

Annexure 1: RYCV Inclement Weather Policy – Nautilus Marine Insurance Lipton Cup



Aim Many of the hazards identified in the Risk Assessment for the **Nautilus Marine Insurance Lipton Cup Regatta** have a higher risk factor if weather is inclement. A control measure to minimize this risk, is to apply this Policy. Although it is expected that there will be a range of decisions and outcomes given the diversity of yacht racing at the Regatta, this policy has been written to assist the Race Management team with decision making around inclement weather and whether to start a race, postpone racing, abandon a race started or abandon racing for the rest of the day.

Responsibility The Principal Race Officer (PRO) is responsible for the implementation of this policy and procedure. Delegation of this responsibility on-water may be made to the individual Course Race Officers (CRO) however the PRO retains ultimate responsibility.

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.

Procedure Prior to the first race of the day, an assessment is to be made if conditions are expected to be suitable for yacht racing by the PRO in conjunction with the CRO(s) and the Regatta Manager. This decision will be continuously reviewed by the PRO and the individual CROs in the event competitors are on the water.

As a record of this process the form **Annexure 6 - Race Day Risk Control Form** must be completed. This form is a record of the decision-making criteria for the race day and may include forecast and real time information from sources such as the Bureau of Meteorology and third-party applications such as Predict Wind, Windy and AUSWINDS.

Gale Warning and Abandonment of Races

Should a Gale Warning be current three hours prior to the scheduled start of a race or the scheduled start of the first race, racing will 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.

The Club will advise sailors of early postponement or abandonment by using Racing Rules of Sailing race signaling (informs everyone who is at the club), email and/or SMS to the contact list (informs crew organizer), and/or on the Club web site and/or Social Media pages (Informs sailors more widely).

Strong Wind Warning

If a Strong Wind 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 near RYCV may remain suitable for racing despite a Strong Wind Warning being issued for other areas of Port Phillip. These broader warnings may not reflect the actual or expected conditions at RYCV. (Refer to Decision Making Criteria for guidance.)

Lightning Activity

Applications such as *Lightning Pro* can give near-real time views of approaching lightning storms and should be consulted when making decisions relating to lightning. Usage of these applications can give advance warning of lightning conditions, allowing for an early response.

For a rule-of-thumb the Australian Standard on Lightning Protection references the *30/30 Rule*. The rule is designed to provide guidance on the suspension and resumption of activities in an outdoor environment.

It sets out the following principles:

Consider Postponement/Abandonment:

- When lightning is seen, begin counting the seconds until thunder is heard.
- A flash (Lightning) to bang (Thunder) count of 30 seconds or less indicates that the lightning is 10km away. This is associated with the risk that strikes may impact the race area.

Consider (re)commencing racing:

- When **30 minutes** have passed since the last sighting of Lightning.
- A typical storm travels at about 40 km/h and waiting 30 minutes allows the thunderstorm to be approximately 20km away.

Heat

Guidance for managing high temperatures may be found in the Australian Sailing document *HOT WEATHER GUIDELINES*.

On occasions of extreme temperatures this guideline should be consulted and consideration given to mitigating the impact of heat.

The Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) produces ambient and Wet Bulb readings for many locations in Australia. You can check these readings and a guide for the relative risk for your location at www.bom.gov.au/info/thermal_stress/index.shtml

It is important to watch for unusual “heatwave” conditions or variations from the average temperature for the time of year. This is one situation where there may be a greater danger of heat illness. Heat stress increases with increases in air temperature but be aware that there are not clear demarcations in risk between temperature ranges. At high relative humidity levels stress increases markedly.

For temperatures above 36C or a Wet Bulb temperature above 30C consideration should be given to postponing activities.

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, their age 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.)

Safety Level Decision Matrix

To assist the PRO and CRO(s) a Safety Level Decision Matrix will be available as a quick reference for their use and for the guidance of any committee boats on the course. This matrix is available in *Annexure 2 – Contacts and Procedures - Lipton Cup 2025*.

Race Management Vessels will have a copy of this matrix in the Boat Documentation pack.