

Australian Drag Boat Association

Official Rulebook



This rulebook supersedes all other previous rulebooks and is subject to change. Any person finding an anomaly is required to contact the Secretary of the Australian Drag Boat Association (ADBA) so that a correction can be carried out.

ADBA Committee

23rd September, 2025

Table of Contents

Table of Contents	1
Introduction	3
Foreword	3
Disclaimer and Scope of Rules	3
Part A: Sporting Regulations	4
A1: Racing Classes and Specifications	4
A1.1: Official ADBA Racing Classes	4
A1.2: Racing Class Summary Table	5
A1.3: Professional Class Specifications	7
A1.4: Sportsman Class Specifications	7
A2: Competition and Elimination Procedures	8
A2.1: Qualifying	8
A2.2: Class Changes Post-Qualifying	8
A2.3: Eliminations	9
A2.4: Elimination Round Infractions	9
A2.5: The Break Rule	10
A2.6: Grounds for Elimination vs. Disqualification	10
A2.7: Concluding an Incomplete Race	11
A3: National Championship and Records	11
A3.1: ADBA High Points Championship Series	11
A3.2: Establishing National Records	12
Part B: Safety and Technical Regulations	13
B1: General Safety and On-Water Procedures	13
B1.1: Mandatory Event Briefings	13
B1.2: Minimum Rescue and Medical Requirements	13
B1.3: Role Qualifications & Credential Currency (Mandatory)	13
B1.4: Post-Incident Protocol	15
B1.5: On-Water Conduct and Procedures	15
B1.6: Unsafe Equipment and Practices	16
B2: Boat Technical and Safety Requirements	16
B2.1: General Construction and Appearance	16
B2.2: Drivetrain Safety	16
B2.3: Control Systems Safety	17
B2.4: Miscellaneous Equipment	17
B3: Driver Personal Safety Equipment	17
B3.1: Core Protective Gear	18

B3.2: Head and Neck Restraints	18
B3.3: Driving Suits and Life Jackets (Tiered Requirements)	18
B3.4: Driver Safety Equipment Summary Table	19
B4: Specialised Craft Regulations	20
B4.1: Enclosed Cockpit Boats (Capsule and Cell)	20
B4.2: Jet Boats	20
B4.3: Young Stars Class	21
B5: Fuel Regulations	21
B5.1: Permitted Fuels and Definitions	21
B5.2: Fuel Restrictions	21
B5.3: Refuelling and Spill Mitigation	21
Part C: Governance and Administration	22
C1: Association Membership and Licensing	22
C1.1: Membership Requirements	22
C1.2: Competition Boat Log Book (CBLB)	22
C2: Participant Obligations and Code of Conduct	23
C2.1: Assumption of Risk	23
C2.2: Compliance with Rules and Decisions	24
C2.3: Code of Conduct and Owner Responsibility	24
C3: Event Procedures and Protests	24
C3.1: Event Registration	24
C3.2: Competition Limitations	24
C3.3: Protests	25
C4: Association Authority and Final Provisions	25
C4.1: General Provisions	25
C4.2: Regulation of Advertising	25
C4.3: Final Determination	25
Part D: Glossary of Terms	26



Introduction

Foreword

Drag boat racing is a timed acceleration event conducted between two vessels, side-by-side, from a standing start over a measured straight-line course—typically 1000 ft in length. Each race consists of only two boats competing in clearly defined lanes, separated by marker buoys and monitored by electronic timing equipment. The objective is to complete the course safely and as close as possible to the nominated time, or in the fastest elapsed time where no index applies, from the starting signal to the finish line. This format differs fundamentally from circuit or mass-start powerboat racing; drag boats do not race in groups, navigate turns, or share lanes. Strict staging, start-light sequencing, and single-pair runs ensure precise timing, controlled conditions, and maximum safety oversight at all times.

This rulebook has been compiled and published by the Australian Drag Boat Association (ADBA), a national governing body for the sport of drag boat racing in Australia. Its express purpose is to establish and make clear the standards that must be met to conduct or participate in any ADBA-sanctioned drag boat race nationwide. The rules, regulations, and safety requirements contained herein have been developed through extensive experience to create a unified, fair, and safe environment for all participants, officials, promoters, and spectators across the country. These rules incorporate current best practices in drag boat safety and event management, ensuring that all racing activities are conducted to the highest technical and safety standards.

Each member, participant, sponsor, and promoter is strongly encouraged to obtain a copy of this rulebook, as well as any release forms required for entry or participation in a sanctioned event. It is advised that this be done well in advance of the first sanctioned event to allow ample time to thoroughly read and understand these regulations, and to review them with legal counsel if necessary. Adherence to these rules is fundamental to the integrity, safety, and future growth of the sport at a national level.

Disclaimer and Scope of Rules

The rules and regulations set forth herein are designed to provide for the orderly conduct of racing events and to establish the minimum acceptable requirements for such events. These rules shall govern the condition of all sanctioned events, and by participating in these events, all participants are deemed to have complied with these

rules. The absence of a specific rule does not imply approval for any action or equipment modification.

NO EXPRESS OR IMPLIED WARRANTY OF SAFETY SHALL RESULT FROM THE PUBLICATION OF OR COMPLIANCE WITH THESE RULES AND/OR REGULATIONS. They are intended as a guide for the conduct of the sport and are in no way a guarantee against injury or death to a participant, spectator, or official.

The ADBA shall be empowered to permit minor deviations from any of the specifications contained herein or impose any further restrictions that, in their opinion, do not alter the minimum acceptable safety and competition requirements. NO EXPRESSED OR IMPLIED WARRANTY OF SAFETY SHALL RESULT FROM SUCH ALTERATION OF SPECIFICATIONS. Any interpretation or deviation of these rules is left to the sole discretion of ADBA officials, and their decision is final.

