

# Draft Navigation Safety Bylaw 2026 feedback

\* Compulsory question

## Your contact details

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

<b>Name</b>	<input type="text" value="REDACTED"/>
<b>Organisation (if you are submitting on behalf of an organisation):</b>	Jet Boating New Zealand Inc
<b>Email address:</b>	<input type="text" value="REDACTED"/>
<b>Phone number</b>	<input type="text" value="REDACTED"/>
<b>Postal address</b>	<input type="text" value="REDACTED"/>
<b>Do you wish to speak to your submission at a public hearing?</b>	<input type="button" value="Yes"/>

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 refer to Feedback and supporting appendix attached.

## 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

**File upload**



**About you (optional)**

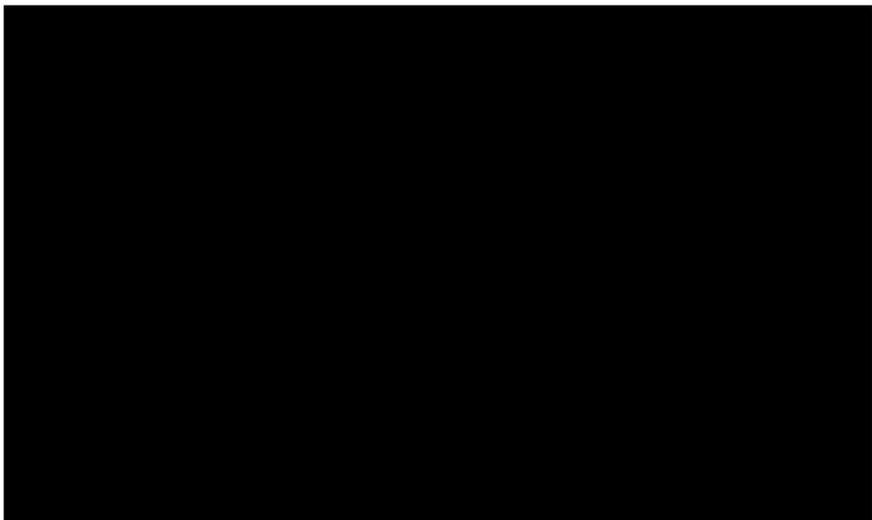
**What area do you live in?**

**Please specify.**

**Which age group are you in?**

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

**Please specify.**





# Feedback to Otago Regional Council: Navigation Safety Bylaw Review 2026

Revision: 5  
Dated: 17 February 2026

Jet Boating New Zealand (JBNZ) is pleased to provide feedback to the committee regarding the Navigation Safety Bylaw Review and specifically the recently notified Proposed Navigation Safety Bylaw 2026.

The feedback is provided below. Note that the feedback is in reference to recreational jet boating activities.

## Background

The committee will be aware of the Maritime New Zealand Rules concerning Navigation Safety. Part 22 provides for collision prevention, and Part 91 provides for navigation safety. These Rules together support safe navigation of vessels operating on the water.

Part 91 also provides a default control on the speed of vessels as well as an exemption from the same in some circumstances. The exemption is referred to as a *speed uplifting*.

JBNZ has obtained many speed upliftings for New Zealand rivers, or sections of rivers, and over many years. These upliftings enable recreational jet boating activities within the rivers or sections of rivers. Without the upliftings recreational jet boating cannot effectively occur.



## Present Speed Uplifting's

Otago Regional Council has delegated responsibility to impose a Bylaw on Navigation Safety within the waterways in the Region. The Bylaw refers to the Maritime Rules and particularly Part 91. It also refers to circumstances for speed upliftings.

The present speed upliftings within the region under the control of the Otago Regional Council are enabled via the provision of Special Speed Zones (SSZ) noted below.

## Areas Subject to Special Speed Zones

### Region's Inland Waterways

#### Manuherekia River:

The Manuherekia River from the confluence with the Clutha River to the Falls Dam in St Bathans, between August and September when the flow is between 10 cumecs and 45 cumecs as measured at the Ophir gauge.

#### Mid Clutha River:

Speed unlimited for all vessels in Clutha River, including all waters of Lake Roxburgh, between Fruitgrowers Road bridge at Clyde and the Rail Bridge at Balclutha.

#### Taieri River:

The Taieri River from the bridge at Outram downstream to the confluence with Waipori River, between 15 July and 15 August when the flow is more than 30 cumecs as measured at the Outram gauge.

#### Taieri River:

The Taieri River from the Gravel Pit at Hyde downstream to the Pukerangi Road Bridge in Pukerangi, between August and September when the flow is more than 20 cumecs as measured at the Waipiata gauge.

