



# Race Management Procedure



# Wireless Communications

Produced by:

Royal Brighton Yacht Club, Race Committee

[www.rbyc.org.au](http://www.rbyc.org.au)



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## Start Procedure

The following procedure outlines the essential steps for effective race management in accordance with Rule 26 of the Racing Rules of Sailing. This guide is designed to ensure a fair and standardized start to each race, providing clarity and consistency for both race officials and participants.

Race management is a critical component of competitive sailing, requiring precise timing, clear communication, and strict adherence to established protocols. By following this procedure, race officials can confidently manage the start of each race, ensuring that all competitors have an equal opportunity to compete under fair conditions.

This procedure includes detailed instructions for pre-race signals, timing, and post-start monitoring, emphasising the importance of visual signals and the correct use of sound signals. It serves as a comprehensive guide for race officials, helping them to execute their duties with accuracy and professionalism.

We hope this guide will be a valuable resource for race management teams, enhancing the overall quality and fairness of sailing competitions.



## Boat Start Procedure

Time	Signal	Sound	Time keeper call
6 minutes before the start	None (confirm with RO P, U or Black flag start and no course change).	QUIET ON BOAT	"1 minute to class flag up with one sound signal; QUIET AND NO NON-ESSENTIAL TALK NOW"
5 minutes 30 seconds	None	None	"30 seconds to class flag up with one sound signal"
5 minutes 15 seconds	None	None	"15 seconds to class flag up with one sound signal"
<b>5 minutes 10 seconds</b>			<b>"10,..... 5, 4, 3, 2, 1,NOW"</b> <b>Class Flag Up</b>
5 minutes	<b>Class Flag Raised (Warning signal)</b>	<b>One sound</b>	"1 minute to P (or U/Black) flag up with one sound signal"
4 minutes, 30 seconds			"30 seconds until P (or U/Black) flag up with one sound signal"
4 minutes, 15 seconds			"15 seconds until P (or U/Black) flag up with one sound signal"
4 minutes, 10 seconds			<b>"10,..... 5, 4, 3, 2, 1,NOW"</b>
4 minutes	<b>"P" Flag Raised (Preparatory Signal)</b>	<b>One sound</b>	<b>"P(or I/Z/Black) UP, 3 minutes to P (or I/Z/Black) flag down with one sound signal"</b>
3 minutes			"2 minutes to P (or U/Black) flag down with one sound signal"
2 minutes			"1 minutes to P (or U/Black) flag down with one sound signal"
1 minute 30 seconds			"30 seconds to P (or U/Black) flag down with one sound signal"