Part A: Sporting Regulations

This Part governs all sporting aspects of an ADBA-sanctioned event. It includes all regulations pertaining to official racing classes, competition and elimination procedures, and the National Championship points system.

A1: Racing Classes and Specifications

A1.1: Official ADBA Racing Classes

The ADBA sanctions two primary categories of competition: Professional Classes and Sportsman Classes. All classes, unless otherwise specified, will compete on a standard 400-metre drag racing course. The ADBA reserves the right to add, modify, or delete classes at any time to adapt to the evolving needs and participation levels within the sport, ensuring its continued relevance and growth. A sanctioned event need not include all classes listed, and the Race Director may require a minimum number of entrants to constitute a class for competition.

A1.2: Racing Class Summary Table

Category	Class Name	Designator	ET Bracket / Course	Horsepower Range	Vessel Type	Driver Qualifications	Typical Speed Range (incl. Max)	Key Requirements
Professional	Top Fuel Hydro	TFH	No ET Limit / 875ft	8,000 – 10,000+ HP	Hydroplane	Pro Competition Licence	220–270+ mph	Capsule mandatory, Min. Age 18
	Top Alcohol Hydro	TAH	No ET Limit / 875ft	3,000 – 5,000 HP	Hydroplane	Pro Competition Licence	180–210 mph	Capsule mandatory, Min. Age 18
	Top Alcohol Flat	TAF	No ET Limit / 1000ft	3,000 – 5,000 HP	Flatbottom	Pro Competition Licence	180–210 mph	Capsule mandatory, Min. Age 18
	Pro Outlaw	PO	5.20 – 6.19s / 1000ft	3,000 – 5,000 HP	Hydroplane	Pro Competition Licence	170–200 mph	Capsule mandatory, Min. Age 18
	Pro Modified	PM	5.60 – 6.49s / 1000ft	3,000 – 5,000 HP	Hydroplane	Pro Competition Licence	160–180 mph	Capsule mandatory, Min. Age 18
Licensed Sportsman	Top Eliminator	TE	6.50 – 7.49s / 1000ft	800 – 1,200 HP	Flat / Displacement	Competition Driver's Licence	100–150 mph	Min. Age 18
	Pro Comp	PC	7.00 – 7.99s / 1000ft	800 – 1,200 HP	Any Type	Competition Driver's Licence	100–150 mph	Min. Age 16

Category	Class Name	Designator	ET Bracket / Course	Horsepower Range	Vessel Type	Driver Qualifications	Typical Speed Range (incl. Max)	Key Requirements
Non-Licensed Sportsman	Super Comp	SC	8.00 – 8.99s / 1000ft	800 – 1,200 HP	Any Type	Sportsman Licence	90–120 mph	Min. Age 16
	Super Stock	SS	9.00 – 9.99s / 1000ft	600 – 900 HP	Any Type	Sportsman Licence	90–120 mph	Min. Age 16
	Modified Stock	MS	10.00 – 10.99s / 1000ft	400 – 600 HP	Any Type	Sportsman Licence	80–110 mph	Min. Age 16
	River Racer	RR	14.00s – Open / 1000ft	200 – 400 HP	Any Type	Sportsman Licence	70–80 mph	Min. Age 16
	Personal Watercraft	PWC	Dial-in / 1000ft	150 – 350 HP	Jet Ski / PWC	Sportsman Licence	50–80 mph	Min. Age 16
Young Stars	Young Stars	YS	Open / 600ft	8 – 15 HP	Hydro / Displacement	Junior Licence	30–40 mph	Min. Age 8, Max. Age 16

A1.3: Professional Class Specifications

- **Engines:** TFH engines are limited to a maximum displacement of 500 cubic inches (approx. 8193 cc). All other Professional Class engines (TAH, TAF, PM) are limited to a maximum displacement of 565 cubic inches (approx. 9258 cc).
- **Forced Induction:** Superchargers and turbochargers are permitted in all Professional classes. Nitrous oxide is also permitted, but it is strictly prohibited to be used in conjunction with a forced induction engine (supercharger or turbocharger). This rule exists to create a clear and enforceable standard for powertrain combinations, preventing complex and potentially unsafe setups.
- **Fuel:** TFH may utilize a mixture of nitromethane and alcohol (pure methanol), with a minimum of sixty-five percent (65%) nitromethane required. All other alcohol-designated classes must use only pure methanol. Aviation fuel is not permitted in any class under any circumstances.
- **Hulls:** Hull design must conform to the specific class designation as follows:
 - **Top Fuel Hydro and Top Alcohol Hydro:** Competition is restricted to hydroplane hulls only.
 - **Top Alcohol Flat:** Competition is restricted to flatbottom hulls only.
 - **Pro Modified:** Any hull design is acceptable, provided it meets all other safety and capsule requirements for the class.
- **Water Injection:** Water injection systems may be used in any Professional class.

A1.4: Sportsman Class Specifications

- **Engines:** Engines may be of any cubic inch displacement and may be naturally aspirated, supercharged, or fuel injected, including modern Electronic Fuel Injection (EFI) systems.
- **Blowers:** Blown engines may utilize superchargers (Centrifugal, Roots, Screw, or PSI types) or turbochargers. All supercharged engines must use SFI-approved blower restraint systems according to the following table:

Engine Fuel	Supercharger Type	Required SFI Specification
Blown Alcohol	Roots / High Helix	14.1 Straps
Blown Alcohol	Screw Type	14.21 Bag
Blown Petrol	Screw Type	14.21 Bag
Blown Petrol	Roots / High Helix	Not Required

All restraining devices must be secured and in place at all times when the engine is running and must be recertified according to the manufacturer's and SFI's specifications.

- **Fuel:** A wide range of fuels are permitted, including gasoline, alcohol (pure methanol or ethanol), E-85, and nitrous oxide. Aviation fuel is not permitted in any class under any circumstances.
- **Hulls:** Any hull design is acceptable for competition within the Sportsman classes.