#### Taieri River:

Speed unlimited for all vessels from bridge at Outram Glen to the Rock Garden 7km northeast of the State Highway 87 bridge.



Upper Clutha River:

Speed unlimited for all vessels in Clutha River between boundary of Queenstown Lakes District Council and Lake Dunstan. Navigation safety for Lake Dunstan is administered by Otago Regional Council.

Waipori River:

Speed unlimited for all vessels more than 30m from shore, from the upstream end of Riverside Road to the State Highway bridge at Titri. Excludes Taieri River upstream of confluence with Waipori and other tributaries of Waipori River.

## Feedback from Jet Boating New Zealand

### General Comments

1. JBNZ has a constitutional objective to share waterways with other users. The belief is that our waterways are an important natural asset that can be enjoyed by many, and in a variety of ways. This should be recognised, and all waterway users need to develop practical and sensible ways to use and enjoy the waterways having regard to other users and safe navigation.
2. The use and enjoyment of waterways for recreational jet boating is facilitated by Rules and Standards in District Plans, as well as authorised exemptions from the general speed limits imposed under the Maritime New Zealand Rules.
3. Rules and Standards within District Plans typically reference the effects of the 'land use activity' on the environment. These Plans sit within the Resource Management Act. The 'land use activity', being watercraft operating on the surface of water, is typically allowed when these effects are less than minor or the effects are appropriately avoided, mitigated or remedied.
4. Clauses under the Maritime New Zealand Rules reference safety aspects of the activity of navigating the waterway by vessels. A default 5 knot maximum speed applies to most motorised vessels when near the shore and/or close to other vessels and people within the waterway unless there is a speed uplifting to exempt them from the default speed.
5. In most instances recreational jet boating requires speeds greater than the default maximum 5 knot speed. Recreational jet boats are designed for effective and safe navigation when the hull is 'on the plane'. This is typically achieved and maintained when the boat speed exceeds 5 knots.
6. JBNZ is active in advocating for waterway access for recreational jet boating. It participates in Resource Management Act related regulatory exercises that enable or allow the 'land use activity' of recreational jet boating.
7. JBNZ is also active in obtaining speed upliftings under the Maritime New Zealand Rules. This enables recreational jet boats to be exempt from the default general speed limits in certain localities, and in some circumstances subject to both time and water flow restrictions.

8. Many speed upliftings are now facilitated by Regional Councils via Regional Navigation Safety Bylaws. Hence JBNZ is active in participating in Regional Navigation Safety Bylaw Reviews.

#### Specific Comments

9. Otago Regional Council is presently going through a Navigation Safety Bylaw Review exercise. A proposed Bylaw has been prepared, and it is now available for public viewing with an invitation for the public to provide feedback via a formal submission process.
10. JBNZ has studied the proposed Bylaw and is happy to provide the following feedback.
11. For the specified rivers, JBNZ seeks to amend the circumstances for activities within the existing Special Speed Zones as follows
  - a. Speed unlimited for the Manuherekia River from the confluence with the Clutha River to the Falls Dam in St Bathans, between July August and to September inclusive when the flow is between 10 cumecs and 45 cumecs as measured at the Ophir gauge. In addition, October to the following March inclusive when the flow exceeds 20 cumecs measured at the Ophir gauge.
  - b. Speed unlimited for the Taieri River from the Gravel Pit at Hyde downstream to the Pukerangi Road Bridge in Pukerangi, between August and September to December inclusive when the flow is more than 20 cumecs as measured at the Waipata Tiroiti gauge.
  - c. Speed unlimited for the Taieri River from the bridge at Outram downstream to the confluence with Waipori River, between 15 July and 15 August when June to August inclusive and November to the following March inclusive when the flow is more than 30 20 cumecs as measured at the Outram gauge.
12. JBNZ also seeks an additional Special Speed Zone and qualified circumstances for unrestricted vessel speeds as follows.
  - d. Speed unlimited for the Lindis River from the confluence with the Clutha River upstream, between July to September inclusive when the flow is more than 20 cumecs as measured at the Ardour Road gauge.

13. The reasons in support of these amendments and additions are as follows.

- a. JBNZ seeks to reasonably maximise opportunities for recreational jet boating within the Region albeit doing so in circumstances where consideration of other users and safe navigation is achieved.
- b. To this end JBNZ has liaised with the Regional Harbourmaster who has provided useful information on recorded concerns and complaints of recreational jet boating activities over the last 5 years. No such records exist, and this provides comfort that recreational jet boating impacts on the public in general are less than minor and acceptable. Specifically, it strongly suggests that there are no public navigation safety aspects that need any regulation beyond the general Maritime New Zealand Rule requirement that motorised vessels shall be operated in a safe manner.
- c. JBNZ has also liaised with Otago Fish and Game recognising that recreational jet boating activities may have navigation safety related impacts on people undertaking fishing activities. Otago Fish and Game has provided formal 'approval' to the JBNZ proposal, and we refer you to their correspondence in [Appendix A](#) dated 26 January 2026.

