

Preparing for a Blairgowrie Yacht Squadron

Keelboat Equipment Audit

The safety audit is an inspection conducted by an accredited Club Equipment Auditor (CEA) who represents Blairgowrie Yacht Squadron. Boats must have a current safety audit certificate to compete in BYS keelboat club racing. It does not remove or replace the boat owner's ultimate responsibility for safety, nor does it cover crew training/experience or an assessment of hull structure, stability, or integrity. The audit is simply an independent assessment that the owner has complied with Australian Sailing Special Regulations and is valid for 12 months from being approved.

Members can download the relevant equipment audit form on the BYS website. BYS club racing is all category 6 ratings however many non-club events require higher ratings and would require a separate safety audit to achieve that higher rating if required. Keelboat owners wishing to compete in events such as Cock Of The Bay should be mindful that this event is a category 5 event and would be wise to do their yearly audit as a cat 5 audit to cover them for such races like this, should they wish to compete to save a separate audit being required.

The compliance requirements are set by the Australian Sailing Racing Rules of Sailing 2021-2024. Updates are also available on their website. For new keelboat owners, the Special Regulations can appear overwhelming, however, there is plenty of assistance and advice available from the Sailing Office, and when renewing, this process will be a lot easier the second time.

Owners are advised to work through the equipment compliance form and ensure they have all the required equipment, that it is in good and working condition and if necessary, has been serviced and/or is in date in particular - flares, medical items, fire extinguishers, personal floatation devices (PFDs). The audit is ideally a one-off inspection (renewed annually), taking about an hour.

Book an audit by contacting one of the club auditors from the list provided by the Sailing Office. Audits are generally available on race day mornings and through the week. Audits won't be completed without a booking.

Some tips from The Sailing Office

Showing something is in service is much easier to prove to the CEA if you have copies of service certificates with you on the day.

onboard on the day of the audit.

Personal or crew-owned gear and certificates will be required and you must have it all. Ensure all medical kits and documentation are up to date well before the audit date.

Be prepared for your safety audit booking day/time. Have storm boards out, uncover

sea cocks, look up fuel and water capacities, engine horsepower, ensure aerials are in place and radio is turned on, storm sails on deck ready to be viewed and able to be ready to hoist if necessary.

The category equipment audit form must be **fully completed, signed** and lodged with the Sailing Office **prior** to the audit – this includes the owner completing the boat details on page 1 and **initialling** each requisite item in the owner column of subsequent pages.

Book a date and time for the audit.

To save a lot of time, before the inspection, the owner (and crew member, recommended) should lay out all of the equipment from its storage position for ease of inspection. **If not done the audit may need to be re-scheduled.**

Compliant or not, the Equipment Audit Form is returned to the Sailing Office. Copies of completed (compliant) forms can be provided for inclusion in other club's race entries but the original remains on file with the Sailing Office.

Steps for a Safety Audit

- Fill out and initial the appropriate Equipment Audit Form form.
- Lodge form and book audit
- Before the audit commences, lay out **ALL** the gear for the inspection
- Lodge the completed form (pass or fail) with the Sailing Office.

Owner's Responsibility

- It is the owner's responsibility to ensure that all crew know the location of equipment on the boat, and how to use or deploy the equipment, for example how to use flares, wear and use PFDs, set storm sails, and know how to conduct man overboard recoveries. Crew training is part of the process of achieving safe sailing.
- All equipment for all crew necessary to comply with the Special Regulations category of the event, as notified in the Sailing Instructions or Notice of Race, shall be maintained on the boat for the event at all times.

After your boat has satisfactorily met the safety requirements, the CEA signs off the Equipment Audit form and then submits the form to the Sailing Office. You should be sent a copy of this form as well for your files.

If there is an outstanding item/s on your boat that requires attention, the auditor will not sign off unless this is completed. This will mean a re-visit from the auditor to check these items off. Please be mindful that this could delay documents reaching the Sailing Office so do all you can to prepare for your audit to minimise this occurring.