A2: Competition and Elimination Procedures

A2.1: Qualifying

Qualifying rounds are held to determine the pairings for the elimination rounds.

- **Qualifying Attempt:** A valid qualifying attempt is defined as the boat reaching the starting line holding rope under its own power, leaving the holding rope when instructed, and subsequently crossing the starting line under its own power. The run is considered a valid attempt regardless of whether it is completed down the full length of the course. The race program will not be delayed to accommodate any boat receiving outside assistance or making repairs.
- **Driver Limitation:** A driver may be permitted to drive more than one boat during qualifying, with prior approval from the Race Director. If the boats are in different classes, the driver must hold a valid license for each class. Qualifying sessions will not be held up to accommodate a driver switching between boats.
- **Infractions during Qualifying:**
 - **Foul Start (Red Light):** A foul start during a qualifying run carries no penalty. The competitor will receive both the Elapsed Time (E.T.) and Miles Per Hour (M.P.H.) for that run.
 - **Breakout:** In E.T. bracket classes, running faster than the class index (a "breakout") during qualifying carries no penalty. The run time is still recorded for pairing purposes.
- **Identical E.T.s:** If two or more boats in the same class record identical qualifying E.T.s, the boat that registered the lower Reaction Time (R.T.) will be deemed the quicker boat for elimination pairing purposes. If both the E.T. and R.T. are identical, the boat that recorded the time first will be considered quicker.

A2.2: Class Changes Post-Qualifying

If a competitor wishes to change from the class in which they originally registered, it is their sole responsibility to notify the timing tower within fifteen (15) minutes of the official

conclusion of qualifying for their class. Their qualifying E.T.s will be transferred to the newly declared class and used for pairing. All championship points will be awarded in the final declared class. Only the registered boat owner or driver may request a class change.

A2.3: Eliminations

Eliminations are conducted as a single-elimination tournament to determine the event winner for each class.

- **Pairings:** Pairings for eliminations are based on the lowest legitimate qualifying E.T. for each boat. Competitors are placed on a standard ladder system according to their qualifying performance and the number of boats in the class.
- **Driver Limitation:** At the discretion of the Race Director, a driver may be permitted to drive a second boat in another class during eliminations. However, the elimination rounds will not be delayed to accommodate a driver switching between boats.
- **Bye Run:** In a class with an uneven number of competitors, a "bye run" is awarded to the #1 qualifier in the first round of eliminations. This grants the competitor an unopposed pass into the next round. The driver may choose to make a pass down the track or advance directly. If the driver chooses not to run, they must inform the Ramp Manager and Timing Tower; they will advance automatically but will be considered the slowest boat for pairing purposes in the next round.
- **Legal Single Run:** A "legal single run" may be awarded to a competitor whose opponent fails to appear for the scheduled elimination round.

A2.4: Elimination Round Infractions

During eliminations, rules infractions determine the outcome of a round.

- **Foul Start (Red Light):** A foul start occurs when a boat crosses the starting line before the green light is illuminated. This results in the immediate elimination of that competitor. If both competitors commit a foul start, the one who left earliest (the greater red light infraction) is eliminated.
- **Breakout:** In Pro Modified and all Sportsman classes, a "breakout" occurs when a boat runs an E.T. quicker than its designated class index. This results in the immediate elimination of that competitor. In the event of a "double breakout," where both competitors run quicker than their index, the competitor who broke out by the least amount is declared the winner.

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- **First or Worst Principle:** Should two different rules infractions occur on the same run during eliminations (e.g., one driver red-lights while the other crosses the centreline), the driver who committed the more serious infraction will be eliminated. Safety violations are generally considered more serious than procedural violations like a foul start. The hierarchy of infractions is determined by the categories and order listed in Rule A2.6. All 'Grounds for Disciplinary Disqualification' are considered more serious than 'Grounds for Sporting Elimination.' Within each list, infractions are presented in descending order of seriousness.

A2.5: The Break Rule

The "break rule" applies only in the final round of eliminations. If a competitor in the final round is unable to compete due to mechanical failure, the Race Director has the discretion to either award a legal single run to the remaining competitor or invoke the break rule. Under this rule, the boat that was eliminated by the broken competitor in the most recently completed round is reinstated to compete in the final.

A2.6: Grounds for Elimination vs. Disqualification

The ADBA recognizes two distinct outcomes for a rules infraction during an event: Sporting Elimination and Disciplinary Disqualification.

- **Elimination:** Refers to a standard sporting outcome where a competitor is removed from the current competition ladder due to a race-based infraction (e.g., losing a round, breakout).
- **Disqualification:** Refers to a penalty for a serious breach of safety, technical, or conduct rules, which removes the competitor from the entire event and may result in further disciplinary action.

The following infractions are grounds for elimination and disqualification:

- **Grounds for Sporting Elimination:** A boat is eliminated from the competition for that day (unless reinstated by the break rule) for any of the following reasons :
 - Losing a valid elimination round.
 - Committing a "breakout" infraction.
 - Failure to report to the launch ramp when called.
 - Failure to proceed to the starting line holding rope under its own power.
 - Failure to leave the holding rope and cross the start line within five seconds of the green light.

- Committing a safety violation on the course, such as crossing the centerline or hitting course equipment.
- Failure to cross the finish line.
- **Grounds for Disciplinary Disqualification:** A boat is disqualified from the remainder of the event and may face further penalties for any of the following actions :
 - Failure to comply with the rules or directions of officials.
 - Unsportsmanlike conduct.
 - Running down the racecourse when red lights indicate the course is closed.
 - Starting an engine while under tow on the water.
 - Any action or practice deemed unsafe by an official.
 - Intentionally defeating or disabling any required safety equipment.
 - Any open boat running quicker than a 6.50 second E.T. on a 1000-ft course.

