

Safety Management System for the Conduct of Racing and Sailing Events

Capricornia Cruising Yacht Club 2023 Sailing Season

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Last reviewed January 2023

Next review January 2024

1 Overview

Capricornia Cruising Yacht Club Inc. (CCYC) was established in 1974 and is located at John Howes Drive, Rosslyn Bay Harbour, Queensland. The 2022 membership was 363. Members except social members have 24-hour access to the club house and boat storage area through a security key card system. The club has a registered liquor licence trading system and bar opening hours are from 1200 – 1900 hours daily, although these can be extended to for functions and race days.

Twenty-six sailing activity days will be conducted in 2023 with 21 of these being races days and the others social events. The sailing season commences on Australia Day, 26th January, with the Blessing of the Fleet. The first race will be on 4th February and the final race 25th November 2023. Most races are day events on Saturday with several long races which are either overnight or with an overnight stay somewhere in the Keppel Island group followed by a race on Sunday.

Races have typically 6 to 12 yachts, either monohull or multihull and range in length from 5.5 to 13 m. Each yacht, depending on length is crewed by 2 to 8 people but typically 3 to 5.

2 Principles of Conduct of Races and Events

CCYC is an affiliated member of the parent body, Australian Sailing and thus conducts races using the 2021-2024 Racing Rules of Sailing (RRS) of World Sailing and the Prescriptions of Australian Sailing.

However, when a yacht sailing under these rules meets a vessel that is not, it shall comply with the **International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea (IRPCAS)** rules. If the Sailing Instructions so state, the rules of RRS (Part 2 When Boats Meet) are replaced by the right-of-way rules of the IRPCAS.

Australian Sailing has published Special Regulations whose purpose is to establish uniform minimum equipment, accommodation and training standards for boats racing and as a guide for cruising boats. All yachts competing in CCYC events must comply as a minimum with these Special Regulations of Australian Sailing for the nominated category of race.

Races are conducted under various categories as described in the Special Regulations and races for 2023 will be conducted under either Category 4 or 5.

Category 4: Short offshore races, close to shore in relatively warm or protected waters, normally held in daylight. One race will be held in this category

Category 5. Races with limited rescue availability, in protected waters, in daylight hours or in sheltered waters at night. 19 races will be conducted in this category in the partially smooth waters of Keppel Bay with an additional race having equipment enhancements for night racing.

The Category system is a graduation of standards of equipment and accommodation required for various races. Yachts that are compliant with Category 4 are automatically compliant with Category 5 but the converse does not apply.

The racing calendar (<https://www.ccy.org.au/sailing/>) is decided by the Sailing Committee and approved by the CCYC Executive Committee. There is a Notice of Race and Sailing Instructions for each race or series of races which are available on the CCYC website (<https://www.ccy.org.au/sailing/>)

Racing is conducted once an Aquatic Event Authority (<https://www.msq.qld.gov.au/Waterways/Aquatic-events>) has been received from Maritime Safety Queensland (MSQ). This authority is obtained 3 monthly. (Department of Transport and Main Roads, Aquatic Event Application Process, March 2017)

3 General Safety Obligations in the Conduct of Races and Events

CCYC's principles for safely conducting races is continually reminded at briefings and is summarised as:

- Competitors must ensure their boat is safe and adequately maintained.
- Competitors must ensure their boat is properly equipped and crewed in accordance with the Sailing Instructions and Safety Category requirements imposed.
- Competitors must ensure their boat is operated in a safe manner.

The following Fundamental Rules (Part 1) of RRS apply in all races

Rule 1 Safety

Rule 1.1 Helping those in danger. A boat, competitor or support person shall give all possible help to any person or vessel in danger

Rule 1.2 Life-Saving equipment and Personal Floatation Devices. A boat shall carry adequate life-saving equipment for all persons on board, including one item for immediate use, unless their class rules make some other provision. Each competitor is individually responsible for wearing a personal floatation device adequate for the conditions

Rule 3 Decision to race. The responsibility for a boat's decision to participate in a race or to continue racing is theirs alone.

