

CARDIFF BAY YACHT CLUB

GAFFERS IN THE BAY



Assessment of Risk for the Gaffers Series.

Assessment undertaken 15/4/2026

Undertaken by Gaffers Series Organisers

Signed and dated ... Roger Wallington 15/4/2026

Assessment Review Date: Annual or when circumstances dictate.

Hazard

- Danger inherent in sailing craft originating from the interaction of spars, sails and cordage all in a waterborne environment subject to changing weather conditions.
- Multiple craft engaged in competitive racing, sometimes at close quarters, with the possibility of collision, navigation error, stranding.
- Possibility of collision resulting from several, different racing fleets competing within a common geographical area and possibly under diverse race management.
- Interaction of leisure racing fleet and commercial shipping using constrained navigation channels.
- Interaction of leisure racing fleet and other non-racing leisure vessels.
- interaction of leisure racing fleet and small commercial ferries within Cardiff Bay.
- Severe inclement weather.
- Operation and deployment of club vessels used for waterborne race management and mark laying.

Those at Risk

- Crew members of participating vessels
- Race management when deploying waterborne techniques.

- Crew members of other non-racing leisure vessels.
- General public and crew aboard small ferries within Cardiff Bay.

Controls Deployed to Manage Risk Levels

- **Race Management:**

Each race is controlled by a designated race officer. A race officer will have significant sailing and racing experience. A race officer will either be certificated, having attended a race officer (RYA) recognised course, or will have been judged to be of significant experience and, additionally, undertaken duty as an assistant race officer to the cruiser racing chairman who will have demonstrated the guidance and controls available to club race officers.

Race officers must have sailing instructions, a chart of the race area, binoculars, timers, hand held radios, notepad and pens.

However, as there is no massed start and that boats individually sail a predetermined course, self-timing, over a protracted sailing period then risks will be further reduced

- **Dangers inherent in sailing:**

It is not considered possible to eliminate the dangers inherent in sailing, but measures have been introduced to mitigate the risk:

All races are conducted under the auspices of the Racing Rules of Sailing of the World Sailing, and all competitors acknowledge this when completing their entry forms. This is considered to promote the orderly conduct of racing with the resultant reduction in the risk of collision and injury.

In both the Notice of Race and the Sailing Instructions all competitors are reminded of their absolute responsibility to maintain their vessels and to manage the competence of both crew and vessel in relation to prevailing conditions.

All competitors are required to carry insurance for their activities in the amount of £3m. All competitors are required to carry a minimum of safety equipment.

All competitors declare their familiarity with the current Notice of Race and Sailing Instructions on completion of the Registration Form to further control the conduct of racing with a view to reducing risk.

- **Different racing fleets:**

The club schedules racing within the bay so as to separate the timing of racing undertaken by different fleets operated by the club. Races with possible overlap with neighbouring clubs are resolved by inter-club liaison usually involving an agreement to stagger starting times and deploying courses which minimise any overlap.

Race Officers will ensure that different classes involved in the same club race are given courses which avoid fleets rounding common marks in opposite directions.

- **Scrutineering:**

Scrutineering is not considered necessary if racing within Cardiff Bay, but it is still necessary for each skipper to ensure that his boat, and crew, is in a proper condition to compete.

- **Interaction with commercial shipping:**

Race officers are encouraged to liaise with Cardiff Harbour Control to establish whether any shipping is likely to affect the intended race, and any information received passed to competitors.

- **Interaction with other water users:**

All users of Cardiff waters are governed by the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea and the Regulations of the Harbour Authority. Further club regulation is not considered to be able to improve the position and incidents of this nature are virtually unknown.

- **Severe inclement weather:**

Guidance to race officers indicates that races will not be undertaken if the Met Office forecast for Cardiff predicts steady winds over 15 mph and/or gusting in excess of 20 mph for the scheduled time of the race.

- **Deployment of club vessels:**

Gaffers normally self-time between fixed transits and thus no mark laying is required. If mark laying is required for any reason, then the following applies.

All race officers or mark layers scheduled to use a club vessel are required to hold a minimum qualification of PB2 or higher. Qualification to Day Skipper and above is considered to be acceptable and may require an approval trial under the authorisation of the General Manager. Potential users of club vessels should consider attending PB2 courses if they do not already hold the requisite level of qualification.

Vessel familiarisation sessions are held for those that require them on request.

Operators of club mark laying vessels are provided with guidance notes which identify requirements to use a kill cord, wear a buoyancy aid and other safety procedures. They are also provided with a safety 'barrel' containing a kill cord, radio, first aid kit and length of rope.

Operators should wear gloves when laying and lifting marks and wear suitable clothing commensurate with the prevailing weather. Hats and sunscreen should be used if appropriate.

Any defects must be reported to the Race Officer who will relay the report to the General Manager for remedial action.

All Safety Boats are serviced in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

Risk Levels

Hazards identified are all considered to be low risk following the adoption of the control regime implemented by the club.

Supporting Documentation

The following documentation is revised at least annually and circulated to those individuals involved in the various race management roles and is also available on the Gaffers page of the CBYC website:

- Series Entry forms. These acknowledge familiarisation with other supporting documentation.
- Notice of Race.
- Sailing Instructions
- Safety Regulations
- Gaffers T&Cs
- Chart of the Bay