



Inclement Weather Policy

Applicable to all PPNYC Races

This policy has been written to assist PPNYC Race Management with decision making around inclement weather and whether to start a race, postpone racing, abandon a race once started, or abandon racing for the rest of the day. It also enables entrants to understand the rationale applied to inclement weather decisions. This policy applies to all PPNYC races.

1. Responsibility

Responsibility for the implementation of this policy and procedure falls to the Race Officer for the event.

2. Overview

The Racing Rules of Sailing (RRS) 3 states that, “The responsibility for a boat’s decision to participate in a race or to continue racing is hers alone.”

Whilst very specific, this rule does not remove the obligation of Race Management to exercise a “Duty of Care” to competitors and race management personnel.

3. Procedure

Prior to the first race of the day, an assessment is to be made by the Race Officer as to whether conditions are expected to be suitable for racing. This decision will be continuously reviewed by the Race Officer while competitors are on the water.

A risk assessment will be conducted for each day of the PPNYC racing activities.

Gale Warning and Abandonment of Races

Should a Gale Warning be current **2 / 3 / 4 hours** prior to the scheduled start of a race or the scheduled start of the first race, racing **may** be postponed to another day or abandoned.

Racing will not normally be postponed or abandoned until the day of the event. If the conditions are marginal, it is normal practice to wait until near the scheduled start time of the race before abandoning racing.

Strong Wind/Squall Warning

If a Strong Wind/Squall Warning is current within one hour of the scheduled race start, the race committee may consider postponing or abandoning the race. In some cases, conditions in the local race area may remain suitable for racing despite a Strong Wind/Squall Warning being issued for other areas of Port Phillip. These broader warnings may not reflect the actual or expected local conditions. (Refer to the Decision-Making Criteria for guidance.)

Lightning Activity

Apps such as Lightning Pro give near-real-time views of approaching storms and should be consulted for early warning. Apply the 30/30 Rule from the Australian Standard on Lightning Protection:

- **Consider postponement/abandonment** when the flash (lightning) to bang (thunder) count is 30 seconds or less, indicating lightning within 10 km of the race area.
- **Consider (re)commencing racing** 30 minutes after the last sighting of lightning. A typical storm travels at about 40 km/h, placing it roughly 20 km away.

Heat

In extreme temperatures, consult the Australian Sailing *Hot Weather Guidelines*. The Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) publishes ambient and Wet Bulb readings, with relative-risk guidance, at www.bom.gov.au/info/thermal_stress/index.shtml. Heat illness risk rises sharply at high humidity.

Consider postponing activities for temperatures above 36°C or a Wet Bulb temperature above 30°C.

4. Decision Making Criteria

Decisions that conditions are suitable for racing to proceed need to be based on several items expected in the local race area:

- Wind Strength and Direction
- Sea State
- Air Quality and Temperature
- Visibility
- Lightning Strike Activity
- Capability of competitor and race management vessels.
- The experience and capabilities of the sailors and, in part, their expectations and preparedness for the expected weather.
- The time frame of racing (competitors may be held ashore if the conditions are considered not suitable to race at that time but are expected to moderate).

5. Notification

The Club will advise sailors of any early postponement or abandonment via the TopYacht Entry System (TES) – SMS, the Club Website, the Club notice board and email where applicable.