

Media Release

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MetService and Maritime New Zealand partner to help paddleboarders stay safe while on the water.

This week metservice.com and the MetService weather app will feature new paddleboarding forecasts, to be followed by kayaking forecasts in the near future. The new forecasts are the product of a partnership between MetService and Maritime New Zealand aimed at helping more people in New Zealand stay safe and make informed decisions when heading out on the water.

Research has shown many Kiwis using light watercraft don't check a suitable marine forecast when heading out, and some were relying on land-based forecasts which can vary significantly from conditions experienced at sea.

Ramon Oosterkamp, MetService General Manager Meteorological Operation says just because it's a great day to head to the beach doesn't necessarily mean it's safe to head out on the water.

"Factors such as offshore winds, swell and sea state play a big part in the risk of activities such as paddleboarding and kayaking. These new forecasts are specifically designed to help people who are not familiar with marine forecasts to make informed decisions.

Matt Wood, Maritime NZ Principal Advisor Recreational Crafts says this partnership will play a key role in helping those on the water understand the conditions.

"There are likely to be watercraft users who may be inexperienced with certain activities and having this easily accessible information should help them as they prepare for days out on the water," Matt Wood says.

In 2021 approximately two million people in New Zealand were involved in recreational boating activities, and sadly 22 of these people lost their lives. During spring and summer more people are out on the water and sadly more incidents of harm occur.

"The three most important things you can do to stay safe on the water are, wear your life jacket, carry at least two waterproof ways to call for help and check the MetService marine weather forecast," says Matt Wood

The new seven-day forecasts display a paddleboarding condition risk rating (high, medium, or low) alongside the forecast factors (wind, wind direction, gusts and wave height) used to calculate it. The forecast for each day provides a three hourly rating.



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“The seven-day forecasts enable you plan ahead – to decide what day and time of day has the best conditions for paddleboarding at your favourite locations,” says Ramon Oosterkamp.

There are also tips on how to stay safe on the water and in some cases local advice on specific hazards to be aware of.

The forecast locations are those popular with paddleboarders and were chosen in consultation with New Zealand Stand Up Paddling. The list of locations will continue to grow over time.

The paddleboarding forecasts can be found on the marine pages of metservice.com following the paddleboarding tab (www.metservice.com/marine/paddleboarding), and there is also information on all the urban forecast pages.

This product was developed by MetService’s ocean team at MetOcean Solutions. Forecasts will also appear on Swellmap.com.

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NOTES TO THE EDITORS

About MetService

MetService is New Zealand’s National Meteorological Service helping people to make informed decision based on the weather whether they are in the air, on land or at sea.

A team of 60 trained operational meteorologists, qualified to the World Meteorological Organization training standards, provide New Zealand’s forecasts and official Severe Weather Watches and Warnings service.

[MetOcean Solutions](#), based in Raglan is the oceanographic division of MetService.

As a State-Owned Enterprise, MetService’s core purpose is to protect the safety of life and property in New Zealand, while operating as a commercial business.