

Date: October 18, 2025

Dear Members,

After a very careful and thorough review, the National Committee of the Windsurfer Class Association of Australia (WCAA) resolved **not** to proceed with the 2026 Australian Nationals at Brighton & Seacliff Yacht Club (BSYC).

This decision was made with full consideration of the health, safety, and legal responsibilities owed to our members, the host club, and volunteers.

While this outcome is deeply disappointing for many, it represents the only responsible course of action available to the Association.

1. The Environmental Situation in South Australia

Over the past several months, the South Australian coastline has been affected by a persistent algal bloom (*Karenia mikimotoi*) stretching from Aldinga to Semaphore.

- The bloom has been closely monitored by PIRSA, Environment SA, and SA Health, with daily updates issued via algalbloom.sa.gov.au.
- According to the State Government, exposure to discoloured water or foam may cause eye, skin, and respiratory irritation, particularly for those with asthma or allergies.
- While short-term exposure effects are documented, the impact of prolonged exposure over a multi-day regatta is not yet understood.
- In recent weeks, the South Australian Government has committed more than \$100 million to mitigation and recovery efforts, acknowledging that the bloom may persist into the summer months.

Given this uncertainty, the WCAA cannot guarantee safe sailing conditions for competitors and their families over the course of the Nationals.

2. Local Government and Public Health Authority Requirements

Any event on metropolitan beaches requires cooperation with local councils, the Department for Environment and Water, and the Department for Health.

- Councils have the power to withdraw event permits or close beaches if public safety risks are identified.
- Public Health authorities may restrict access to affected marine areas if conditions deteriorate suddenly.
- Emergency Services also retain authority to suspend marine activities at short notice in response to updated risk assessments.

With these overlapping jurisdictions, the Association cannot rely on consistent access or approvals if conditions remain unstable.

3. Member Consultation and Poll Results

The WCAA conducted a national survey to gauge member sentiment last week, which had a strong response.

- Only around 50% of respondents intended to attend the Nationals under current conditions.
- Two-thirds advised postponement or relocation rather than proceeding in January.
- Many cited concerns about health, uncertainty, and the potential for last-minute cancellation.

With participation likely to be halved, the event would not represent a credible or fair national championship.

4. The Position of the National Committee

At the meeting held via Zoom on October 16th, 2025, the National Committee decided to cancel the Nationals at BSYC on the following grounds:

- Unknown long-term health risks from five days of exposure.
- Reduced participation making a true national contest unviable.
- Unacceptable financial and legal risk to the Association.
- Member sentiment and fairness — the clear majority do not wish to proceed under current conditions.

The Committee expresses its gratitude to Brighton & Seacliff Yacht Club and its members for their professionalism and effort throughout this challenging period.

5. Next Steps – Planning for a Safe and Successful 2026 Nationals

- Discussions are underway with various clubs to host the 2026 Nationals.
- The WCAA Executive Committee will confirm the location and dates once final approvals are received.

6. Appreciation and Acknowledgment

We acknowledge that many members had already booked travel and accommodation in South Australia. We encourage you to contact providers promptly regarding cancellations, as most bookings made this far in advance should attract only minimal penalties.

The WCAA thanks every sailor who contributed feedback to our polls and discussions. Your

honesty and pragmatism have ensured that this decision reflects the collective will and best interests of our community.

We want to express our sincere gratitude to the BSYC team for their exceptional planning, enthusiasm, and professionalism. The club has been supportive from the outset, investing significant time and energy to prepare for what promised to be an outstanding event. Their leadership and cooperation throughout this process have been exemplary, and we remain enormously appreciative of the Clubs partnership and goodwill.

In Summary

- The 2026 Nationals will not proceed in South Australia.
- The decision was based on public health advice, legal and insurance constraints, and clear member sentiment.
- The WCAA is now working to relocate to an alternative venue. We are extremely confident that a suitable location will be confirmed very shortly.
- If you've already entered the Nationals and would like a refund please contact Peter Holton: peter_holton@mac.com But you might like to wait until the new venue is announced.

Thank you for your understanding for this careful, evidence-based decision. Together, we will continue to uphold the safety, fairness, and spirit of the Windsurfer Class.

With respect and appreciation,

Greg Johns
President – Windsurfer Class Association of Australia
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