



Weather Warning Safe Sailing Policy

This policy relates to the cancellation or abandonment of **Botany Bay Yacht Club** (“Club”) sailing events, including racing and cruising events, which may be due to inclement weather and / or unsafe sailing conditions.

The purpose of this policy is to guide Club Officers in helping to ensure racing and other sailing events are conducted with due regard to the safety of Club members, boats and members of the public with whom we share our local waterways.

This policy does not infer any liability on the Club, its Board of Directors, Race Committee, Race Starters or any agent of the Club for any damage or injury sustained while racing or cruising in an event organised by the Club or its agents.

All Skippers and other participants are advised to consider the various Risk Warnings issued by the Bureau of Meteorology (BOM), NSW Govt. Department of Roads and Maritime Services (RMS), Australian Sailing (AS) and the Club prior to participate in any sailing event conducted by the Club.

Useful weather warning information

Weather warnings are issued by the BOM and are specific to areas of each State (e.g. Sydney coastal waters, Sydney closed waters, etc.) Considerations by Skippers¹ in relation to such warnings include:

- **When will the wind warning conditions start?**
Skippers must assess whether they have enough time to get back to port before the wind reaches warning strength or take all reasonable safety precautions, including but not limited to reducing sail area, ensuring all those aboard are wearing appropriate life jackets, seeking shelter, etc.
- **What speed will the wind reach?**
Refer to the BOM wind warning ranges below. Skippers must be aware of what wind conditions their vessel can handle safely and take steps to avoid unnecessary risk.

Strong Wind	Winds averaging from 26 knots up to 33 knots
Gale	Winds averaging from 34 knots up to 47 knots
Storm Force Wind	Winds averaging from 48 knots up to 63 knots
Hurricane Force Wind	Winds averaging from 64 knots or more

NOTE - Average wind strength (for a 10 minute period) can include wind gusts of 40% or more above the forecast or observed average. Refer *Diagram 1* to see a typical wind chart.²

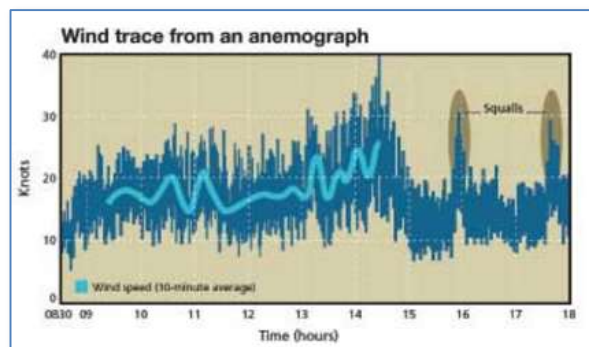


Diagram 1

¹ Reference - www.bom.gov.au/marine/about/six-things-about-wind-warnings.shtml

² 'Afloat magazine (2009)

BOM website data for NSW (www.bom.gov.au/nsw/observations/sydney.shtml) updates every 10 minutes and gives recorded average and gust wind speeds over that 10 minute period. The highest wind gust since midnight of that day is also indicated. See *Table 1* example.

SYDNEY AREA																		
	Date/Time EDT	Temp °C	App Temp °C	Dew Point °C	Rel Hum %	Delta-T °C	Wind					Press hPa	Rain since 9am mm	Low Temp °C time	High Temp °C time	Highest Wind Gust		
							Dir	Spd km/h	Gust km/h	Spd kts	Gust kts					Dir	km/h time	kts time
Sydney - Observatory Hill	15/04:50pm	24.5	23.1	18.9	71	3.6	E	24	-	13	-	1017.9	0.2	19.8 11:43pm	25.9 02:46pm	-	-	-
Sydney Airport	15/04:50pm	24.8	22.4	20.3	76	2.9	ENE	33	39	18	21	1017.9	0.6	19.9 04:42am	27.1 01:30pm	E	50 03:18pm	27 03:18pm
Sydney Harbour	15/04:50pm	23.6	-	-	-	-	E	24	28	13	15	-	-	19.3 11:27pm	24.3 01:06pm	ENE	52 10:20am	28 10:20am

Table 1

You can also drill down to specific monitoring stations (see *Table 2* example) for average and gust wind speed readings.

Station Details ID: 066037 Name: SYDNEY AIRPORT AMO Lat: -33.95 Lon: 151.17 Height: 6.0 m Data from the previous 72 hours. See also: Recent months at Sydney Airport													
Date/Time EDT	Temp °C	App Temp °C	Dew Point °C	Rel Hum %	Delta-T °C	Wind					Press QNH hPa	Press MSL hPa	Rain since 9am mm
						Dir	Spd km/h	Gust km/h	Spd kts	Gust kts			
15/04:30pm	25.0	22.6	20.0	74	3.2	ENE	32	41	17	22	1018.1	1018.1	0.6
15/04:00pm	25.1	22.7	19.9	73	3.4	ENE	32	39	17	21	1018.2	1018.2	0.6
15/03:30pm	25.4	22.5	20.0	72	3.5	ENE	35	48	19	26	1018.5	1018.5	0.6
15/03:00pm	25.7	22.4	20.0	71	3.7	ENE	37	48	20	26	1018.8	1018.8	0.6
15/02:30pm	25.8	22.1	19.9	70	3.8	ENE	39	50	21	27	1019.0	1019.0	0.6

Table 2

Other safety considerations

- Known hazards may also be present that require consideration and may lead to a sailing event cancellation or abandonment.
- Thunderstorms, lightning, hail and other environmental issues may also threaten the race course area during the likely race / sailing event duration.
- Other factors such as pollution from current or recent floods (debris and large floating material), oil spills or known sunken / submerged objects may also represent safety risk.

Race cancellation or abandonment

When a **gale or stronger warning** has been issued by the BOM, which is current for the area of the race within 2 hours of the scheduled start, that **race shall be postponed, or cancelled with no further racing on the day.**

When a **strong wind warning** has been issued and is current for the area of the race within 2 hours of the scheduled start, the Race Committee has the discretion to **vary the start time by up to one hour, postpone or cancel that race.**

Where no local wind warnings are in force, but the BOM forecast or recorded data from local BOM weather stations (e.g. Sydney Airport or Kurnell) indicate the occurrence or likelihood of **wind gusts of 26 knots or above for a significant period**, the Race Committee has the discretion to **vary the start time by up to one hour, postpone or cancel that race.** For forecast or actual **wind gusts of 30kts or above for a significant period**, it is recommended that the race be abandoned.

Where a race has been varied, postponed cancelled by the Race Committee, all endeavours will be made to post the decision on the Club's [Facebook Page](#) and <https://www.bbvc.com.au> website Home page. Skippers may also be alerted via SMS.

The Race Starter has similar discretions when boats are already on the water. Please refer to '**International Sailing Flags and Pennants**' in the [Club's Blue Book](#) for signals that will **apply** for delayed starts or abandoned races.