A key element of this approval is recognition that fishing activities can be practically isolated from recreational jet boating activities simply by imposing restrictions on the later according to flow volumes. Low flows make recreational jet boating impractical, and higher flows often make fishing impractical or unsuccessful.

- d. No other consultation has occurred for other potential river users. JBNZ is not aware that other river users such as rafters and kayakers use the subject rivers to any great and regular extent.
- e. JBNZ takes the view that it is preferred that specific waterways are subject to some degree of regulation and control of recreational jet boating, rather than having an unregulated regime. The extension to this is that waterways considered to be suitable for recreational jet boating should be identified. In addition, the controls relating to recreational jet boating on those waterways need to be practically determined and imposed.

Hence JBNZ has considered the Regions waterways and seeks both amendments to the controls within the existing Special Speed Zones and the addition of a further Special Speed Zone for the Lindis River.

- f. For the Tairei River section between Gravel Pit at Hyde downstream to the Pukerangi Road Bridge in Pukerangi, JBNZ consider that the river flow is more relevant measured at the Tiroiti gauge rather than the Waipiata gauge. The Tiroiti gauge is further downstream and closer to this section of the river and will provide a realistic representation of water flows.
- g. Note that these amendments and additions have been considered over a lengthy period and with primary consideration of navigation safety; both for the occupants of the jet boats and others who may be in proximity of the waterway.
- h. JBNZ is comfortable that navigation safety can be reasonably achieved on these waterways during the noted periods and when the specified water flows occur – noting that there are other Maritime Rules that also apply and further support the safe operation of vessels on the water.

## Summary

Thank you for the opportunity of providing feedback to the committee via this submission. Members of the Otago Branch and National Executive of JBNZ will be happy to discuss the feedback matters in further detail if and as necessary. Member details are provided below.

We also appreciate that there will be an opportunity to attend a Hearing to present the submission matters to the committee. Members of the Otago Branch of JBNZ intend to attend the Hearing and speak to the feedback.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



## Appendix A

Fish and Game written approval dated 26 January 2026



January 26, 2026

Otago Jet Boat Association (OJBA)

Via Email:

**Subject: No Objection to proposed Speed Uplift Amendments for Navigational Safety Bylaws**

Dear OJBA Team,

I am writing to formally advise that the Council has reviewed your proposal for speed (5-knot) uplift changes as outlined in our recent discussions.

Following an assessment by our staff, the Council offers no objection to the proposed amendments you intend to submit to the Otago Regional Council (ORC) as part of their Navigational Safety Bylaws review.

### **Basis for Decision**

Staff analysis indicates that these proposals are unlikely to negatively impact recreational angling or fish spawning. This conclusion is supported by several factors:

- **Minimal Impact:** Most changes are extensions of existing uplifts or occur during high flows when rivers are typically unsuitable for angling or spawning.
- **Proven Track Record:** There have been no logged complaints from anglers regarding current uplifts (in the ORC jurisdiction), and jetboat events remain well-notified.
- **Collaborative Relationship:** The Council remains committed to maintaining positive relationships with all river users.

## Summary of Supported Amendments

The Council supports the following specific changes to the bylaws:

### Manuherikia River

- **Current uplifting:** August/September when flow at Ophir gauge is between 10–45 cumecs
- **Agreed:** Add July to current parameters and October to march if above 20 cumecs

### Upper Taieri

- **Location:** Pukerangi Road Bridge to Hyde Gravel Pit
- **Current uplifting:** August/September, flow above 20 cumecs at Waipiata gauge
- **Agreed:** Add October, November, and December to current uplifting period

### Lower Taieri

- **Location:** Confluence of Waipori River to Outram
- **Current:** 15 July to 15 August, flow >30 cumecs at Outram gauge
- **Agreed:** Closed April/May and September/October; open the rest of the year with flow above 20 cumecs

### Lindis River

- **Current:** Closed
- **Agreed:** Open July, August, and September when above 20 cumec

We appreciate the OJBA's proactive engagement on this matter. We believe these adjustments provide a balanced approach that respects both jetboat enthusiasts and the river environment.

Yours sincerely,

