

# 2025 - 2027 Strategy

# Who We Are



# Leading the Future of Rowing in Auckland



Since 1882, the Auckland Rowing Association (ARA) has been at the heart of rowing in the Auckland region, representing and supporting a vibrant community of rowers spanning from Whangarei in the north to Mercer in the south.

As the regional body for the sport, we proudly serve around 1,500 rowers across Auckland and its neighboring areas. Our mission is clear: to develop the capability, enjoyment, and unity—or Kotahitanga—of Auckland’s rowing clubs and schools by providing strong leadership, advocacy, and unwavering support.

Rowing in Auckland is a community, a passion, and a legacy that ARA has cultivated for over a century. Through our strategic efforts, we support the vision of Rowing New Zealand while tailoring our focus to meet the unique needs of the Auckland region. We believe that rowing should be an accessible and inclusive sport that brings people together, from grassroots enthusiasts to elite athletes. Our vision is to be New Zealand’s leading rowing region—a role that demands commitment, adaptability, and strategic foresight.

To realise this vision, we have identified three key strategic pillars that frame all aspects of our work: Finishing What we have Started, Expanding Our Reach and Impact, and Ensuring Long Term success. These pillars form the foundation of our activities and programs, enabling us to grow participation, enhance performance, and foster a cohesive rowing community across Auckland.



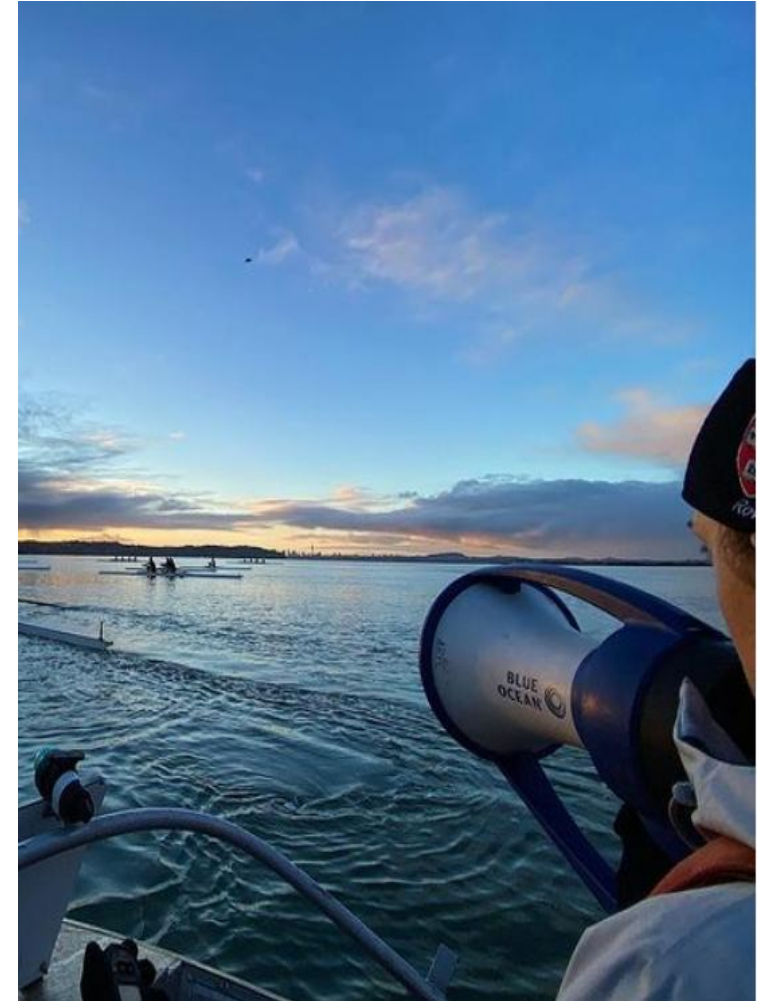
# Our Role and Impact



The Auckland Rowing Association provides the structure, resources, and expertise that allow rowing clubs and schools to broaden access to rowing for all ages and abilities. We promote and develop rowing across a diverse range of disciplines, including flat water (1k, 2k, and long distance), coastal, indoor, and adaptive rowing. Our reach extends to all levels of the sport—recreational, competitive, and high-performance—ensuring Auckland’s rowing community is thriving, diverse, and well-supported.

As a region, we are fortunate to have a rich rowing ecosystem, where clubs, schools, and individuals come together to create opportunities for participation, competition, and excellence. We are dedicated to fostering leadership among our athletes, coaches, and officials, ensuring that Auckland is a region of rowing excellence, integrity, and opportunity.

