

Sail GP Investigation Whakaraupō Harbour

- **DOC investigated a possible breach of the Marine Mammals Protection Regulations during the final Sail GP race on Sunday, 19 March.**
 - DOC's investigation of the incident was unable to establish that a breach occurred.
 - DOC's role was to advocate for the protection of marine mammals, and to carry out compliance functions if any incidents involving protected wildlife occurred.
 - During the event, two Hector's dolphins being tracked by the event's marine mammal observers moved toward the race area.
 - The onsite marine mammal observer coordinator notified the race controller and recommended racing should cease. This was supported by the Department's staff and the mana whenua representative. The SailGP race director did not make the call to cease racing nor instruct the boats to drop off their foils.
 - Although no dolphins were injured or killed during the event it is disappointing that race officials did not act on DOC advice. DOC is considering its approach for future events.

NOT FOR RELEASE

If this type of breach had occurred, the maximum penalty would be a fine of \$10,000. There is also the option of a \$600 infringement fee. Looking forward, and to ensure this does not happen again, there are several options which will be considered. 9(2)(f)(v)

9(2)(g)(i)

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