A2.7: Concluding an Incomplete Race

If an event cannot be completed due to circumstances such as inclement weather, winners will be determined based on the following procedure :

- **Cancelled Before First Round:** The winner of each class will be the #1 qualifier, determined by the lowest legitimate E.T. recorded during qualifying.
- **Cancelled After First Round:** The winner will be determined by the lowest legitimate E.T. recorded during the most recently completed round of eliminations for that class.

A3: National Championship and Records

A3.1: ADBA High Points Championship Series

The ADBA National Championship is determined by a points system that rewards participation, qualification, and success in eliminations throughout the racing season. To be eligible to win the high points championship in a particular class, a competitor must have gained points at more than one event in that class during the season.

The points are awarded as follows :

- **Race Registration:** 50 points
- **Passing Tech Inspection:** 50 points
- **Round Win in Eliminations:** 50 points
- **1st Qualifier:** 10 points

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- **2nd Qualifier:** 5 points

To ensure points are awarded for active participation, points for Race Registration and Passing Tech Inspection are only granted after the competitor has made at least one valid qualifying attempt. This prevents points from being awarded simply for entering an event without competing. If an event is cancelled before racing commences, no points will be awarded.

A3.2: Establishing National Records

The ADBA maintains official National E.T. and M.P.H. records for each sanctioned class. The process for establishing a record is designed to ensure its credibility and prestige.

- **Requirements:** To establish and hold an official record, all drivers of the boat must hold a current annual racing membership with the ADBA and comply with all rules.
- **The Backup Run:** Any run quicker than the existing E.T. record or faster than the existing speed record qualifies for a new record attempt. However, to validate the performance and demonstrate consistency, the record leg must be supported by a "backup run." The backup run must be within one percent (1%) of the record leg. This backup can be made at any time during qualifying or eliminations, either before or after the record leg itself. This process confirms that the performance was not a fluke and upholds the integrity of the ADBA record book.
- **Record Run Scenarios:**
 - If a backup run is faster/quicker than the original record leg but still within 1%, the backup run becomes the new record, having been validated by the original leg.
 - If a backup run is more than 1% faster/quicker, it becomes a new record leg itself and requires its own subsequent backup run.
- **Infractions:** A foul start (red light) has no effect on a record attempt. However, no E.T. or M.P.H. will be considered for a record if the boat was disqualified on that run.
- **Final Approval:** No record will be considered official until it has been reviewed and formally approved by the ADBA Committee.

Part B: Safety and Technical Regulations

B1: General Safety and On-Water Procedures

B1.1: Mandatory Event Briefings

Prior to the commencement of any on-water activity, a compulsory driver and crew briefing will be held. All drivers are required to attend. The briefing will cover critical safety information, including any no-boat zones, specific course hazards, and other safety instructions pertinent to the event. Any driver who is absent must meet with the Race Director to be briefed personally before they will be permitted to participate. Failure to attend the mandatory briefing may result in disqualification from the event.

B1.2: Minimum Rescue and Medical Requirements

No racing will commence or continue unless the following minimum rescue and medical services are in place and fully operational. These requirements are non-negotiable conditions for ADBA sanctioning and are essential for insurance and liability coverage.

The minimum requirements are :

- For each boat racing simultaneously, a dedicated rescue boat staffed with a driver, two qualified and fully dressed divers, and a licensed first aid provider registered with the relevant state's health authority. A qualified diver is defined as a person holding a minimum certification of PADI Rescue Diver (or an equivalent, recognised certification from another accredited agency) and a current First Aid certificate. All divers must also complete an ADBA-specific capsule rescue orientation session before the start of the season.
- At least one jetski with a driver, who may also be a nominated safety officer.
- A licensed paramedic, registered with the relevant state health authority, and a fully equipped ambulance must be on-site for the entire duration of racing. If the paramedic or ambulance needs to leave the site for any reason, racing will be immediately halted until cover is restored.

B1.3: Role Qualifications & Credential Currency (Mandatory)

All safety and medical leadership roles must meet the minimum qualifications listed below. These requirements are mandatory conditions of operation and form part of ADBA's insurance and risk compliance framework.

All certifications and registrations must be current and valid at the time of the event. Expired, suspended, or lapsed credentials do not meet minimum requirements. The minimum requirements for each role are:

Safety Director / Head of Rescue

- Demonstrated experience in high-speed marine motorsport safety operations
- Current First Aid and CPR certification (minimum requirement)
- Operational authority over all rescue personnel and protocols

Head Paramedic

- Currently licensed and registered paramedic under the relevant Australian jurisdiction
- On-site ambulance present and operational for all on-water activity
- Final medical authority for driver assessment and transport decisions

Lead Diver

- Minimum PADI Rescue Diver certification (or equivalent nationally recognised qualification)
- Current First Aid and CPR certification
- Experience in in-water rescue operations

Rescue Divers

- Minimum PADI Rescue Diver certification (or equivalent nationally recognised qualification)
- Current First Aid and CPR certification

Rescue Boat Driver

- Current boat licence (as required by local jurisdiction)
- Experience operating in high-speed race environments

Credential Verification Requirement

Prior to the commencement of racing activities, the Safety Director must verify that all listed safety and medical personnel meet the above minimum standards and that all certifications are current.

If minimum qualifications are not met, racing must not commence until compliant personnel are in place.