Each year, we play a central role in organising, overseeing, and supporting a wide range of regattas and events that unite our community and showcase Auckland’s rowing talent. These include flagship regattas such as the Head of Harbour, Mercer, Bennett Shield, Eric Verdonk Memorial, Beach Sprints, Auckland Long Distance, and the Intra-Provincials. By providing essential equipment, expertise, and logistical support, we help ensure that these events are not only successful but also inclusive and accessible for all participants.



# Developing Tomorrows Rowing Leaders



Our commitment to Auckland’s rowing community goes beyond events and competitions. The ARA is deeply invested in the development of our athletes, coaches, and officials. Through a comprehensive range of initiatives—including Baby Blues, Light Blues, and Open Blues training and development camps—we provide critical opportunities that empower our community to reach new heights in skill, performance, and leadership.

We are also proud to operate a Performance Hub that offers structured pathways for pathway athletes, along with dedicated programs for coaching development. This hub is a central component of our strategy to develop Auckland’s rowing talent and ensure that our athletes and coaches have access to world-class training, resources, and mentorship.

Our support also includes:

- **Financial Support** – We provide financial assistance for New Zealand representative athletes in the under 19, under 21, and under 23 squads, as well as funding for coaches to attend leadership and development courses.
- **High-Performance Partnerships** – Collaborating with High Performance Sport New Zealand to offer strength and conditioning intensives, as well as guest lectures and workshops from Rowing New Zealand experts.
- **Community Engagement** – Guest speakers, visits, and other opportunities for pathway athletes, coaches, and officials to interact with leading figures in the sport, enriching their journey and expanding their perspective.

Our strategic investments in development ensure that Auckland remains a powerhouse of rowing talent, providing pathways for athletes from grassroots levels to international competition. This commitment is reflected in the appointment of our regional coach, who works with schools and clubs across Auckland to strengthen capabilities and elevate the sport’s standards at every level.

# Building a Legacy of Unity and Excellence



The ARA's work is grounded in a culture of unity and collaboration. With representation from across the Auckland region on our board, including athlete representatives, and an active Regional Manager leading day-to-day operations, we are committed to building a governance structure that reflects the diversity and ambition of our community.

As a forward-thinking organisation, we are guided by our core values of leadership, inclusivity, and excellence. We believe in celebrating success, which is why we host annual awards to recognise outstanding contributions to the sport, along with quarterly coaching conferences that bring our community together to share knowledge, build relationships, and inspire progress.

Through our active presence on social media and our branded uniforms for representative athletes, coaches, and officials, we foster a sense of pride and identity for Auckland's rowing community. These efforts ensure that Auckland Rowing Association remains a visible and influential force, not just in Auckland but across New Zealand's sporting landscape.



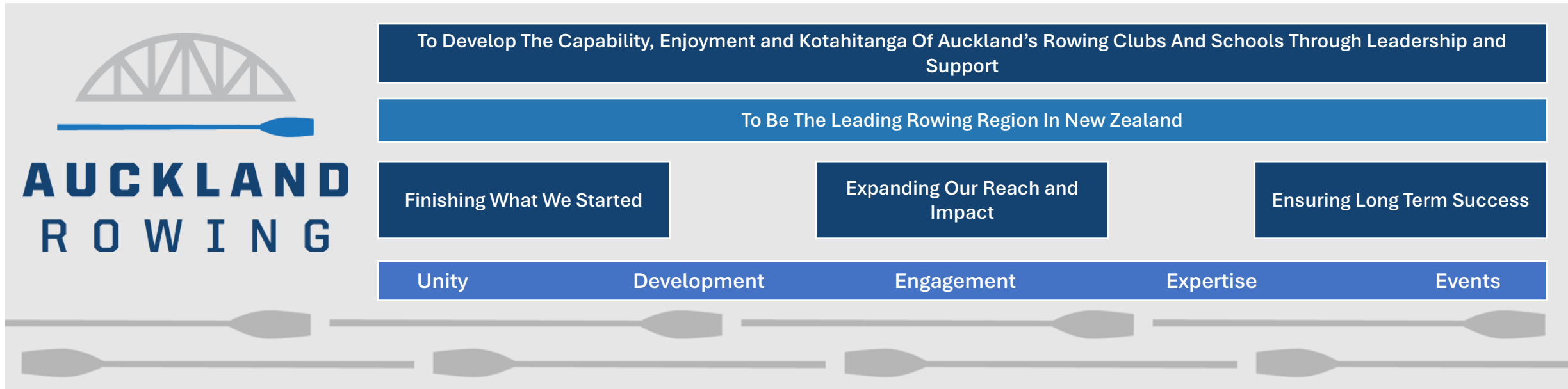
# Our Strategy



# Our Strategic Vision



To achieve our vision of becoming New Zealand’s leading rowing region, we are embarking on a strategic journey that builds upon our foundational achievements, transforms how we deliver value to our members, and prepares us for the future. This vision is guided by three strategic pillars: Finishing What We Started, Expanding Our Reach and Impact, and Ensuring Long Term Success. Together, they represent our commitment to the values and aspirations of our community, as well as our responsibility to contribute to the broader goals of Rowing New Zealand.



