

4 March 2024

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Tēnā koe [REDACTED]

Thank you for your request to the Department of Conservation, received on 19 February 2024, in which you asked:

1. *Are jet skis, boats, personal sail foils and other yachts, allowed to rock around the harbour at more than 30 knots where the Sail GP is being held?*
2. *How many Hector's dolphins have been sliced up in the previous 10 years by recreational vehicles that can go much faster?*

We have considered your request under the Official Information Act 1982.

I regret that I am not able to provide you with the information you seek in your first question because the Department does not regulate vessel speed in harbours. However, you might be able to access that information on the Environment Canterbury [website](#).

Your second question refers to information that is publicly available – you can access it on the [Hector's and Māui dolphin incident database](#) on the DOC website. The database lists likely causes of death based on results from necropsies (animal autopsies) of dead dolphins found or brought to shore by fishers. The dolphins are not always in great condition when found, which makes it hard to establish the exact cause of death.

In the database, for the last ten years, two dolphins are recorded with potential death from vessel / propeller strike. For many more, the cause of death is indeterminable with 'unknown trauma' listed as a potential contributing factor.

In summary, it is hard to establish the exact cause of death when a dolphin washes up on the shore and even where vessel strike is suspected, we cannot know the exact type of vessel or how fast it was travelling.

I hope that this is helpful.

Please note that this letter (with your personal details removed) may be published on the Department's website.

Nāku noa, nā

[REDACTED]

Kirstie Knowles  
Director Biodiversity System and Aquatic  
Department of Conservation  
*Te Papa Atawhai*