

## Health & Safety September 2016

The Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 came into law on the 4th of April 2016.

After listening to the commentary and reading the information on the WorkSafe website it is clear the aim of this Act is to change New Zealand's health and safety culture, particularly in the work place. For our Club we should continue doing what we have always been doing to operate in a safe manner. Our challenge under the new Act is to be sure we communicate how to mitigate hazards we know about to members and visitors.

The act introduces a new legal concept of a Person Conducting a Business Undertaking (PCBU). To be a PCBU you will be employing staff. A PCBU has the primary duty of care to maintain a safe working environment. As our Club does not employ staff we come under the category of a Volunteer Association and remain so even if we engage a contractor, as long as we are clear who is responsible for what. The other category is that of Worker and that covers all our members. As a worker you are obliged to take reasonable care of your own health and safety.

Listening to the commentary and reading the information provided it is clear to me that it is no longer good enough to publish a list of hazards on the notice board and think, job done. The Act is clear that if we identify a hazard we must take reasonable steps to ensure all those who might be affected know about the hazard. Also we must ensure that what we do does not adversely affect the health and safety of others.

Two examples are, (1) If our ramp is slippery we must ensure skippers and launch crew know about this hazard. (2) Visitors walking past while our boats are being rigged may not be aware of the danger of a swinging boom. We must tell them.

We have documents and we do have briefings that cover how to run a safe sailing operation:

- Yachting New Zealand Racing Rules of Sailing & Safety Regulations.
- Our Sailing Instructions and Safety Procedures.
- Our Website.
- The race briefing given by the Race Officer.
- We should also add:
- A hazard list.
- Rigging Area Safety Person.

Our challenge is to build into the Club culture a continuous discussion about how to sail safely while still testing our limits.

The aim of this Act is to change New Zealand's health and safety culture, and for leaders to drive that change. It is about keeping people safe and a shift in thinking from 'do I have a duty to this person?' to 'what can I reasonably do to keep them safe?'

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