Through these strategic pillars we will continue to lead and elevate the sport of rowing in Auckland. Our commitment to unity, development, engagement, expertise, and events will guide us as we adapt, grow, and strengthen Auckland’s rowing community. Together, we are building a future where rowing in Auckland is vibrant, inclusive, and recognised for its excellence, providing all within the Auckland rowing community with the opportunity to thrive and succeed.

# Finishing What We Started

Over the past year, we've made substantial progress on many initiatives aimed at building a strong, cohesive rowing community in Auckland. However, several important projects remain in progress. Our first priority is to complete these initiatives and fully implement the frameworks, systems, and support that will serve as the foundation for our continued growth.

- **Strengthening Unity Across Clubs and Schools:** We will finalise and fully embed a regional coastal rowing strategy that fosters a shared identity and purpose among our clubs and schools. This initiative will encourage collaboration by providing opportunities for clubs and schools to share resources, expertise, and insights. Additionally, we will continue to hold quarterly forums and networking events where members can connect, discuss challenges, share experiences, and explore new opportunities for collaboration.
- **Enhancing Development Pathways:** We are committed to the growth and retention of athletes, coaches, and officials by finalising a comprehensive development pathway and strategy. This includes launching a new coxswain development program and an officials' development program, which will provide vital training and support for these essential roles. Through these initiatives, we aim to create a clear progression framework that nurtures talent across all levels.
- **Building Effective Communication Channels:** To foster greater engagement with our stakeholders, we are completing the implementation of a CRM and database to streamline communication and improve knowledge-sharing. This system will empower our clubs and schools to access resources, connect with peers, and share insights with ease. Additionally, we will enhance our online platform, making it a central hub for clubs and schools to ask questions, share experiences, and access information.
- **Providing Targeted Support for Club Management:** We will complete the centralised resource hub and establish an audit and certification program for clubs, helping ensure that all clubs in our region meet high standards for safety, coaching, and management. This structure will create a supportive environment where clubs are equipped with the tools and resources they need to thrive.
- **Elevating Regatta Experiences:** Regattas are at the heart of rowing culture, and we are dedicated to enhancing the experience for all participants. We will finalise and implement a comprehensive regatta delivery handbook, reintroduce the annual Novice Dash to support recruitment, and strengthen the unique identity of the Head of Harbour Regatta. These actions will help create exceptional, memorable experiences for rowers, spectators, and supporters.

# Expanding Our Reach and Impact

To adapt to a dynamic and evolving sports landscape, we are evolving our approach to service delivery. This transformation will make our organisation more agile, impactful, and inclusive, ensuring that ARA continues to meet the changing needs of our rowing community.

- **Inclusive Programs for Young Athletes with Barriers:** We will launch a program of work aimed at making rowing accessible to young, aspiring athletes with physical and cognitive barriers. By developing inclusive opportunities and providing necessary support and resources, we aim to open pathways for these athletes, creating a rowing environment that values diversity and offers opportunities for all.
- **Evolving Our Brand and Communication Strategy:** We are committed to building a distinctive, aspirational brand that resonates with our community and embodies the values of Auckland Rowing Association. A comprehensive social media plan and branding evolution will help us become a recognised and respected leader in rowing. This rebranding effort will cover all communication touchpoints, including uniforms, our website, written materials, and outreach efforts, creating a unified and compelling image that inspires pride.
- **Strengthening Engagement Through Outreach and Accessibility:** To deepen our connection with our community, we will conduct regular visits to clubs and schools throughout the region. These visits will allow us to listen to our community, share updates, and gather feedback, ensuring that we are responsive to the needs and aspirations of our members. We will also establish information tents at key national and local regattas, staffed by ARA Board members, where attendees can drop in for information sessions and support.
- **Enhancing the Participant and Spectator Experience:** By continuing to evolve the structure and organisation of regattas, we will make these events more enjoyable and valuable for participants, spectators, and sponsors. Our aim is to create an inclusive, well-organised environment at each event, elevating the experience for all involved and reinforcing the value of ARA's role.
- **Expanding Development Opportunities:** We aspire to provide our regional representative athletes, coaches, and officials with opportunities for growth beyond our borders. Exploring the possibility of attending regattas in Australia and further afield, we will broaden their exposure to high-level competition, allowing them to gain valuable experience on the international stage.
- **Building Strong Partnerships to Support Community Ambitions:** To enhance our impact, we will establish partnership programs with key stakeholders, including KRI, local businesses, councils, universities, schools, and foundations. These partnerships will provide vital financial and operational support, enabling us to expand our reach, strengthen our programs, and provide greater value and to the Auckland rowing community.