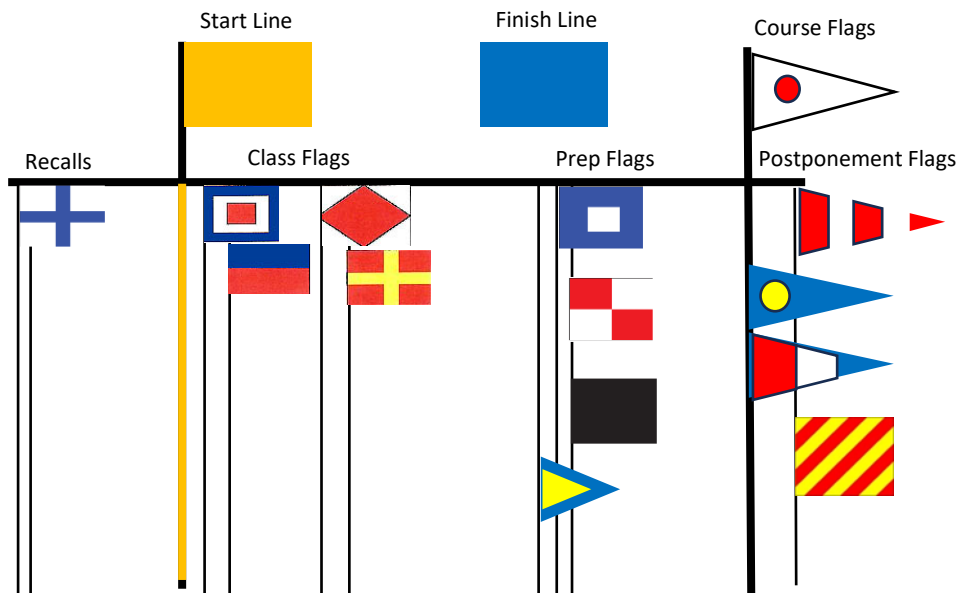


1 minute 30 seconds			"30 seconds to P (or U/Black) flag down with one sound signal"
1 minute 15 seconds			"15 seconds to P (or U/Black) flag down with one long sound signal"
1 minute 10 seconds			"10,..... 5, 4, 3, 2, 1,NOW"
<b>1 minute</b>	<b>"P" Flag lowered</b>	<b>One long sound</b>	<b>"P(or U/Black) DOWN; 1 minute</b> to class flag down with one sound signal"
30 seconds			"30 seconds to class flag down with one sound signal"
20 seconds			"20 seconds to class flag down with one sound signal"
15 seconds			"15 seconds to class flag down with one sound signal"
<b>10 seconds to Start</b>			<b>"10,..... 5, 4, 3, 2, 1,NOW"</b>
<b>Start</b>	<b>Class Flag Down</b>	<b>One sound signal</b>	<b>"Start"</b>
<b>Individual Recall</b>  (Ideally for 1- 2 sec after Start. Maximum 4 sec)	<b>"X" Flag Up</b>	<b>One sound signal</b>	" Individual Recall Flag with one sound signal, together"  Sound signal maybe made accompanying flag. Flag stays up for 4 min OR until all OCS boats return
<b>General Recall (ASAP)</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Sub flag up</b>	<b>Two Sounds</b>	"General Recall Flag and two Sound Signals"-  Sound signals maybe made accompanying flag. Flag down when RO says at least 1 min prior to new warning





## Standard Flag Positions (Start Boat)

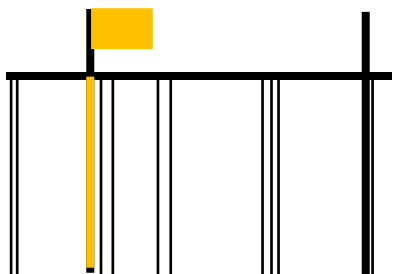


View from Course Side

## One Design / Keelboats Course Board

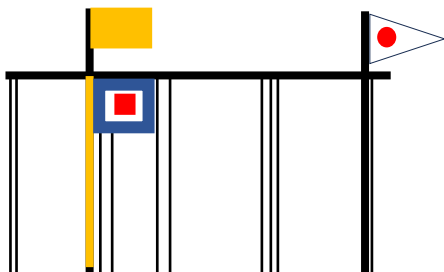


Course Bearing and Distance in Nautical Miles displayed on stern of Start Boat. Displayed a Minimum of 5 min, before Start Time.