B1.4: Post-Incident Protocol

In the event of any on-water accident, the procedures in the official ADBA On-Water Incident & Emergency Response Plan will be followed. Key post-incident requirements for participants are:

- **Driver Medical Clearance:** Any driver involved in an accident must be examined by the Head Paramedic. A driver may not resume racing until they have been formally cleared to do so by the Head Paramedic, whose decision is final. Refusal to undergo an examination will result in immediate disqualification and suspension of the driver's Competition Boat Log Book (CBLB).
- **Vessel Impound and Re-Scrutineering:** Any boat involved in an accident will be impounded at a designated recovery point. Following a driver's medical clearance, the boat and all personal safety equipment must be re-inspected and formally released by the ADBA Technical Director before it is permitted to compete again. The boat and its parts are subject to retention by the ADBA or relevant authorities for investigation.
- **Accident Report:** An official accident report must be completed for any boat involved in an accident, detailing the circumstances, probable causes, and possible means of prevention. The report must also be submitted to the relevant state maritime authority, with copies kept for official ADBA records.
- **Communications Control:** During and immediately following an on-water incident, competitors and team members must not provide commentary to the media or publish incident details publicly. All communications are to be managed by the appointed ADBA spokesperson or Race Director.

B1.5: On-Water Conduct and Procedures

- **Boats Under Tow:** While a boat is being towed on the water, the driver shall not attempt to start the engine. The ignition switch and fuel shut-off valve must be in the "off" position, and the V-drive must be disengaged. Failure to comply may result in disqualification.
- **Starting Motors on Ramp:** Firing motors on the launch ramp while the boat is on the trailer is strictly prohibited, unless specifically instructed to do so by the Ramp Manager or Pit Marshal.
- **Clearing the Course:** After completing a run, drivers must make a concerted effort to drive off and clear the course promptly. This is essential for maintaining the flow

of the race program and avoiding unnecessary delays for boat retrieval. Repeated failure to do so may result in penalties.

B1.6: Unsafe Equipment and Practices

- **Unsafe Equipment:** Any participant is subject to elimination if an official determines that any required safety equipment is unsafe, even if it passed the initial safety inspection. If it is determined that the equipment was rendered unsafe or was not activated by the intentional actions of the participant, said participant may be immediately disqualified from the event and suspended from future competition for up to six months.
- **Smoking:** For obvious fire safety reasons, smoking is not permitted in or on any race boat at any time, whether on land or on the water.

B2: Boat Technical and Safety Requirements

B2.1: General Construction and Appearance

- **Appearance:** All boats must be presentable in appearance. The Race Director may reject any boat with names, graphics, or pictures deemed obscene or objectionable. This standard also applies to the appearance of owners, drivers, and crew members.
- **Bow Eye:** All boats shall be equipped with a bow eye for towing and retrieval.
- **Numbers and Designators:** All boats must have their official race number and class designator clearly displayed on both sides of the boat.

B2.2: Drivetrain Safety

- **Covers:** All open inboard V-drive boats must utilize a 360-degree driveline cover constructed from a minimum of 6mm thick 6061-T6 aluminium or 3mm thick steel. All inboard boats with a forward-facing engine must have a flywheel cover meeting the same minimum material and thickness specifications.
- **Propeller:** The propeller must be secured with either a castle nut and cotter pin or a nylock nut to prevent it from detaching during operation.
- **Propeller Shaft Release (Whirlaway):** All inboard powered boats running faster than 8.99 seconds must be equipped with a propeller shaft release mechanism (whirlaway) in the driveline. This device is designed to disengage the propeller from the engine in the event of a catastrophic failure, preventing further damage.
- **Safety Collars:** All inboard powered flat bottoms and hydros must use a safety collar on the propeller shaft to prevent it from moving backward. Hydros must also

utilize a two-piece split steel safety collar on the prop shaft under the boat, located a maximum of 12.7 mm forward of the main strut.

- **Pressure Relief Valve:** All jetboats running at or faster than 8.99 seconds must be fitted with an approved pressure relief valve located in the bowl to safely discharge excess pressure. The valve must be maintained in accordance with manufacturer specifications. Any jetboat found without a functional relief valve will not be permitted to compete until compliance is verified.

B2.3: Control Systems Safety

- **Kill Switch:** All open boats must have an electrical ignition kill switch. This device, typically connected to the driver via a lanyard, will immediately shut off the engine if the driver is thrown from their seat.
- **Fuel Shut-Off Valve:** All mechanical fuel injected boats must have a mechanical fuel shut-off valve installed within reach of the driver.
- **Steering:** All boats utilizing open cable steering must use a cable with a minimum diameter of 4.75 mm. The cable ends at the turnbuckles must be double clamped and taped to prevent failure. Steering locks must be fitted so that the rudder cannot turn more than 45 degrees in either direction.
- **Throttle Return Springs:** All boats using carburetors or mechanical fuel injection must have two positive-action throttle return springs. This redundancy ensures the throttle will close if one spring fails, preventing a stuck-open throttle situation.

B2.4: Miscellaneous Equipment

- **Bilge Pump:** It is highly recommended, but not mandatory, that all open boats have an electric bilge pump.
- **Holding Rope Deflector:** A holding rope deflector is required on all boats to prevent the starting rope from snagging.
- **Rudder:** Rudders must be constructed from high-quality **steel**. The use of aluminium or other alloys for rudder blades is prohibited in all classes. The minimum blade thickness must be 9.5 mm. Boats using a through-the-hull rudder must utilize a safety collar to prevent the rudder from disengaging from the boat.
- **Paddle:** All open boats may, at the driver's option, carry a paddle securely mounted within easy reach.

B3: Driver Personal Safety Equipment

The ADBA mandates a tiered approach to personal safety equipment. The minimum requirements are scaled according to the level of risk associated with each racing

category, balancing the need for maximum protection in high-performance classes with accessibility for grassroots competitors.

B3.1: Core Protective Gear

- **Helmets:** All drivers must wear a proper-fitting crash helmet that meets, as a minimum, either the Australian Standard, EU Standard, SNELL specification, or any SFI specification. All helmets must be within twelve (12) years of their SFI or Snell rating date, and the rating label must be permanently attached. Helmets must be worn at all times on the water, except when under tow.
- **Eye Protection:** All drivers must wear eye protection made with safety glass or a flexible, shatterproof material commercially manufactured for racing. Goggles or full-face shields are acceptable. Standard sunglasses are not permitted.
- **Ballistic Shorts:** To prevent water from entering the body upon high-speed impact, ballistic shorts are required for drivers in all open boats running 10.99 seconds and quicker.