4 The Conduct of Individual Races

Races are either island races where the course involves a rounding of one or more islands in Keppel Bay or buoy races which involve roundings of club inflatable buoys placed out prior to and retrieved after the race.

On a designated race day, the decision to race is the responsibility of the Vice-Commodore and the Sailing Committee. The conduct of the race then becomes the responsibility of the Principal Race Officer (PRO) who decides the direction and length of the course based on wind strength and direction and tidal movements.

The PRO for each race is a rostered position and is a skipper or crew member of a yacht with at least 2 years racing experience. The duties of a PRO are outlined in <https://www.ccyc.org.au/sailing/>.

The PRO conducts the pre-race briefing including a sign-on register for all boats, provides the latest weather forecast sourced from the Bureau of Meteorology (BOM), predicted tide times and ensuring handicaps for all boats are available for all competitors to peruse. The PRO directs the race and acts as a link between the competitors, the Vice Commodore and Sailing Committee, the Handicapper and the Protest Committee. Usually, the PRO is aboard a competing yacht although this is not mandatory. The PRO may choose to direct the race from the Start Boat in buoy races, or any other suitable venue as the PRO considers appropriate.

During the race, the PRO assumes responsibility of making all decisions for the race. Each race is run in accordance with the race Sailing Instructions. The PRO is in contact by VHF radio with all boats and the Start Boat. The PRO is responsible for responding to weather conditions which may require a change in course, a shortened course, abandonment or cancellation of a race. If the Sailing Instructions require radio schedules, the PRO or his nominee is responsible for their conduct. In the event that the PRO has to withdraw from the race or has a problem with his radio, then the Vice-Commodore or a member of the Sailing Committee sailing in that race will take over responsibilities of the PRO.

At the end of the race, the PRO ensures that all competing yachts and the Start Boat are accounted for and that all skippers or their nominees sign off on the race register usually within 2 hours of their completion of racing for the day.

The decision to race when there is a strong wind warning in the partially smooth waters of Keppel Bay is at the discretion of the PRO and ultimately the Vice-Commodore. In most cases when local conditions are assessed, races are abandoned and postponed to a later date when there is a strong wind warning. Weather conditions greater than a strong wind warning will automatically abandon or postpone a scheduled race.

As access to and from the race is via the restricted channel of Rosslyn Bay Harbour, competitors should be mindful of IRPCAS Rule 9 Narrow Channels

(a) A vessel proceeding along the course of a narrow channel or fairway shall keep as near to the outer limit of the channel or fairway which lies on her starboard side as is safe and practicable.

(b) A vessel of less than 20 metres in length or a sailing vessel shall not impede the passage of a vessel which can safely navigate only within a narrow channel or fairway.

(d) A vessel shall not cross a narrow channel or fairway if such crossing impedes the passage of a vessel which can safely navigate only within such channel or fairway. The latter vessel may use the sound signal prescribed in Rule 34(d) if in doubt as to the intention of the crossing vessel.

5 Communication

All yachts must have a VHF radio as part of their compliance with either Category 4 or 5 equipment audit. The primary method of communication during a race is Channel 73, with Channels 21 and 22 also used during longer races into the night. The designated international distress VHF Channel 16 can be used in an emergency.

The Start Boat is equipped with a VHF radio and there is a shore-based VHF radio at the CCYC club house which is used to monitor races.

All yachts in Category 4 races must have an emergency antenna and have at least two means of receiving weather bulletins.

For all boats including the Start Boat there must be at least one person that has a Marine Radio Operators VHF Certificate of Proficiency as recognized by the Australian Communications and Media Authority.

There is good VHF communication and mobile phone reception throughout the partially smooth waters of Keppel Bay with Channel 22 being more reliable in the southern part of the bay.

Messages can also be relayed to the competitors on the water via flags, sound signals and a loud hailer where required. These are employed mainly at the start of the race. These race flag and sound signals are standard under the Racing Rules of Sailing; 2021-2024.

6 Area of Operation

All races for 2023 will be conducted in the partially smooth and smooth waters of Keppel Bay (<https://www.msq.qld.gov.au/Safety/Smooth-and-partially-smooth-water-limits/Swl-keppel-bay>).