10 Min Before Start Time

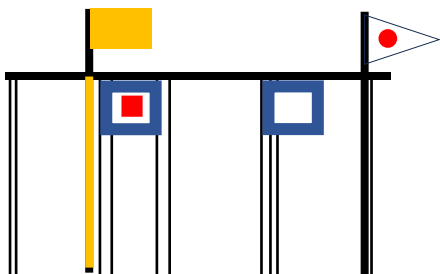
Orange Flag Up



5 Min Before Start Time

Class & Course Flags Up

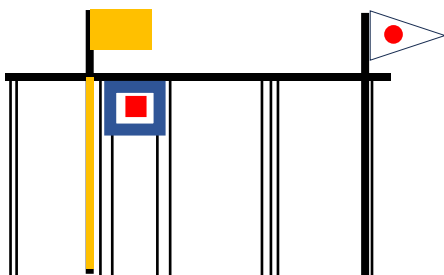
1 Sound Signal



4 Min Before Start Time

Preparation Flag Up

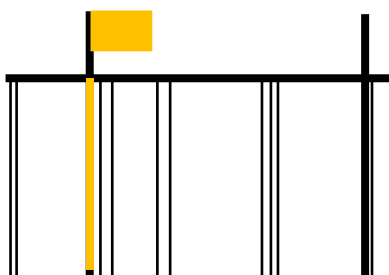
1 Sound Signal



1 Min Before Start Time

Preparation Flag Down

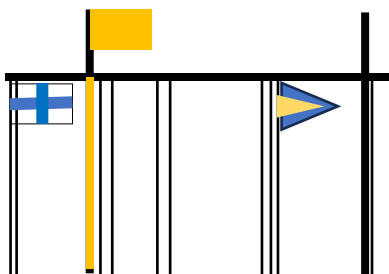
1 Long Sound Signal



Start Time

Class & Course Flags  
Down

1 Sound Signal



After Start Time

Individual Recall Up

1 Sound Signal or

General Recall for  
multiple boats over start  
line before start time

2 Sound Signals



OTB Course Boa Rd



OTB Course Board  
Showing Class Insignia  
and Course displayed on  
stern of Start Boat.  
Displayed a Minimum of 5  
min, before Start Time.





## Tower Start Procedure

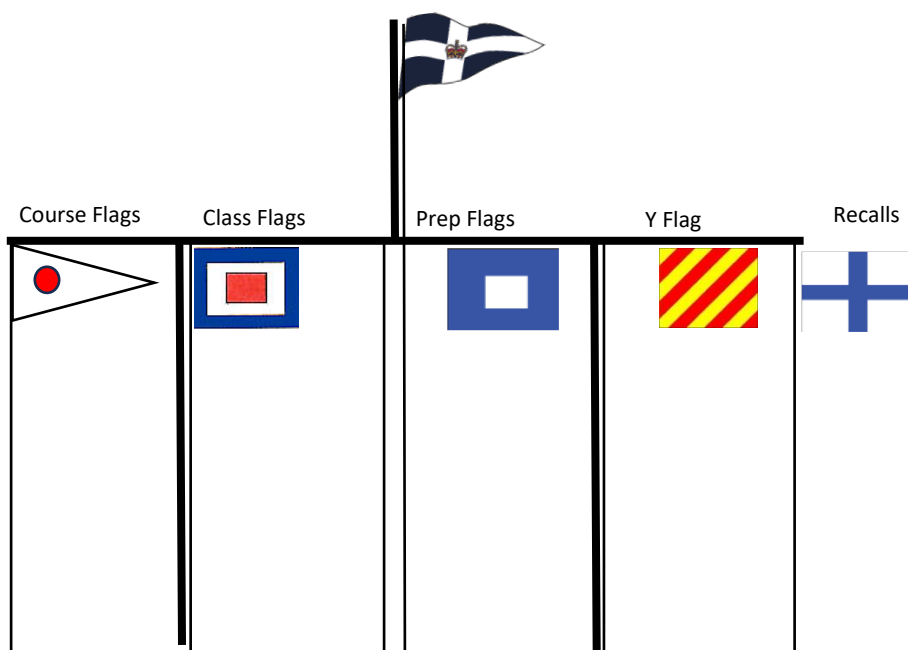
Time	Signal	Sound	Time keeper call
6 minutes before the start	None (confirm with RO P, I, Z or Black flag start and no course change	QUIET IN TOWER	"1 minute to class & Course flags up with one sound signal; SILENCE AND NO NON-ESSENTIAL TALK NOW"
5 minutes 30 seconds	None	None	"30 seconds to class flag up with one sound signal"
5 minutes 15 seconds	None	None	"15 seconds to class flag up with one sound signal"
<b>5 minutes 10 seconds</b>			<b>"10,..... 5, 4, 3, 2, 1,NOW"</b> <b>Class Flag Up</b>
5 minutes	<b>Class &amp; Course Flags Raised (Warning signal)</b>	<b>One sound</b>	"1 minute to P (or I/Z/Black) flag up with one sound signal"
4 minutes, 30 seconds			"30 seconds until P (or I/Z/Black) flag up with one sound signal"
4 minutes, 15 seconds			"15 seconds until P (or I/Z/Black) flag up with one sound signal"
4 minutes, 10 seconds			<b>"10,..... 5, 4, 3, 2, 1,NOW"</b>
4 minutes	<b>"P" Flag Raised (Preparatory Signal)</b>	<b>One sound</b>	<b>"P(or I/Z/Black) UP, 3 minutes to P (or I/Z/Black) flag down with with one sound signal"</b>
3 minutes			"2 minutes to P (or I/Z/Black) flag down with one sound signal"
2 minutes			"1 minutes to P (or I/Z/Black) flag down with one sound signal"
1 minute 30 seconds			"30 seconds to P (or I/Z/Black) flag down with one sound signal"



