

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?

Proposed 14-day anchoring bylaw for Otago Harbour

First, it is not clear what "problem" the Council is trying to address and what the justification would be for creating a bylaw. Pleasure boating is a very, very limited activity everywhere south of the very top of the South Island.

Otago Harbour is a large body of water comprising many bays which afford anchoring. Not only a visiting yacht can easily spend more than two weeks in it without representing an issue, but it is plainly unreasonable to attempt to force it out of the only all-weather shelter on the coast between Bluff (140NM away) and Oamaru (42NM away and dangerous to approach in heavy easterly swells) within just 14 days, being subsequently banned from returning for 2 months. A vessel undertaking a cruise to Stewart Island could easily pass Otago Peninsula twice within 60 days and could, at times, remain weather bound in Otago Harbour for more than 14 days without doing anything unusual.

It seems quite obvious that there are far too few boats and more than enough space for any yacht to become a "problem" in the entirety of Otago Harbour. The Council appears to be attempting to address

another issue and I would suggest to begin with stating it explicitly.

A somewhat comparable bylaw exists in the Auckland region and it prohibits remaining anchored in the same location for more than 14 days. It is rarely enforced, as most anchored vessels don't represent a problem, regardless of how long they stay in one place. The bylaw however enables taking action if and when a vessel becomes a problem.

Oamaru Harbour

I wish to point out from experience that the designated anchoring area, W of Sumpter Wharf, offers very poor holding. Vessels can anchor reliably N of the end of Sumpter Wharf. The anchorage can become uncomfortable at high tide with heavy swells outside, but it remains safe and holding is excellent.

The body of open water parallel to Holmes Wharf is an access channel and could be designated as a prohibited anchoring area with some benefits. Occasional visitors have had to be moved on after anchoring there in the past.

AIS

I am unconvinced about the actual benefit that would ensue from the installation of AIS transmitters on small commercial craft as proposed. Ships cannot realistically avoid them in the restricted waters of Otago Harbour. On the other hand, their comparably shallow draft allows them to keep clear of ships, which are highly visible and follow a defined track.

The increase in cost and complexity from the point of view of the operator seems difficult to justify.

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.

