



Kayaking and
canoeing
Safety strategy
2009-2014



MARITIME NEW ZEALAND KAYAKING AND CANOEING SAFETY STRATEGY 2009-2014

Summary

The table below provides a summary of the key components and the primary focus of initiatives under the strategy - more details follow.

Safety component	Proposed initiatives
1. Accommodation providers supplying kayaks for clients	Guide to responsibilities
2. Qualifications for commercial kayaking	Recognition of national qualifications
3. Safety systems for commercial kayaking	Recognition of OutdoorsMark, Qualmark, and Register of Outdoor Safety Auditors
4. Novice and intermediate kayaker knowledge/local knowledge for experienced overseas kayakers	Kayak safety promotion
5. Multisport and kayak adventure racing	Kayaking event participation certificate

Purpose

This strategy sets out priority areas for Maritime New Zealand (MNZ) safety initiatives in the area of kayaking and canoeing over the next 3 to 5 years.

It is a high level document and as such makes no attempt to prescribe or provide a blueprint for any particular initiative. Rather, the strategy is there to provide a sense of overall direction and a "framework" for developing initiatives by providing a reference point grounding specific programmes to the best current assessment of the key problems and opportunities.

The strategy should be regarded as a "living document" that is subject to review and development. As projects under the strategy move forward, and as the record of safety performance of kayaking expands, new information and evidence may emerge that would indicate that the problem and opportunity statements in the strategy should be revisited. We should also not rule out the possibility that entirely new ones be added to, or substituted for, those set out in this document.

Background

MNZ has developed the safety in kayaking strategy from information gathering, analysis and consultation over the period April 2007 to December 2008.

The strategy is aimed at safety in kayaking generally, rather than the commercial sector specifically, because the analysis revealed that most of the recorded accidents were in the recreational kayaking sector, or at the margins of the continuum between that sector and commercial operations.

The recreational kayaking elements in this strategy complement the initiatives under the New Zealand Pleasure Boat Safety Strategy that have general application to pleasure craft, including kayaks.

The strategy does not take a stringent rules-based approach because it was found that:

- there is a generally adequate level of safety performance by commercial operators
- there are established and evolving industry standards available
- the accident record over recent years does not warrant it.

This strategy has evolved from two rounds of consultation with the kayaking community and other stakeholders: the first on the basis of an initial draft circulated to industry for comment in late 2007; the second from a formal, revised draft released in August 2008, incorporating "co-regulation" of kayaking qualifications and safety systems where MNZ recognises industry standards.

This strategy works in tandem with MNZ safety guidelines for commercial kayaking and canoeing. Copies of the guidelines are available from the MNZ website: www.maritimenz.govt.nz

Stakeholder participation

Co-operation, support and collaboration with the kayaking communities in carrying forward the various initiatives are central to the strategy. The safety initiatives are aimed at problem or opportunity areas where the greatest impact can be made to reinforce and build on industry-led developments.

The input of stakeholders in providing information and comment on drafts of this strategy is valued, and MNZ aims to maintain that dialogue in the development of initiatives, using the Watersafety NZ-convened, and broadly representative, non-powered craft forum as the focal point.

Components of safety strategy

MNZ has identified five components that make up the kayaking and canoeing safety strategy. Each of these components is discussed in terms of the problem or opportunity they are addressing, proposed initiatives and anticipated outcomes.

1. Accommodation providers supplying kayaks for clients' use

Problem

Lack of provider knowledge of safety and legal responsibilities.

Initiatives

MNZ to produce a guide to responsibilities for hiring/lending small water craft to guests setting out legal requirements and incorporating advice on good practice drawing from:

- MNZ safe boating information
- Kiwi Association of Sea Kayakers (KASK) and New Zealand Recreational Canoeing Association (NZRCA) safety brochures, and Sea Kayak Operators' Association of New Zealand (SKOANZ) code of practice for sea kayak rentals
- contacts for training providers and instructors for various kayak disciplines
- contacts for Coastguard Boating Education
- literature on the day skipper and boatmaster/sea kayak module.

Work with Qualmark to investigate whether it is possible to develop linkages between accommodation ratings and safe management of small craft available for the use of guests.

Outcomes

- There is a higher level of provider awareness of good practice and understanding of legal responsibilities.
- Providers are enabled to manage kayak use appropriately.
- Guests use craft within a less risky setting.

Partners:	KASK, NZRCA, New Zealand Outdoor Instructors' Association (NZOIA), Sea Kayak Operators' Association of NZ (SKOANZ), Coastguard Boating Education, MNZ safe boating advisers, NZ Police, harbourmasters, Qualmark, Tourism Industry Association, accommodation provider associations
Target groups:	Accommodation providers (backpackers, motor camps, motels, bed and breakfasts) and their associations
Priority and timeline:	Complete guide within 12 months. Review impact of code after 2 years. Ongoing promotion and maintenance.

2. Qualifications for commercial kayaking

Problem

There is a lack of uptake of national kayak instructor and guide qualifications incorporating modern methods of assessment and verification of currency.