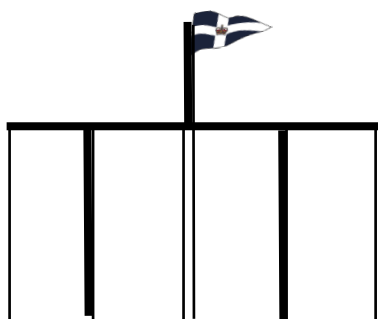
1 minute 30 seconds			"30 seconds to P (or I/Z/Black) flag down with one sound signal"
1 minute 15 seconds			"15 seconds to P (or I/Z/Black) flag down with one long sound signal"
1 minute 10 seconds			"10,..... 5, 4, 3, 2, 1,NOW"
1 minute	"P" Flag lowered	One long sound	"P(or I/Z/Black) DOWN; 1 minute to class flag down with one sound signal"
30 seconds			"30 seconds to class flag down with one sound signal"
20 seconds			"20 seconds to class flag down with one sound signal"
15 seconds			"15 seconds to class flag down with one sound signal"
10 seconds to Start			"10,..... 5, 4, 3, 2, 1,NOW"
Start	Class Flag Down	One sound signal	"Start"
Individual Recall  (Ideally for 1- 2 sec after Start. Maximum 4 sec)	"X" Flag Up	One sound signal	" Individual Recall Flag with one sound signal, together"  Sound signal maybe made accompanying flag. Flag stays up for 4 min OR until all OCS boats return
General Recall (ASAP)	1 <sup>st</sup> Sub flag up	Two Sounds	"General Recall Flag and two Sound Signals"-  Sound signals maybe made accompanying flag. Flag down when RO says at least 1 min prior to new warning