# Ensuring Long Term Success

To ensure the Auckland Rowing Association's relevance, accessibility, and effectiveness, we must be prepared for future challenges and opportunities. By focusing on governance, innovation, and adaptability, we will create a resilient and future-focused organisation.

- **Strengthening Compliance and Governance:** To uphold the highest standards of accountability, we will undertake critical compliance work to align with the new Incorporated Societies Act and update our Board policies. This effort will ensure that our governance remains robust, transparent, and aligned with current legislative requirements, reinforcing trust within our community and stakeholders.
- **Expanding Our Officials Base:** Officials play an essential role in maintaining the quality and integrity of rowing events. To support our growing demand, we will expand our base of qualified officials through targeted recruitment and training. This investment will ensure that we have a dedicated and skilled team in place to support events across Auckland.
- **Increasing Visibility, Accessibility, and Value:** To make the ARA more visible and accessible to our community, we will expand our digital presence and improve access to resources. Our goal is to ensure that the Auckland Rowing Association is recognised for its relevance and value, creating a more connected and engaged community.
- **Building a Sustainable Pathway for Growth:** We aim to support ongoing growth in membership and participation across all disciplines and levels. By **implementing** long-term strategies that address retention, recruitment, and engagement, we will ensure that Auckland remains a thriving center of rowing excellence for years to come.
- **Future-Proofing Operational Excellence:** As part of our commitment to operational strength, we will adopt best practices in governance, data management, and technology. This includes a full refresh of our website, built on a modern, adaptable platform that will strengthen our online presence and provide easy access to valuable resources for all members.
- **Cultivating Aspiration and Pride:** Through a unified brand, expanded development programs, and enhanced support, we aim to make the Auckland Rowing Association an organisation that inspires pride and commitment. We will continue to evolve our annual awards to celebrate excellence, and quarterly coaching conferences will foster learning and connection, strengthening a sense of belonging across the Auckland rowing community.

# Our Strategic Roadmap



We are committed to building a thriving and inclusive rowing community. Our Strategic Roadmap outlines the steps we will take over the next three years to expand opportunities, deepen engagement, and strengthen our foundation to elevate rowing across Auckland.

**2025: Foundation and Initial Roll Out**  
**Goal: Build a strong foundation for rowing in Auckland by delivering key initiatives and creating opportunities for growth.**

**2026: Expansion and Engagement**  
**Goal: Build on the foundations of 2025 to expand opportunities, deepen engagement, and increase participation.**

**2027: Optimisation and Sustainability**  
**Goal: Solidify Auckland Rowing’s leadership role and ensure long-term sustainability for the sport.**

Finishing what we Have Started

**Strengthening Unity and Collaboration:**

- Launch Coastal Beach Sprints NZ to lead the growth of coastal rowing.
- Host the Orewa Coastal Sprint Championships, inspiring participation and showcasing coastal rowing’s potential.
- Encourage collaboration by sharing resources and fostering stronger connections between clubs.

**Enhancing Development Pathways:**

- Roll out training programs for coxswains, officials, athletes, and coaches to support development at all levels.
- Introduce a development calendar, including the annual coaches’ conference, to drive learning and networking.

**Building Effective Communication Channels:**

- Start implementing a new CRM system to help engage members and manage resources more effectively.
- Launch a communication strategy to keep the rowing community informed and connected.

**Elevating Regatta Experiences:**

- Create a digital regatta handbook to make planning and delivering events easier.
- Improve accessibility at regattas with better parking and seating for spectators with disabilities.

Expanding Our Reach And Impact

**Inclusive Programs for All Athletes:**

- Secure funding and pilot programs to support athletes with physical and cognitive barriers, making rowing more inclusive.

**Evolving Our Brand and Outreach:**

- Launch a social media strategy to increase awareness and promote Auckland Rowing’s work.
- Begin club and school visits to understand needs and offer tailored support.
- Set up ARA information tents at regattas to engage with the community and provide assistance.