Initiative

MNZ recognises the kayak qualifications of NZOIA, SKOANZ, Skills Active (formerly Sport, Fitness, Community Recreation Industry Training Organisation), and Industry Training Organisation for Aviation, Tourism, Travel and Museum Industries (ATTTO), and supports recent industry-led initiatives and ongoing development work (entry level kayak qualifications, qualifications revalidation/registration, and outdoor leader standards and qualifications alignment). MNZ, in conjunction with industry, promotes and monitors uptake of qualifications.

Outcome

- There is wide uptake of national qualifications in commercial kayaking operations and reduction in the number of operators without qualified guides/instructors with a positive influence on safety outcomes (reduction in safety risks).

Partners:	Outdoors New Zealand, NZOIA, SKOANZ, Skills Active, ATTTO
Target groups:	Commercial kayak operators, kayak guides and instructors
Priority and timeline:	Revised guidelines issued and promoted by MNZ within 2 months of strategy being finalised MNZ and industry promote and monitor uptake of national qualifications – ongoing.

3. Safety systems for commercial kayaking

Problem

There is a lack of uptake of national quality systems for managing safety in commercial kayaking operations.

Initiative

MNZ recognises OutdoorsMark and Qualmark (for sea kayaking) as quality systems suitable for managing safety in commercial kayaking operations. MNZ recognises the use of auditors from the Register of Outdoor Safety Auditors to develop and verify safety systems.

MNZ incorporates recognition into its revised guidelines for commercial kayaking, and promotes uptake of safety systems. MNZ, in conjunction with industry, monitors the rate of uptake of systems.

Outcome

- There is wide uptake of these two quality systems by commercial kayaking operations and reduction in the number of operators without third party audited safety management systems with a positive influence on safety outcomes (reduction in safety risks).

Partners:	Qualmark, OutdoorsMark, SKOANZ, NZOIA, Register of Outdoor Safety Auditors, harbourmasters, Department of Conservation
Target groups:	All commercial kayak operators (instructional, vocational, tourism, educational, and outdoor pursuits settings)
Priority and timelines:	Revised guidelines issued and promoted by MNZ within 2 months of strategy being finalised. MNZ and industry promote and monitor uptake of safety systems – ongoing.

4. Novice and intermediate kayaker knowledge/local knowledge for experienced overseas kayakers

Opportunity

Promote kayak safety to new and existing recreational kayakers and encourage the use of appropriate safety equipment, paddling in environments appropriate to skill levels, participation in formal training with kayak instructors and, where appropriate, Coastguard Boating Education.

For example, one important safety issue (relevant to both recreational and commercial operations) is awareness amongst kayakers and boaties of the factors affecting visibility and options to increase ways to be seen.

Problem

Too many overseas kayakers and organised overseas groups of kayakers (including educational/instructional trips bringing their own guides and instructors) lack knowledge of local conditions.

Initiatives

MNZ to take a lead in promoting kayak safety by:

- complementing existing safety programmes by sector groups
- recruiting the opinion leaders in those groups to the project
- providing material to kayakers at point of sale and to harbourmasters for support in promoting safe navigational practices.

MNZ to take the lead in developing information and advice targeted at visiting overseas kayakers to increase knowledge of local conditions and New Zealand kayaking lore.

Outcomes

- Fewer collisions and close quarter incidents between powered craft and kayaks.
- New recruits and would-be recruits to recreational kayaking are encouraged and are set on a path to become confident, free and independent paddlers.
- Better uptake of existing safety products (KASK sea kayak handbook, Coastguard sea kayak module, NZRCA river safety and river rescue courses).
- Fewer accidents and incidents involving novice paddlers, and experienced overseas kayakers.
- MNZ and its partners broaden and deepen relationships that contribute to ongoing collaboration in promoting kayaking safety.

Partners:	KASK, NZRCA, SKOANZ, NZOIA, Coastguard Boating Education, harbourmasters, importers, retailers (including non-specialists), manufacturers
Target groups:	Novice and intermediate kayakers, visiting overseas kayakers
Priority and timelines:	Key products to be developed within 12 months. Promotion of products ongoing. Periodic reviews to assess impact and update content.

5. Multisport and kayak adventure racing

Problem

The quality of certificates, required of competitors in multisport and kayak adventure race events perceived as providing evidence of general competency in river kayaking, is inconsistent, and there are no certification arrangements for events involving sea kayaking, or flatwater lakes and rivers.

Initiative

MNZ to facilitate:

- re-focusing the grade 2 kayaking certificate as a kayaking event participation certificate, and more comprehensively specify competencies and assessment standards
- developing certification for kayaking event participation involving sea kayaking, and flatwater lakes and rivers.

Outcomes

- The training and assessment of multisporters and kayak racers are aligned to needs and are consistent.
- Holders of the certificate are more realistic in their assessment of what they are competent to do.

Partners:	Multisport NZ, Canoe Racing NZ, NZRCA, KASK, NZOIA, "independent" kayak instructors
Target groups:	Multisport and race kayakers and event organisers
Priority and timelines:	New certificate available within 2 years. Initial review within 2 years of introduction and subsequent periodic review.