B3.2: Head and Neck Restraints

Head and neck restraints (e.g., a HANS Device) are highly recommended to be worn during competition to mitigate the risk of basilar skull fractures and other severe neck injuries during a sudden stop. If such a device is used, it must be a commercially manufactured device and worn in strict accordance with the manufacturer's specifications.

B3.3: Driving Suits and Life Jackets (Tiered Requirements)

The specific requirements for driving suits and life jackets vary by performance level to ensure an appropriate level of protection.

- **Professional Classes:** While an engine is running on the water, the driver must wear an approved, commercially manufactured, fire-resistant driving suit that is long-sleeved with closed cuffs. Full cover shoes, socks, and gloves are mandatory. Drivers in capsule boats must wear a Personal Flotation Device (PFD) with built-in buoyancy as part of their integrated safety system.
- **Sportsman:** A fire-resistant driver suit must be worn. Shoes must be worn. Gloves are highly recommended. Drivers in boats running 8.99 seconds or quicker must wear an approved chute jacket.
- **Bracket Classes (PC and slower):** A fire-resistant racing suit is recommended. As a minimum, full body cover including shoes is required. All drivers in non-capsule

boats must wear an approved, commercially available life jacket that meets Australian Standards. No inflatable-type jackets are permitted.

- **Young Stars:** A fire-resistant racing suit is recommended. As a minimum, full body cover including shoes is required. All drivers must wear an approved life jacket meeting Australian Standards.

B3.4: Driver Safety Equipment Summary Table

This table provides a comprehensive overview of the minimum personal safety equipment required for each racing category. Competitors should use this as a quick-reference checklist.

Equipment	Professional Classes	Sportsman	Bracket (PC & Slower)	Young Stars
Helmet	Mandatory (SFI/Snell)	Mandatory (SFI/Snell)	Mandatory (AS/EU/SFI/Snell)	Mandatory (AS/EU/SFI/Snell)
Driving Suit	Mandatory (Fire-resistant)	Mandatory (Fire-resistant)	Recommended (Full cover min.)	Recommended (Full cover min.)
Life Jacket	Mandatory (Capsule PFD)	Mandatory (AS Standard)	Mandatory (AS Standard)	Mandatory (AS Standard)
Chute Jacket	N/A (Capsule System)	Mandatory (if < 8.99s)	Not Required	Not Required
Ballistic Shorts	N/A (Capsule)	Mandatory (if < 8.99s)	Not Required	Not Required
Gloves	Mandatory	Highly Recommended	Highly Recommended	Highly Recommended
Shoes/Socks	Mandatory (Full cover)	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory
Eye Protection	Mandatory (Racing spec)	Mandatory (Racing spec)	Mandatory (Racing spec)	Mandatory (Racing spec)

Knee/Shin Pads	Mandatory	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required
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B4: Specialised Craft Regulations

B4.1: Enclosed Cockpit Boats (Capsule and Cell)

All Professional class boats must be equipped with a driver's capsule. These advanced safety systems require strict adherence to the following standards.

- **Certification:** Breakaway capsules must be manufactured to SFI standards (USA) or by an approved Australian manufacturer. The certification ID tag must be attached and visible.
- **Air Supply System:** A minimum 207 Bar (3,000 PSI) high-pressure air system is required. Air tanks must be inspected annually and hydrostatically tested every five years. A quick-release coupler must be installed in the air supply hose, with all fittings being mechanically crimped (no push-locks or hose clamps).
- **Air Bottle Mounting:** The air bottle must be permanently attached to the capsule frame rails using robust metal brackets. The base must be fully contained in a cup-type bracket and the neck completely encircled. Velcro, hose clamps, or wire ties are strictly prohibited for mounting the air bottle.
- **Seat Belts:** A minimum four-point SFI specification harness is mandatory. The release mechanism must have a fluorescent colour tag of at least 200 mm attached to aid divers in locating it during a rescue.
- **Driver Protection:** Knee and shin protectors of a baseball or motocross type are required for all capsule boat drivers. The protectors may be worn externally or be integrated (sewn in) to the driver's suit.
- **Visibility and Retrieval:** The bottom and sides of the capsule below the deck line must be painted in a fluorescent colour to aid visibility if submerged. The capsule must be equipped with a minimum of two lifting points attached to the frame rails.
- **Parachutes:** All Professional class hydros are required to have dual parachutes. On any boat using nitromethane, the parachute pack and shroud lines must be protected with fire-resistant material.

B4.2: Jet Boats

- All jet-driven boats that run 160 km/h (100 mph) or faster must be equipped with a "pop-off valve" or a ratcheting device on the jet drive.

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- All jet-driven boats that run 210 km/h (130 mph) or faster must be equipped with both a "pop-off valve" and a ratcheting device.

B4.3: Young Stars Class

This class provides a crucial and controlled entry point for junior competitors into the sport.

- **Age Structure:** J1 Class (8-16 years), J2 Class (10-16 years), J3 Class (12-16 years).
- **Boat and Motor:** Boats must be a minimum of 2.5 metres in length. Only outboard motors are allowed, clamped and bolted to the transom. Power is limited by class: J1 (6 hp), J2 (10 hp), J3 (15 hp). No modifications to standard outboard motors are permitted.
- **Control Systems:** A returnable spring-loaded foot throttle must be fitted. No tiller arm steering or throttle is permitted. Any device that allows adjustment to the motor's trim while the boat is in motion is prohibited.

