken out of the water at Whairepo Lagoon ramp for cleaning

### Breakdowns or repairs

- Rescue crew to record fault on boat log or maintenance request report.
- Totally Marine to be contacted and called to the Waterfront.
- If Rescue boat is not available for dragon boat training then only one boat to conduct rescue services. Other support craft may be brought in to assist. This may result in rescheduling of up some Dragon Boat teams training.
- Only once Rescue Boat is repaired will it resume rescue services.

### Rescue Boats are to be serviced at the conclusion of the dragon boat season.

- Service to be conducted by Totally Marine, Wellington or similar service provider
- Service and maintenance to be recorded in respective service log via invoices from Totally Marine.

When outside of the season and/or not in use, the rescue crafts are stored in the Lower Frank Kitts car park or at the Director's home.

## SECTION 9 – RESCUE CREW TRAINING

### Contracting rescue staff

From October an advertisement goes on Trade-me and Seek.co.nz advertising for a Rescue Crew team. Skills required are:

- Being a competent swimmer
- Being able to use VHF Radio
- Current First Aid Certificate (1 Rescue Crew member minimum)
- Experience with surf lifesaving or yacht club boat driving

Additionally looking for:

- Mature nature
- Ability to organise and lead a team
- Life or work experience to fit the job
- Day skipper's qualification (not mandatory)

The Festival Manager will then be involved in hiring the Rescue Crew in conjunction with the Director of Capital Aquatic Limited.

### Contracting process

- CV's are vetted and shortlisted.
- Phone interviews are held by Director of Capital Aquatic Limited
- References checked
- Potential Rescue Crew meet with Festival Manager for interview
- Successful Crew advised by phone by Festival Manager or Director

### Training Rescue Crew

An initial training day is held prior to dragon boat water training starting. All rescue crew and Festival Manager must attend. This is taken by the Director alongside experienced sweeps/coaches and often with outside contractors brought in to assist.

In office training consist of:

- Going over Rescue Boat Operating Procedure
- Reading through all sections and answering questions
- Advising what are non-negotiable and what leeway could be applied under supervision
- Induction sheets to be filled in
- Going through incident reporting, dragon boat capsize and sinking reporting
- Hazard identification, particularly weather conditions – when it is safe to allow dragon boats on the harbour and when it is not
- Setup of online messenger forum to communicate digitally, also stored in the Cloud

On water training consist of:

- Familiarisation of rescue craft and all their equipment
- Checking that boats have equipment as per list in Operating Procedure
- Practise for all crew in starting rescue boats, taking off the mooring at berth and safe operation of boats
- Familiarise crew with training area boundary and make them aware of maps
- Each crew member must show they are competent with boat handling in a safe manner and be signed off by Director and Festival Manager.

Dragon boat shed training consist of:

- Familiarisation with shed and all equipment
- Hand held VHF's to be charged and practise calling
- Uniform to be handed out
- Dragon boat unloading from chains to be shown

- Dragon boat launching and putting away to be shown
- Land based crew member to be given keys for shed along with Training register whiteboard training

#### Signing off of staff

The Festival Manager together with a Director will sign off and/or establish what extra training is required for rescue crew.

#### Ongoing training

Crew to be monitored by Festival Manager and Director, and upskilled on dragon boat training days. Ongoing training of the crew is recorded internally by the Festival Director and/or Festival Manager.

The first week will see only a few dragon boats needing supervision, so practising what was taught on induction day is ideal.

As the summer season progresses, up to ten dragon boats will need rescue supervision from two rescue boats and 5-6 rescue crew. Supported by Shore Crew, Watchtower (wharf) position, experienced coaches and sweeps, and recreational water craft to be used as backup. Rescue crew are made aware that in the event of more help required on water the Wellington Maritime Unit as part of the New Zealand Police are available on 111 in an emergency.

