

## **Terms of Reference**

### ***Yachting New Zealand Membership and Affiliation Advisory Group***

#### **Purpose**

The purpose of the Membership and Affiliation Advisory Group (“the Advisory Group”) is to provide structured, evidence-informed advice to Yachting New Zealand (YNZ) to support a strategic review of the national membership and affiliation model.

The Advisory Group will provide insight to help identify and inform potential future models for consideration by the YNZ Board prior to the 2026 AGM.

The Advisory Group will not act as a decision-making body, but will support YNZ management by:

- assessing the strengths and limitations of the current affiliation and membership model; and
- developing and testing potential options for future models for management consideration.

The Advisory Group is established in recognition of significant structural, financial and demographic changes across New Zealand boating and sailing clubs. It will support YNZ to ensure that membership and affiliation arrangements are fair, transparent, financially sustainable, and accurately reflect participation in sailing - while also supporting the long-term viability of grassroots clubs and the strategic objectives of YNZ.

#### **Context**

In undertaking its work, the Advisory Group will explicitly take into account:

- The sustained financial pressure facing many boating clubs over the past decade.
- Evidence that a significant proportion of affiliated club members do not own boats, do not actively sail, and do not directly participate in YNZ-sanctioned activity.
- The prevalence of dual or multiple club memberships, resulting in duplication within national membership reporting.
- Concerns that current reporting overstates the number of active sailing participants within affiliated clubs.
- Perceptions that the current flat-rate affiliation fee model disproportionately impacts smaller, grassroots clubs with low membership fees, while larger clubs contribute a materially lower proportion of total membership revenue relative to benefit received.

The Advisory Group will also consider broader trends affecting community sport participation, including changing patterns of engagement, declining volunteer capacity, youth participation pathways, and the need for flexible and inclusive membership models.

In addition, the Advisory Group will maintain focus on what constitutes a viable and sustainable level of funding from affiliation fees to enable YNZ to deliver essential services and functions for - or on behalf of - sailors, boaties, and affiliated clubs, class and regional associations.

## Objectives

The Advisory Group will assist YNZ management to:

- Review the current membership and affiliation fee structure.
- Assess the fairness, proportionality and transparency of affiliation fees across clubs of different sizes and models, as well as other members as defined in YNZ Constitution.
- Identify baseline data requirements to ensure consistency, accuracy and integrity of national membership and participation data used for reporting, funding and advocacy.
- Identify membership models that better distinguish between active sailing participation and other forms of club engagement.
- Support the development of youth-focused membership pathways that are accessible, relevant and aligned with young people's needs and values.

## Scope of Advice

The Advisory Group will consider, but not be limited to, the following areas:

### a. Membership Proposition and Classification

- Reframing membership from a primarily transactional model to one centred on belonging, purpose and development.
- Differentiating between active sailing participation, casual participation, and social membership.
- Clarifying which categories of membership derive direct benefit from YNZ affiliation.

### b. Affiliation Fee Structure

- Reviewing the equity and proportionality of the current flat-rate affiliation fee model.
- Exploring alternative models (e.g. tiered, usage-based, participation-linked or hybrid approaches).
- Assessing how affiliation fees interact with club membership pricing and grassroots accessibility.
- Considering the alignment between fees paid and benefits received across different club types.

### c. Non-Competitive and Social Participation

- Recognition of non-racing participation as a valid and valued form of engagement.
- Reducing implicit pressure for clubs or individuals to align with competitive racing pathways.
- Ensuring affiliation settings do not privilege racing-focused models at the expense of community-based participation.

### d. Digital, Data and Reporting Considerations

- Improving clarity around what membership represents at a national level.
- Reducing duplication arising from multi-club memberships.

- Strengthening the credibility of YNZ participation data used for government, funder and stakeholder reporting.

**e. Values-Led Membership and Contribution**

- Embedding wellbeing, environmental responsibility and community contribution into membership value.
- Enabling youth and community participation that may not align with traditional club models.
- Articulating the broader social value of sailing beyond competition.

**Out of Scope**

The Advisory Group will not:

- Make binding decisions on affiliation fees or membership policy.
- Negotiate individual club arrangements.
- Replace the governance role of the YNZ Board or management.

**Membership of the Advisory Group**

The Advisory Group will comprise a balanced mix of:

- YNZ management representatives including the Chief Executive.
- Representatives from grassroots clubs and larger clubs.
- Youth or young adult representatives.

To ensure a balanced and representative perspective is recommended that the Advisory Group should include:

<b>Role / Perspective</b>	<b>Recommended Members</b>	<b>Rationale</b>
<b>YNZ Management</b>	3 (CE, Finance Manager, GM Community and Development)	Provides insight into organisational strategy, operational constraints and policy implications.
<b>Grassroots Club Representatives</b>	3-4 small to medium clubs across different regions	Ensures voices of clubs facing financial and participation challenges are heard.
<b>Large/Competitive Club Representatives</b>	1-2 members from major club(s)	Provides perspective on high-performance pathways, racing infrastructure and resource utilisation.
<b>Youth/Young Adult Representatives</b>	2-3 members aged 16-30	Ensures youth perspectives are embedded, particularly regarding low-barrier, social and non-competitive engagement.

*Total recommended size: 10-12 members.*

In addition, individuals with expertise in community sport economics, membership systems or governance may be called on for guidance and/or advice.

Upon finalisation of the Terms of Reference, expressions of interest will be sought from Club representatives who meet the membership requirements noted above.

Appointments will be made by the Chief Executive in consultation with the YNZ Board.

The Advisory Group will be co-Chaired by the CE of YNZ and an appropriately qualified club representative, endorsed by the YNZ Board. The co-Chairs will agree the agenda of each meeting, ensure pre-reading materials are circulated in a timely manner, and work together to Chair meetings.

### **Reporting and Outputs**

The Advisory Group will provide YNZ management with:

- Clear findings on the strengths and weaknesses of the current model.
- Options for alternative affiliation and membership structures, including impacts on different club types.
- Recommendations to improve fairness, accuracy and sustainability.
- Considerations for transition and implementation.

### **Timeframe**

The Advisory Group is established as a time-limited body, operating for a defined review period of no more than six months, with meeting frequency agreed at commencement.

It is anticipated that members will be required to attend up to six meetings, each of no more than two hours duration.

### **Operating Principles**

The Advisory Group will operate with:

- Respect, transparency and good faith.
- Recognition of the diversity of club models and realities.
- Evidence-based analysis.
- A commitment to fairness, sustainability and long-term participation growth.