

## SAILING POLICY

# Shark Sighting Policy

**PREAMBLE** In order to manage the risk posed by the presence of sharks in Lake Macquarie, the Board of Belmont 16 Foot Sailing Club has established the following procedure.

**PROCEDURE** Prior to the commencement of any sailing activity conducted by the Club the sailing area shall be surveyed to satisfy officials that there are no obvious signs of sharks in the area.

All rescue boat crews, starting crews, radio room attendants and sailors are to be generally aware that sharks do reside in Lake Macquarie and be vigilant at all times.

A shark sighting is considered confirmed when the shark has been sighted by either:

- At least one competitor plus at least one race official [rescue boat crews, starting crews, radio room attendants]; OR
- By any one race official.

**ACTIONS ON SIGHTINGS** In the event of a confirmed shark sighting of a shark that is deemed to pose a threat to the safety of competitors the Race Officer must attempt to get competitors to shore quickly by using one of the following:

1. Shorten the Race [Code flag S] at the nearest mark and direct competitors to shore; or
  2. Postpone Racing [AP over H] -- all boats directed to return to shore; or
  3. Abandon Racing [N over H] -- all boats directed to return to shore.
- Then fly code flag K [all boats to remain ashore].
  - Advise competitors to remain clear of the water.
  - Do not resume racing for a minimum of one hour from the time of the LAST sighting, with increased surveillance for an additional hour at the location of the sighting and surrounding areas until the potential risk is deemed to have subsided.
  - One hour after the last sighting and with additional surveillance racing can resume.
  - Should a shark attack occur, the sailor shall be removed from immediate danger and first aid applied. The PRO, Senior Instructor or Officer of the Day shall be informed immediately and emergency services are to be contacted.
  - At the first available opportunity, the PRO will report the incident to either the Sailing Coordinator or a Club Duty Manager.
  - Race Officials retain in their absolute discretion, the right to abandon any race in the interests of safety. In this event all sailors must immediately return to shore upon direction from the race officials and the hoisting of Code Flag R.

POLICY DETAIL:	Date created:	December 2007
	Dates Reviewed:	June 2014, July 2016, July 2017, June 2021, June 2022, June 2023
	<b>Date of Board Approval:</b>	25 July 2017
	Next Revision Date:	As required.
	Responsibility:	Sailing Administration