7 Training and Licensing

There is no mandatory formal training in race procedure for skippers or crew members competing in races. CCYC does conduct *ad-hoc* training sessions in areas such as life-jacket servicing, navigation and racing rules. However, it is recommended that crews should practice safety routines at intervals including the drill for man-overboard recovery.

The Yeppoon Coastguard conducts regular training sessions in marine radio proficiency. All crew members are encouraged to have Marine Radio Operators

VHF Certificate of Proficiency. For Categories 4 and 5, at least one crew member must have a certificate of radio proficiency.

All boats must comply with Queensland Government Transport Operations (Maritime Safety) Act in terms of licensing and safety equipment and skippers of vessels must have a Recreational Marine Drivers' Licence.

The Start Vessel must have a crew of at least two operators. The master must have a Recreational Marine Drivers Licence.

8 Audit of safety equipment

Australian Sailing has published Special Regulations whose purpose is to establish uniform minimum equipment, accommodation and training standards for boats racing and as a guide for cruising boats. All boats must comply as a minimum with these Special Regulations of Australian Sailing for the nominated category of race. Compliance is achieved with an annual physical audit by one of the 6 auditors in CCYC who have passed the NEA/CEA Accreditation Examination of Australian Sailing.

The audit is extensive and covers the following areas:

- *Structural features and stability*
- *Fixed equipment* such as exits, pulpits, accommodation, lights, radio and engines
- *Portable equipment* such as anchors, medical kit, piloting equipment, instruments, emergency steering, EPIRBs, flares and heavy weather equipment
- *Personal equipment* such as life jackets, safety harnesses, personal lights and personal locator beacons
- *Training*

Equipment audit forms are available on the Australian Sailing website:

<https://www.sailingresources.org.au/safety/equipment-auditing/>

9 Shipping movements and use of buoys

Commercial Shipping

The main regular commercial traffic using Rosslyn Bay Harbour are the two ferry services, Freedom Fast Cats and Keppel Konnections. Between them they may operate up to eight services a day to Great Keppel Island and return. Their hours of operation are mainly from 7:30 to 16:30.

There is also a Water Police base, a Coastguard base, a Boating and Fisheries Patrol base and a National Parks base within the harbour complex. These organisations generate infrequent traffic on the water.

Recreational Shipping

There is a variety of recreational shipping encountered. There is a marina adjacent to the harbour and there are 2 multilane boat ramps servicing the harbour. Recreational vessels routinely encountered range from small dinghies, to 5–10m runabouts to yachts and motor vessels to 20 m.

CCYC clubhouse and boat storage area

CCYC is located between the Yeppoon Coastguard and the Queensland Government Boating and Fisheries Patrol. The club has an 18 m pontoon immediately in front of the clubhouse. On race days it is used for mooring for boats where up to 8 boats can be rafted together. CCYC has also its own boat ramp which is used for launching and retrieving member's boats as well as the Start Boat.

Use of buoys to mark the racing course

Anchored red or yellow inflatable buoys are used to delineate the start and finish lines as well as for rounding marks in races. The greatest congregation of racing boats occurs near the start line which is an imaginary line about 100-150 m in length between the Start Boat and an anchored buoy. Start lines are set well away from ferry routes, anywhere from 1 to 2 NM from the harbour entrance. Buoy races are generally located such that the nearest buoy to the harbour entrance is about 1 NM.

The finish line can be the same as the start line or can be between a separate imaginary line between an anchored buoy and a predetermined position on the harbour wall with the length of the finish line being up to 300 m. When the race is finished at night a flashing strobe light is placed on the buoy. There is little concentration of boats at the finish line as boats finish at different times and there could be several hours' difference between the first and last boat. After the completion of the race the buoys are retrieved by the Start Boat or in some cases by the last finishing yacht.

Summary

Racing activities cause minimal interference to commercial and recreational boating traffic both within the harbour and on Keppel Bay.