Ensuring Long Term Success

**Strengthening Governance and Ensuring Sustainability:**

- Align Board policies with governance standards to ensure accountability.
- Start developing a membership retention and recruitment strategy to grow participation for the future.

**Strengthening Unity and Collaboration::**

- Host regular forums and networking events to bring clubs and schools together.
- Expand the central resource hub with additional tools and templates to support clubs

**Enhancing Regatta Experiences:**

- Update the regatta handbook to improve event planning and delivery.
- Introduce additional facilities and services at regattas to create a better experience for participants and spectators.

**Inclusive Programs for All Athletes:**

- Expand adaptive rowing programs based on pilot success, ensuring more athletes can participate.

**Evolving Our Brand and Outreach**

- Continue rebranding efforts to create a strong, recognisable Auckland Rowing identity.
- Strengthen online presence with targeted social media campaigns to engage new audiences.
- Strengthen support for clubs by enhancing resources that help them operate effectively

**Enhancing Development Pathways:**

- Pilot international opportunities for athletes, coaches, and officials to gain experience and exposure.
- Establish partnerships with businesses, schools, councils, and community groups to provide financial and operational support for development athletes, coaches, and officials.

**Strengthening Governance and Ensuring Sustainability:**

- Conduct a mid-year compliance review to ensure continued alignment with the Incorporated Societies Act.
- Implement the retention and recruitment strategy developed in FY25 to support membership growth.

**Strengthening Unity and Collaboration:**

- Strengthen collaboration across clubs with advanced self-service tools and shared initiatives.
- Formalise relationships to enhance regional connections and shared success.

**Enhancing Regatta Experiences:**

- Optimise the regatta handbook with advanced tools for planning and accessibility enhancements.
- Continue improving facilities and inclusivity at regattas to ensure they remain world-class events..

**Inclusive Programs for All Athletes**

- Expand adaptive rowing programs to more locations, creating broader opportunities for participation.
- Secure long-term funding partnerships to ensure these programs continue to thrive.

**Evolving Our Brand and Outreach:**

- Conduct a brand impact review to refine strategies and keep Auckland Rowing top of mind.
- Introduce mentoring programs for club administrators and volunteers, building leadership capacity.
- Expand promotional efforts to attract new participants and celebrate Auckland Rowing’s legacy.

**Enhancing Development Pathways**

- Establish structured pathways for international representation and leadership development programs for coaches and officials.
- Strengthen partnerships with global rowing organisations to create new opportunities.

**Governance and Sustainability**

- Refine recruitment strategies with data-driven insights to target new audiences and grow the sport.
- Expand efforts to engage underserved communities and build long-term participation.
- Deepen engagement with local and national stakeholders to support the growth of rowing in Auckland.
- Conduct a full governance review to ensure Auckland Rowing is future-ready and aligned with best practices.

# Our 2025 Workplan



In 2025, Auckland Rowing Association is delivering an ambitious program to strengthen rowing in our region. This roadmap focuses on growing opportunities, creating inclusive experiences, enhancing pathways for development, and ensuring strong governance to support the future of rowing in Auckland.

January – March	April – June	July – September	October – December
<b>Laying the Foundations</b>	<b>Strengthening Pathways and Operations</b>	<b>Expanding Opportunities and Engagement</b>	<b>Refining and Preparing for Growth</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish Coastal Beach Sprints NZ to expand and elevate coastal rowing in Auckland.</li> <li>Strengthen how clubs and members connect by exploring innovative systems for management.</li> <li>Enhance communication across our rowing community to increase visibility and engagement.</li> <li>Develop a central guide to support the smooth planning and delivery of regattas.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Launch exciting coastal rowing events to inspire participation and celebrate the sport.</li> <li>Build the capacity of our rowing community by increasing the number of trained officials, coxes, and volunteers.</li> <li>Improve regatta accessibility, ensuring everyone can enjoy and participate in our events.</li> <li>Introduce tools to streamline club and membership engagement.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expand inclusive rowing programs to open new opportunities for athletes of all abilities.</li> <li>Strengthen pathways for coxes and officials, empowering them to contribute at higher levels.</li> <li>Foster collaboration and engagement by deepening connections with schools and clubs.</li> <li>Roll out resources that make it easier for clubs and schools to thrive.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure excellence in governance by aligning organisational policies with the latest standards.</li> <li>Refine regatta planning tools based on feedback, ensuring they meet the community's needs.</li> <li>Roll out strategies to retain and grow participation across Auckland.</li> <li>Evaluate the impact of 2025 initiatives to set the stage for future growth and success.</li> </ul>



# AUCKLAND ROWING



Auckland Rowing Association | [aucklandrowing.org](http://aucklandrowing.org)