

Draft Navigation Safety Bylaw 2026 feedback

* Compulsory question

Your contact details

Only your name will be publicly visible as part of your submission.

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Do you wish to speak to your submission at a public hearing?	<input type="radio"/> No

Please make sure you have provided your contact details (email and/or phone number) so we can be in touch to arrange a time. Hearings can be in person or online. Hearings will be livestreamed.

Hearings will be sometime in late February to March 2026 (date will be confirmed closer to the time).

Your feedback

Please give us your feedback on the changes to the Navigation Safety Bylaw 2020, as outlined in the Draft Navigation Safety Bylaw 2026. What would you change? What do you support or not support?

Please find below my comments on the currently propose version of the Otago Regional Council Navigation Safety Bylaw 2026. I will below provide specific commentary on the bylaw clauses, but I would also like to comment on the removed provisions.

It is disappointing to see the removal rather than the strengthening of the requirement to use a kill cord on a boat where fitted. This was previously in the old clause 6 and stated:

6.3) Any person in charge of a vessel fitted with a kill cord must ensure that the kill cord is fitted correctly at all times whilst underway.

Rather than removal of this requirement, I would propose that this should be retained and strengthened to state that - all vessels fitted with a kill chord must ensure that when the vessel is travelling in excess of 5 knots - the kill chord shall be used in a manor that should the helm move away from the controls, the engine will automatically be switched off.

There are numerous cases in recent history from around the world of serious and life changing or ending injuries being caused due to not wearing the engines killcord, examples provided below.

https://www.yachtingnz.org.nz/news/prevent-injury-or-death-kill-cords?utm_source=copilot.com

https://www.magzter.com/stories/boating-sailing/Practical-Boat-Owner/NO-KILL-CORD-OR-LIFEJACKETS-WERE-WORN-DURING-FATAL-POWERBOAT-CRASH?utm_source=copilot.com

https://www.mby.com/news/padstow-rib-tragedy-final-report-released-1808?utm_source=copilot.com

In relation to the bylaw as written

Clause 6 – Wearing of personal flotation devices on vessels

The below is unclear.

(4) Clause 6 does not apply to a person training or participating in or for any trick water skiing/wake boarding element of a sporting event supervised in accordance with the safety system of a national sporting organisation approved by the Director of Maritime New Zealand pursuant to part 91 of the Maritime Rules. of a national sporting organisation approved by the Director of Maritime New Zealand pursuant to part 91 of the Maritime Rules.

I believe it is trying to say that “clause 6 does not apply to a person training or participation in a sporting event or any trick water skiing/wakeboarding event that is supervised in accordance with a safety system of a national sporting organisation approved by the Director of Maritime New Zealand pursuant to part 91 of the Maritime Rules. of a national sporting organisation approved by the Director of Maritime New Zealand pursuant to part 91 of the Maritime Rules.”

Clause 18 – Anchoring

As the clause does not use any defined terms, I presume that all the words have their typical meaning as defined in a dictionary.

Therefore as the clause states a vessel may not “No vessel shall remain anchored within the Otago Harbour for longer than 14 days”, it could be argued that provided that the boat spends some time every 14 days not anchored that the time limit resets. My understanding from media releases is this is not the desired outcome from this change.

However if your intention is to limit a boat to only being able to anchor for upto a total of 14 days (either individually or concurrently) in a 6 month period, this may have unintended consequences. For example,

1. A boat that regularly goes out fishing though out the summer (6 month period) and drops anchor each time for what ever reason may exceed this limit
2. Port Chalmers race committee boat, is likely to anchor more than 14 times in a 6 month period
3. Trailer yacht cruisers on the harbour may well anchor more that 14 times/days in a 6 month period

I therefore feel that the above limit is overly restrictive (with my understanding of the intention to limit anchoring to a total of 14 days in a 6 month period) and has the potential to capture people that you are not intending to, leaving them open to potential prosecution.

If you are wanting to limit long term anchoring in the harbour, it would seem reasonable that the limit could be much longer, or add a clause requiring that all vessels anchoring in the Otago Harbour for more than 14 days must provide on request details of their permanent mooring or storage location to the harbour master. If these details do not satisfy the harbourmaster that anchoring in the Otago Harbour is temporary, the vessel must be removed from the harbour.

Maybe something like the below

Any vessel anchored within the Otago Harbour for more than 14 days in any six month period shall either
a) obtain prior approval of the Harbourmaster.

b) provide on request details to the Harbourmaster of their permanent mooring or storage location that demonstrates, to the Harbourmasters satisfaction, that the period of anchoring is only temporary.

Upload any supporting documents (optional)

Upload any documents you have to support your feedback, or upload your feedback itself. For visual and audio feedback, please include the links in a document.

Accepted file formats: PDF, Word, Excel, JPG, PNG.

Max size of each file: 5 MB

Maximum number of files you can upload: 3

About you (optional)

What area do you live in?

Which age group are you in?

Which of the following describe/s you? Select all that apply.