10 Weather Reports and Weather Warnings

Competitors can access a number of web sites which provide weather predictions and warnings such as wind strength and direction, weather radar, forecast maps, tide times and heights and UV index. These include

- Australian Government Bureau of Meteorology (<http://www.bom.gov.au>)
- Weatherzone (<https://www.weatherzone.com.au/>)
- WillyWeather (<https://www.willyweather.com.au/>)

- Queensland Tide Tables 2023 (<https://www.msq.qld.gov.au/Tides/Tide-Tables>)
- Notice to Mariners (<https://www.qld.gov.au/transport/boating/notices/about>)

Weather reports from the Bureau of Meteorology are broadcast by either the Yeppoon or Keppel Sands Coastguard on VHF Channel 21/21 at 07:05, 12:05 and 17:05 daily. Weather warnings are available 24 hourly from the Bureau of Meteorology on 1300 360 427

The PRO is responsible for monitoring any of these sites to provide an up to date weather forecast at the race briefing.

11 Incidents and Reporting Incidents

Under the *Transport Operations (Marine Safety) Act 1994*, a marine incident is classified as an event causing or involving:

- the loss of a person from a ship
- the death of, or grievous bodily harm to, a person caused by a ship's operations
- the loss or presumed loss or abandonment of a ship
- a collision with a ship
- the stranding of a ship
- significant damage, or danger of significant damage, to a ship
- significant damage caused by a ship's operations
- danger of significant damage to a structure caused by a ship's operations
- danger to a person caused by a ship's operations.

All Incidents must be reported to a MSQ Shipping Inspector within 48 hours (<https://www.msq.qld.gov.au/Safety/Marine-incidents>)

There has been only one marine incident in the last 10 years involving CCYC races. In 2020, a yacht sank during a race. It was swamped due to equipment failure. There was no injury or loss of life and the crew were rescued within minutes by accompanying yachts.

Based on the MSQ document "Guidelines for reportable incidents", minor incidences such as collisions during a race, minor damage from a grounding or minor injury are handled by the Sailing Committee and Protest Committee. These minor incidents are reviewed at monthly Sailing Committees with recommendations for modifications to race procedures and Sailing Instructions if deemed warranted.

12 Emergency Action Plan

An emergency during a race is an event that could cause anticipated danger to a person or vessel. Examples of an emergency are rapidly deteriorating weather conditions, man overboard (MOB) or a sudden serious illness of a participant. Under RRS Rule 1.1, a boat, competitor or support person shall give all possible help to any person or vessel in danger.

In the event of an emergency all racing may be abandoned, depending on the circumstances and competitors recalled back to Rosslyn Bay Harbour. The PRO is to ensure the whereabouts of all competing yachts and their return. Depending on the circumstance, the Coast Guard may be asked to render assistance via VHF Channels 16 or 21/21.

If a race or event is abandoned due to an emergency, the Sailing Committee may reschedule the race or event within the limits of the Aquatic Event Authority

13 Contacts

Emergency - Police, Fire and Ambulance: Ring 000

Volunteer Rescue

Coast Guard Yeppoon:

4933 6600; VHF Ch 16, 21, 22 from 0600 to 1800, Friday to Monday

Coast Guard Keppel Sands:

4934 4906; VHF Ch 16, 21, 22 from 0600 to 1800, Tuesday to Thursday

Shipping Inspectors & Enforcement Officers

Rosslyn Bay Boat Harbour Controller: 4933 6812

Boating and Fisheries Patrol, Rosslyn Bay Harbour: 132 523 or 4933 6404

Queensland Police Service (Yeppoon and Rosslyn Bay Harbour; 4939 0000

MSQ Regional Office, Gladstone: 4973 1200

Emergency Services

Queensland Ambulance Service (Non-Emergency): 13 7468

Fire and Rescue Regional (Non-Emergency): 13 7468

Keppel Bay Marina and Boatyard: 4933 6244

Ferry Services

Freedom Fast Cats: 4933 6888

Keppel Konnections 0484 241 505

Sailing Organisations

Australian Sailing:

Ben Callard, National General Manager - Club Support (02) 9170 6928

Grant Willmott, Club Support Officer – Queensland (02) 9170 6930

Yachting Queensland (Monday to Friday only)

Head Office (Manly): 3393 6788