## Standard Flag Positions (Tower Start)

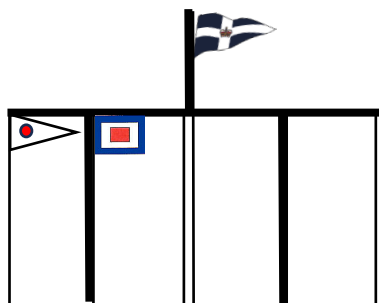


View from Course Side



Minimum 10 Min Before  
Start Time

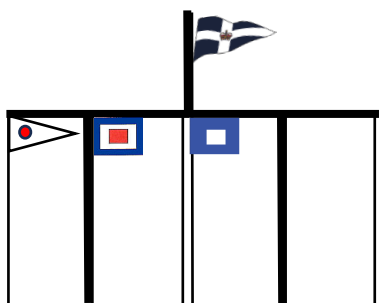
Burgee Up



5 Min Before Start Time

Class Flag Up

1 Sound Signal

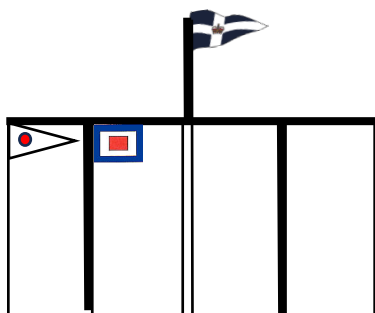


4 Min Before Start Time

Prep Flag Up

1 Sound Signal

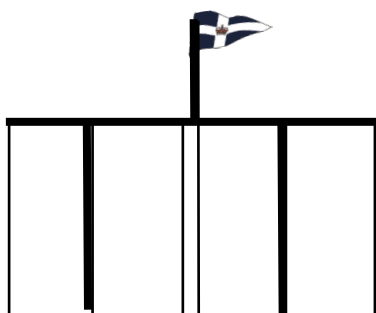




1 Min Before Start Time

Prep Flag Down

1 Long Sound Signal

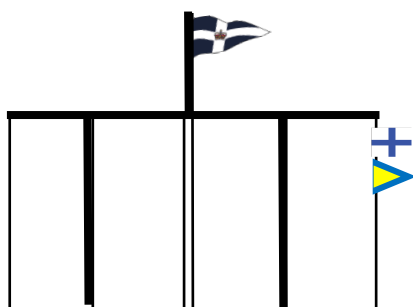


Start Time

Class Flag Down

Coarse Flag Down

1 Sound Signal



After Start Time

Individual Recall Up

1 Sound Signal    **or**

General Recall Up for  
multiple boats over start  
line before start time.

2 Sound Signals.



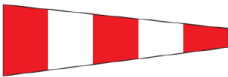
# Additional Race Management Signals

“Times shall be taken from the visual signals; the absence of a sound signal shall be disregarded.” To paraphrase, the visual signals (flags) prevail over the sound signals.

## Postponement Signals



**AP** Races not started are postponed. The warning signal will be made 1 min. after removal unless at that time the race is postponed again or abandoned.



**AP over H** Races not started are postponed. Further signals ashore



**AP over A** Races not started are postponed. No more racing today.

## Abandonment Signals



**N** All races in progress are abandoned. Return to the starting area. The warning signal will be made 1 min. after removal unless at that time the race is abandoned again or postponed.



**N over H** All races in progress are abandoned. Further signals ashore.



**N over A** All races in progress are abandoned. No more racing today



## Preparation Signals



↑ ● ↓ —

**P** Preparatory signal.



↑ ● ↓ —

**I** [Rule 30.1](#)



↑ ● ↓ —

**Z** [Rule 30.2](#)



↑ ● ↓ —

**U** [Rule 30.3](#) is in effect.



↑ ● ↓ —

**Black flag.** [Rule 30.4](#) is in effect.

**“I and Z Preparation Flags” are available but very rarely used.**

## Recall Signals



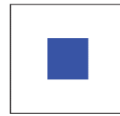
↑ ●

**X** Individual recall.



↑ ● ● ↓ ●

**First Substitute** General recall.  
The warning signal will be made 1 minute after removal.



↑ ● ●

**S** The course has been shortened. [Rule 32.2](#) is in effect.



## Changing the next leg



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**C** The position of the next *mark* has been changed:



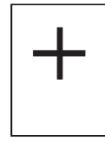
to starboard;



to port;



to decrease the length of the leg;



to increase the length of the leg.

## Other Signals



**L** Ashore: A notice to competitors has been posted.  
Afloat: Come within hail or follow this vessel.



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**M** The object displaying this signal replaces a missing *mark*.



**Y** Wear a personal flotation device (see [rule 40](#)).



(no sound)

**Blue** flag or shape. This race committee vessel is in position at the finishing line.



## Pin / Mark Laying Boat Procedure

### Pin Boat

Responsible for setting the course marks in conjunction with the RO and provide the RO with updates about sailing conditions around the course.

Setting Start Mark

Laying Gate Marks

Laying Leeward Mark

Setting Finish Mark

The Start Mark and Finish Mark are set in conjunction with the RO and you should be providing the RO with updates about sailing conditions around the course.

The Pin Boat should be in position outside the Starting Mark, sighting the line from that end, to verify OCS Contestants during the start procedure.

For General Recalls – Display General Recall Flag (1<sup>st</sup> Sub) and round up competitors who have continued to first mark.

This boat will carry the marks it is required to lay, together with spare marks, counter weights, ropes and anchors.

### Mark Laying Boat

Responsible for setting the course in conjunction with the RO and provide the RO with updates about sailing conditions around the course.

Laying Windward Marks

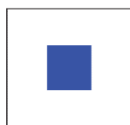
All Marks should be laid in conjunction with courses set in Buoy Zone by RO. To facilitate with adjustment of the course to a new wind as set by RO.