B5: Fuel Regulations

B5.1: Permitted Fuels and Definitions

To ensure fair competition and predictable performance, permitted fuels are strictly defined. The use of broad terms like "any commercially available fuel" is avoided, as this can lead to disputes over expensive, performance-enhancing additives. The following definitions apply :

- **Petrol:** A commercially available fuel such as super or unleaded to which no additives other than upper cylinder lubricant have been added.
- **Alcohol:** Methanol or commercially available methanol-based fuels to which no additives other than upper cylinder lubricant have been added.
- **Nitro Methane:** Permitted only in the Top Fuel Hydro class.

B5.2: Fuel Restrictions

Nitrous oxide gas and its derivatives are not permitted in any class when used in conjunction with a forced induction engine (supercharger or turbocharger).

B5.3: Refuelling and Spill Mitigation

Refuelling is not permitted while boats are on the water. This is a critical environmental and fire safety measure to prevent fuel spills. In a genuine emergency, refuelling may be permitted via a "jiggler" hose only, and only with the express permission of the Race

Director. Any fuel spills on land or water must be immediately reported to the Race Director or Pit Marshal so that spill kits can be deployed to mitigate environmental impact.

Part C: Governance and Administration

C1: Association Membership and Licensing

C1.1: Membership Requirements

- **Membership Period:** Annual membership in the ADBA runs on a yearly basis, commencing on 1 July and ending on 30 June of the following year. This period aligns with the standard Australian financial year to simplify administration.
- **Mandatory Membership:** All owners and all drivers of each boat competing in a sanctioned event must be current, financial members of the ADBA. This is a fundamental requirement for governance and insurance, ensuring all key individuals have contractually agreed to the rules and are covered by event liability policies.
- **Application and Renewal:** New membership requires a completed application and required fees. Renewals require payment of dues. If a renewal applicant has acted in a manner deemed detrimental to the ADBA or the sport, their application for renewal may be denied by a vote of the ADBA Committee.

C1.2: Competition Boat Log Book (CBLB)

The CBLB is the official license to compete in ADBA events.

- **Requirements:** To race, all drivers must hold a current state boating license, a valid ADBA CBLB, a paid race entry, and a current ADBA membership.
- **Age Requirements:** The minimum age for drivers is determined by class category, balancing accessibility with the necessary maturity for higher-performance boats. Drivers in Professional and Top Eliminator (TE) classes must be a minimum of eighteen (18) years old. Drivers in all other bracket classes (PC, SC, SS, MS, SE, RR) must be a minimum of sixteen (16) years old.
- **Physical Examination:** Drivers in Professional and TE classes are required to undergo a physical examination every two years. No physical is required for bracket classes (PC and slower). It is the driver's responsibility to have their current physical form available. There is no grace period.
- **Duration and Suspension:** CBLBs are issued for a period that aligns with the two-year validity of the medical physical, or for seven (7) race meetings, whichever

comes first. Any driver found violating ADBA rules or failing to follow the direction of an official is subject to having their CBLB suspended or revoked.

C1.3: New Boats and Drivers

Any driver operating a boat that is new to them or newly constructed may, at the discretion of the Sanction Supervisor, be required to complete a half-track safety pass before being allowed to compete. Safety passes will be assessed by the Race Director and appointed safety officers.

The Race Director or designee is responsible for instructing the driver on the specific requirements to pass the test. The driving test must be conducted at a sanctioned event, including sanctioned test-and-tune events. Arrangements for the test must be made at the time of registration. All test runs must be single-lane runs; side-by-side runs are not permitted during Competition Driver's License testing.

The following test sequence must be completed in order:

- A first-half course run: acceleration from the starting line with controlled deceleration at mid-course.
- A full course pass: must include safe shutdown and be representative of the class for which the driver has applied. In Professional classes, the pass must be within 0.49 seconds of the class index. TAF and TFJ must achieve an elapsed time of 6.00 seconds or quicker, and TAH 5.00 seconds or quicker.

The full course run may count as the first qualifying pass if completed during a normal qualifying session. Both test runs will be closely monitored and observed by officials. New drivers and upgrades are not guaranteed to receive their Competition Driver's License at the same event in which they apply.

At scrutineering, a current license must be sighted in the Log Book. This applies equally to international drivers.

C2: Participant Obligations and Code of Conduct

C2.1: Assumption of Risk

By entering a sanctioned event, the participant agrees that they acknowledge the event site is safe and suitable for racing. The participant further acknowledges that by participating in the event, they may suffer bodily injury or death, or loss or damage to property. The participant voluntarily assumes the risk of such losses and waives any claims for such losses against the ADBA, its officials, other participants, sponsors, and promoters. For the purpose of this rule, a "participant" includes any person associated with a competing boat, including owners, drivers, and crew members. All participants are required to sign all necessary release forms as a condition of participation.

C2.2: Compliance with Rules and Decisions

Each participant expressly agrees that by entering a sanctioned event, they agree to be bound by all of the decisions, rules, and regulations of the ADBA. The participant agrees to abide by the decisions of all officials at sanctioned events, and further agrees that all decisions made during or incidental to an event are final and may not be appealed or made the basis of litigation. This is a foundational principle for the orderly and efficient conduct of race meetings.

C2.3: Code of Conduct and Owner Responsibility

A central principle of ADBA governance is that of owner responsibility. The registered owner of any boat at a sanctioned event is directly responsible not only for their own conduct but is also held directly accountable for the conduct of their driver(s) and every individual crew member.

Misconduct, rude behaviour, abusive language, deliberate disruption of the race program, or any other action detrimental to the sport by any team member may result in penalties. These penalties can range from a reprimand to disqualification, loss of championship points, fines, or revocation of membership. Any participant who initiates a physical confrontation will be automatically suspended until further notice.

C3: Event Procedures and Protests

C3.1: Event Registration

The ADBA reserves the right to refuse entry to any person at its discretion. Prior to competing, the following must be accomplished at registration :

- Racing membership verified for all owners and drivers.
- CBLB checked for all drivers.
- All forms and releases completed and signed.
- Payment of all required fees.
- All vessels must hold the relevant state boating authority registration.