## SECTION 10 – MARITIME NEW ZEALAND SPECIFIED LIMITS PERMIT

Our operation, these procedures, and our Health & Safety Plan have been reviewed by Maritime New Zealand and the Harbourmaster's office. We are granted to use our rescue craft under a MNZ Specified Limits Permit ("SLP") which is attached to this document. Important conditions to our SLP include:

1. The operation must be conducted within the approved specified limit and no more than 250 metres from the shoreline; and
2. The operation must be conducted within daylight hours and must not be conducted in restricted visibility or adverse weather or sea conditions or outside stated operational limits; and
3. The vessels must not carry any passengers; and
4. The operation must be conducted in accordance with the operator's Specified Limits Plan submitted on 29 June 2023 and Safe Operating Procedures submitted on 26 March 2024; and
5. The vessel) and equipment must be maintained in accordance with the operator's Specified Limits Plan and Safe Operating Procedures; and
6. The operation should only be conducted with on-shore supervision or monitoring; and
7. Lifejackets must be worn by all persons on board wakas and vessels; and
8. The Skipper and crew of each vessel shall be a competent swimmer; and
9. The Skipper and crew of each vessel shall be able to use VHF radio; and
10. When any vessel under this permit is operating on the water, a qualified first aider shall be readily available onshore; and
11. The first aider mentioned above shall be a competent swimmer; and
12. At least one of the vessels operating under this permit must be readily available to provide assistance to the other vessels operating under this permit; and
13. The event and corresponding training shall not interfere with the normal flow of marine traffic and be outside the flow of commercial traffic; and
14. The operation shall be agreed by the Harbourmaster of the permitted area; and
15. This permit is issued only with respect to the use of above vessels, owned by Capital Aquatic Limited and operated by Wellington Dragon Boat Festival.



## Specified Limits Permit

This certificate is issued pursuant to the provisions of Maritime Rule 20.41.

**LEGAL NAME(S) OF OPERATOR** Capital Aquatic Limited

**SPECIFIED LIMITS**

**Wellington Harbour**

**As per Specified Limits Plan and Safe Operating Procedures as submitted to Maritime New Zealand on 25/03/2024**



**OPERATION NUMBER**

**OPN-2795**

**VESSEL(S)**

Refer to the Vessels List in Schedule 1

**THIS CERTIFICATE:**

1. certifies that the *Director of Maritime New Zealand* is satisfied the application meets the applicable requirements of Maritime Rule 20.41 in respect of the specified limits for this maritime operation; and
2. is subject to the Conditions listed in Schedule 1; and
3. will expire on **03 April 2027**.

Date of issue: **04 April 2024**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'W. Epenhuijsen', written over a white background.

**Willem Epenhuijsen**

Advisor Regulatory Licensing

Under the delegated authority by the Director of Maritime New Zealand

# SCHEDULE 1

## Vessel) List

| NAME      | MNZ Number | Length Overall (m) | Maximum Persons |
|-----------|------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| RED BOAT  | 143548     | 5.47               | 8               |
| JET SKI 1 | 143407     | 3.50               | 5               |
| JET SKI 2 | 143408     | 3.50               | 4               |

## Conditions

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6. The operation should only be conducted with on-shore supervision or monitoring; and
7. Lifejackets must be worn by all persons on board wakas and vessels; and
8. The Skipper and crew of each vessel shall be a competent swimmer; and
9. The Skipper and crew of each vessel shall be able to use VHF radio; and
10. When any vessel under this permit is operating on the water, a qualified first aider shall be readily available onshore; and
11. The first aider mentioned above shall be a competent swimmer; and
12. At least one of the vessels operating under this permit must be readily available to provide assistance to the other vessels operating under this permit; and
13. The event and corresponding training shall not interfere with the normal flow of marine traffic and be outside the flow of commercial traffic; and
14. The operation shall be agreed by the Harbourmaster of the permitted area; and
15. This permit is issued only with respect to the use of above vessels, owned by Capital Aquatic Limited and operated by Wellington Dragon Boat Festival.

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### Notes:

1. The operator must obtain approval from the Director of Maritime New Zealand of any changes made to its Specified Limits Plan; and
2. The operator must notify the Director of Maritime New Zealand of vessel(s) entering or leaving the operation; and
3. The operator must notify the Director of Maritime New Zealand about any changes to its contact information.