The Mark Laying boat may be used as a safety boat although its main task is to stand by for alterations to the course in the event of a wind change. This vessel, like the Mark boats, is a source of information to the Course Race Officer. This boat will carry the marks it is required to lay, together with spare marks, counterweights, ropes and anchors.

Both Mark Laying boats and Pin Boats should be equipped with visual and sound signals. The flags to be carried should include Shortened Course, Missing Mark, Course Change Signals, Abandon and, if appropriate for the event, the rule 42 'switch off/switch on' signals.

### Shortened Course



**S** The course has been shortened. [Rule 32.2](#) is in effect.

### Missing Mark



**M** The object displaying this signal replaces a missing mark.

### Abandoned Race



**N** All races that have started are abandoned. Return to the starting area. The warning signal will be made 1 min. after removal unless at that time the race is abandoned again or postponed.

### Changing the next leg



**C** The position of the next mark has been changed:



to starboard;



to port;



to decrease the length of the leg;



to increase the length of the leg.



## Rule 42 Signals



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Flag 'O' – rule 42 does NOT apply



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Flag 'R' – rule 42 applies

Flag 'O' may be displayed before or with the Warning signal to indicate rule 42 does not apply, as specified in the class rules

After the starting signal, flag 'O' or flag 'R' may be displayed at a mark with repetitive sound signals.

## Rescue Boat Procedure

Rescue Boats should be of adequate capability to assist boats in distress under adverse conditions. An adequate number of patrol craft should be provided. Each craft should be manned by at least two competent persons. Depending on the racing environment, Patrol boats should carry thermal blankets, water, sunscreen, seasick tablets, knife, wire-cutters and Safety Tape.

During races the rescue boat should be positioned within the top third of the course or following mid fleet as may be requested by RO.

Coach Boats are also expected to act as Rescue Boats when requested by Race Committee.



## Guidelines for Radio Communications

### Boat Starts

When the start boat is on station, the Race Committee's initial call is:

*To all boats in the Brighton [series name], this is your Race Committee on the start boat [boat name]. We are currently on station and located approximately [x] nm [direction] (e.g. 1.5nm South-West, 0.5nm Northwest, etc.) of the RBYC Tower.*

*[Call sign]/Race Committee out.*

### Start/Abandon/Postpone

- a) We intend to start on time; or*
- b) Today's racing is postponed due to [current reason] (e.g. lack of wind). We will continue to assess the conditions and will update you in [x] minutes; or:*
- c) Today's racing has been abandoned due to current and forecast weather conditions, which are not expected to improve.*

Race to be started - Following a postponement:

*To all boats in the Brighton [series name], this is your Race Committee.*





*The postponement flag has been lowered and we intend to start the [first] race at: [x] (Time to be in 24-hour format e,g 14:35) with a warning signal at: [x]*

*The courses for today will be:*

*Division 1 will sail course [a]*

*Division 2 will sail course [b]*

*Combined Division will sail course [c]*

*I say again:*

*Division 1 will sail course [a]*

*Division 2 will sail course [b]*

*Combined Division will sail course [c]*

**Then:**

*The windward mark/s (or windward gate) is/are laid on a bearing of [x] degrees at a distance of [x] nm (and [x] nm where there are multiple windward marks)*

**If applicable:**

*Please be aware that Code Flag Y is displayed, and all crew shall wear appropriate life jackets.*

**Then:**

*All boats are reminded to sign on all persons on board with Sailing Hub and boats that are not starting are requested to keep clear of the starting area. [Call sign]/your Race Committee out.*

Message B) to be repeated 2-5 minutes before warning signal

Starting sequence

*Before the warning signal - 30 seconds out:*



To all division [A/B/1/2/3] boats, your warning signal is less than 30 seconds away and we will provide a countdown over the radio.

Countdown: Warning Signal in 10, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1

*After start:*

[Clear Start] OR [General Recall] OR [Individual recall Sail Numbers x, y, z]  
and then repeated once.