C3.2: Competition Limitations

- **One Boat, One Class:** A boat may compete in only one class at any single event. A competitor must select a class to register and qualify in, though they may change class after qualifying as per rule A2.2.

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- **Multiple Drivers, One Boat:** If more than one driver is registered for a single boat, each driver must be a fully paid ADBA member, hold a valid CBLB, and sign all required forms.

C3.3: Protests

The ADBA provides a formal process for resolving disputes over rules compliance.

- **Filing a Protest:** Protests may only be filed by a boat owner or driver in the same class as the boat being protested. The protest must be submitted in writing, on the official ADBA protest form, to the Race Director no later than the commencement of the next round the protested boat is competing in. All protests must be accompanied by a \$20.00 cash fee. This fee is set to be accessible, ensuring the protest system is a legitimate tool for enforcing fair play, not a financial barrier to competitors.
- **Refusal to Comply:** Refusal to allow an inspection or check of an alleged infraction, if protested, will be considered an admission of guilt.
- **Sustained Protest:** If a protest is sustained, penalties will be assessed against the offending competitor as determined by the ADBA Committee.

C4: Association Authority and Final Provisions

C4.1: General Provisions

All participants, by joining the ADBA or entering an event, agree to be bound by all provisions within this rulebook. If any part of this rulebook is determined to be void or unenforceable, the balance of the rules will remain in full effect. The rules contained herein are binding upon the successors, assigns, and heirs of each participant.

C4.2: Regulation of Advertising

The ADBA reserves the right to regulate, by guideline, any advertising that appears on a boat participating in a sanctioned event.

C4.3: Final Determination

The ADBA Committee will ultimately determine if a boat is able to compete in a sanctioned drag boat event, with their decision being final on all matters of safety, compliance, and the interpretation of these rules.

Part D: Glossary of Terms

A

- **ADBA:** The Australian Drag Boat Association, a national governing body for the sport of drag boat racing in Australia.
- **Alcohol:** For the purposes of this rulebook, refers to methanol or commercially available methanol-based fuels.

B

- **Backup Run:** A second run made during qualifying or eliminations that must be within one percent (1%) of a potential record-setting run to validate it.
- **Blower:** A common term for a supercharger, a device that forces more air into an engine to increase power.
- **Breakout:** An infraction in E.T. bracket racing where a competitor completes a run with an elapsed time quicker than their designated class index.
- **Bye Run:** An unopposed run awarded to a competitor, typically the #1 qualifier, when there is an uneven number of boats in an elimination bracket.

C

- **Capsule:** An SFI-rated or ADBA-approved reinforced cockpit designed to protect the driver in the event of an accident. Mandatory for all Professional Classes.
- **CBLB:** Competition Boat Log Book. The official license issued by the ADBA required to compete in sanctioned events.

D

- **Disqualification:** A penalty for a serious breach of safety, technical, or conduct rules, which removes a competitor from the entire event and may result in further disciplinary action.

E

- **E.T. (Elapsed Time):** The length of time it takes for a boat to travel from the starting line to the finish line, measured in seconds to three decimal places.
- **Eliminations:** The single-elimination tournament phase of an event where competitors race in pairs, with the winner advancing to the next round until a single winner remains.

F

- **Flatbottom:** A type of boat hull, the bottom of which is relatively flat with a minimum length of 4.87 metres (16 feet), and has no horizontal breaks.
- **Foul Start (Red Light):** An infraction where a boat leaves the starting line before the green light is illuminated.

H

- **HANS Device:** Head and Neck Support device. A type of safety restraint that connects the helmet to the driver's shoulders to prevent extreme head and neck movement during a crash.
- **Hydroplane:** A type of boat hull designed with a tunnel between the front sponsons for the purpose of trapping air, which lifts the bottom of the hull to ride on or above the surface of the water.

K

- **Kill Switch:** A safety device connected from the boat to the driver via a lanyard that automatically shuts off the engine if the driver is thrown from their seat.

L

- **Legal Single Run:** An unopposed run awarded to a competitor during eliminations when their scheduled opponent fails to appear at the start line.

M

- **M.P.H./mph (Miles Per Hour):** The unit of measurement for the speed of a boat, typically recorded at the finish line.

N

- **Nitromethane:** A highly volatile, high-energy fuel permitted only in the Top Fuel Hydro (TFH) class.

P

- **Participant:** Any person associated with a competing boat, including owners, drivers, and crew members.
- **PFD (Personal Flotation Device):** The official term for any device, such as a life jacket or integrated suit, designed to keep a person buoyant in the water.

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- **Pop-off Valve:** A safety device on a jet drive that releases excess pressure in the event of an engine or drive failure, preventing catastrophic damage.
 - **Protest:** A formal complaint lodged by a competitor against another for an alleged breach of the rules.

Q

- **Qualifying:** The initial rounds of an event where competitors make timed runs to determine their performance and seeding for the elimination ladder.

R

- **Race Director:** The senior official with overall command of the race course, responsible for halting races, controlling the scene, and managing official communications.
- **R.T. (Reaction Time):** The time it takes for a driver to react to the green start light and cross the starting line, measured in thousandths of a second.

S

- **Scrutineering:** The formal process of technical inspection of a boat and driver's safety equipment to ensure compliance with the rulebook.
- **SFI (SFI Foundation, Inc.):** An independent, non-profit organisation in the USA that issues and administers standards for the quality and performance of racing safety equipment.
- **Sponson:** The forward-mounted, wing-like hulls on a hydroplane that provide aerodynamic and hydrodynamic lift.

W

- **Whirlaway (Propeller Shaft Release):** A safety device in the driveline designed to disengage the propeller from the engine in the event of a catastrophic failure.