

Why is this audit happening?

Maritime NZ have requested that an audit process is completed in order to maintain an exemption under rule 91.4(3).

Maritime Rule 91.4(3) allows for a national sporting organisation to apply for an exemption from the wearing of lifejackets, so long as the safety systems in place are at or above the equivalent safety standard of a life jacket. Rowing New Zealand have been working in collaboration with Maritime New Zealand to review on-water safety practices and develop an updated Water Safety Code which will ensure rowing continues to be exempt from wearing life jackets. As part of the updated water safety code, RNZ are required to complete a nation-wide safety audit.

Is it possible that our club could be shut down?

No, it is not Rowing New Zealand's intention to shut clubs down, clubs are their own independently responsible entities, who are members of Rowing NZ. The purpose of this audit is to confirm the current water safety practices in each club's daily operations and fitout of the water safety plant, for the purposes of the maritime exemption (above), while also offering recommendations on safe on water procedure.

Where does the responsibility sit?

Each club is their own individual entity. The responsibility to act within the law ultimately lies with the club's coaches, volunteers and management committee. In terms of policy, Rowing New Zealand can only offer recommendations and guidance to each club. These have been provided as Recommended Operating Procedures (ROPs) and although though the new WS code 2023 they will be approved by Maritime NZ, they do not constitute legal advice.

These recommendations should not be taken as the only option and it is within each club's right to either have their own policy or change the one that RNZ provides.

How are clubs with affiliated schools audited?

All schools that are not a registered directly with Rowing NZ as a club will be audited under the umbrella of their parent club. It is the responsibility of club management to liaise with any of their affiliated schools in advance of the audit to ensure that each club member is operating within the requirements of the Rowing NZ Water Safety Code and that all documents, policies, and equipment is on hand.

What do clubs need to do before the audit?

Clubs should send through all of their water safety policy to watersafety@rowingnz.kiwi and work through as many of the requirements (see end of document) as possible.

What should my club do if it has not developed water safety policy?

In preparation for this audit, Rowing New Zealand has developed water safety policies that clubs can use. These policies include a risk register and a wider list of recommended operating procedures (ROPs). If clubs have not yet developed water safety policy, club safety officers can find resources to use on the Rowing NZ website. These resources will also be given to the club safety officer via a USB stick at each audit.

How long does the audit typically take to complete?

Each audit will typically take 1-2 hours, depending on the number of safety boats in the club.

Who can attend the audit?

It is expected that the club safety representative is in attendance (club safety officer or another representative appropriately appointed by the club committee). The club is welcome to have other members of the management/operational team present during the audit.

What happens if my club cannot make the allocated time for the audit?

This audit is being conducted in a short amount of time on a limited budget. It is therefore expected that clubs make all possible arrangements to attend the audit at the scheduled time. If the club cannot, in any circumstance, arrange for a member of club management to arrive at the club at the scheduled time, the water safety officer should contact watersafety@rowingnz.kiwi or 022 169 6719 to coordinate a suitable time.

My clubs safety boats are stored across multiple locations, will the each boat have to be checked?

Yes, clubs with safety boats in multiple locations will have to work with the auditor to ensure that each boat is checked. This will be coordinated with the water safety auditor.

What happens if a club fails the audit?

Any non-compliances to the current WS code 2016 will be noted and clubs will be given a period to rectify any non-compliances. This would include, if directly requested by a club, additional time to apply for grant funding to cover any needed upgrades/improvement of their WS plant. This would be reasonable given the circumstances. Clubs are to seek direct approval from Rowing NZ watersafety@rowingnz.kiwi in advance of any audit close out date.

As a position of last resort, Rowing NZ could remove the club from the bounds of the Maritime NZ exemption Rule 91.3 - Exemption from the wearing of lifejackets while rowing.

What is the process for addressing and rectifying any safety deficiencies identified during the audit?

If the final report of the audit highlight non-compliances or observations to address, the club will be given a two week notice period to acknowledge the report and the points raised. The club then will have a further period of four weeks to rectify any deficiencies. If the club needs a longer period, in the case of grant applications for example, this can be communicated with the water safety auditor.

My club is in need of safety equipment to bring the safety boats to compliance, can Rowing New Zealand help?

It is the responsibility of each club to comply with the RNZ WSC, any additional plant is the responsibility of the club to purchase through their member funds or grant applications.

It is however the intention of Rowing New Zealand to explore initiatives to help clubs gain compliance status. Until such time, clubs should be engaged exploring their own solutions to gain compliance.

How often will these safety audits be conducted?

Depending on the findings of the audit, Maritime New Zealand will decide the frequency of future audits. Rowing New Zealand can conduct, at any time, an audit if it is deemed necessary by Maritime New Zealand.

I have more questions. Who is the best contact for this audit?

Fin Sherlock is the lead water safety auditor. He can be reached on watersafety@rowingnz.kiwi. There will also be a chance to talk through any questions at the audit.

Also available for questions is Jared Cummings: jared@rowingnz.kiwi (Coach Development Manager) and Mark Weatherall (GM Community and Development: markw@rowingnz.kiwi).

What will be checked in the audit?

Life Jackets

- a) Life jackets will be counted
- b) General condition of lifejackets
- c) Life jackets will not be tested

First Aid Kit

- a) The club's first aid kit will be checked.

Support Vessels

- a) bailer, and for inflatable rubber dinghies, a suitable pump, and a spare inflation valve
- b) sound signalling warning device. i.e., an air horn, megaphone, or whistle
- c) grab line or 'throw bag'.
- d) sufficient approved floatation belts for the largest skiff being supervised (8 is ideal)
- e) basic first aid kit including a survival blanket.
- f) sharp knife in carrying sheath.
- g) paddle
- h) engine cut-out lanyard device
- i) fire extinguisher
- j) waterproof torch
- k) Working lights

Policy

- a) Boat log/on water movements in and out of club
- b) Risk register
- c) Incident Procedure
- d) Safety Induction Procedure

On Display

- a) Local waterway
- b) Address of rowing club
- c) Contact details of club safety officer
- d) Risk management plan
- e) List of Hazards