Race shortening:

*To all boats in the Brighton [series name], this is your Race Committee.*

*Please be advised that the race [for Division X] will be shortened at [location]*

(e.g. Leeward Gate)

*I say again, the race [for Division X] will be shortened at [location].*

*[Call sign]/Race Committee out.*

Time Limit expiry:

*To all boats in the Brighton [series name], this is [call sign]/your Race Committee.*

*Please be advised that the time limit for this race has now expired.*

*[Call sign]/Race Committee out.*



## Tower Starts

### **Tower Starts [call sign is: Brighton Tower]**

When tower is manned and operating, 10 minutes before the first warning signal:

*To all boats in the Brighton [series name]. This is your Race Committee.*

### Start/Abandon/Postpone

- d) *We intend to start on time; or*
- e) *Today's racing is postponed due to [current reason] (e.g. lack of wind). We will continue to assess the conditions and will update you in [x] minutes; or*
- f) *Today's racing has been abandoned due to current and forecast weather conditions, which is not expected to improve.*

*Brighton Tower, your Race Committee out.*



## Race to be started

Following a postponement:

*To all boats in the Brighton [series name], this is your Race Committee.*

*The postponement flag has been lowered and we intend to start the [first] race at: [x] (Time to be in 24-hour format e.g. 14:35) with a warning signal at: [x]*

*The course for today will be [Division 1 – Course a], [Division 2 – Course b]*

If applicable:

*Please be aware that Code Flag Y is displayed, and all crew shall wear appropriate life jackets.*

Then:

*All boats are reminded to sign on all persons on board with Sailing Hub and boats that are not starting are requested to keep clear of the starting area.*

*Brighton Tower, Race Committee out.*

## Race shortening:

*To all boats in the Brighton [series name], this is your Race Committee.*

*Please be advised that the race [for Division X] will be shortened at [location]*

*I say again, the race [for Division X] will be shortened at [location].*

*Brighton Tower, Race Committee out.*



At race time limit expiry:

*To all boats in the Brighton [series name], this is your Race Committee.  
Please be advised that the time limit for this race has expired.*

*Brighton Tower, Race Committee out.*

Immediately prior to leaving Tower for the day:

*To all boats in the Brighton [series name], this is your Race Committee.  
Please be advised that Brighton Tower is closing down.*

*Brighton Tower, Race Committee out.*





## Radio Protocols

RBYC shares our main working radio frequency with several other Clubs who also conduct sailing events at the same time we do. As a result, it is important that our radio operators use the facility in the most efficient and effective way.

The way to do this is to follow the procedures set down in the Marine Radio Operators Handbook – the authoritative reference for your Radio Licence.

Set out below are procedures and terminology which are often misused or misunderstood by radio operators.

### Composing your message

In order to keep your radio traffic brief and concise, it is essential that you compose your message **BEFORE** pressing the transmit button. Think through how to say what you want in the briefest way. Do not use the radio for chatting or lengthy explanations – your mobile phone is better for that!

Before transmitting, listen on the working frequency to ensure that you are not cutting across other radio traffic.

Golden Rule: **KEEP THE MESSAGE BRIEF AND SUCCINCT**



## Voice procedures

A summary of the correct use of common terms and phrases:

(Always refer to the call sign you are calling first, followed by your call sign)

To initiate a call: ***called station Call Sign*** (say once only) **THIS IS**  
***calling station*** (your call sign) (say twice)

**OVER** (this indicates you expect a reply but is not mandatory when the quality of the signal is good)

If there is no response: Repeat initial call followed by **NOTHING HEARD, OUT**

To respond to a call: ***Calling station call sign*** (them) **THIS IS** (*your call sign*), **GO AHEAD**

To end a call: ***your call sign OUT*** (This means you do not expect any further response. Do not use **STANDING BY**)

To expect a response: **OVER** (but see above)

To ask for a message to be repeated: **SAY AGAIN** (**REPEAT** is only used to emphasise an instruction)

Acknowledge a the preferred reply is **ROMEO**

Message: .

If a calling station is unclear: **STATION CALLING *your call sign*, SAY AGAIN CALL SIGN ID.**





