

Blue Lake Multisport Festival 2020 Health and Safety

On Sunday morning of the Blue Lake Multisport Festival 2020, there was a health and safety issue on the triathlon cycle course. This arose from a traffic control fault at the Tarawera /Okareka Loop Road intersection, which meant we had motor vehicles travelling in the same direction as the cyclists. Fortunately, the issue was identified and no athletes were injured, but the risk was unacceptable.

Together, Rotorua Association of Triathlon and Multisport Inc. (RATs), Owner/Manager of the Blue Lake Multisport Festival, and Traffic Management New Zealand (TMNZ), Contractor for the BLMF, have identified changes needed to reduce the likelihood of any type of health and safety incident or near miss taking place in future.

We agree that, on the day of the event, our high standards of safety and commitment to athlete welfare were not met. This created a risk for athletes, spectators and road users on part of the course. While we are jointly thankful there were no reported incidents, we recognise the gravity of this error and would like to apologise to all participants and stakeholders.

Our statements and commitments are attached below.

Rotorua Association of Triathlon and Multisport Inc. (RATs)

1. We, RATs, have accepted Traffic Management New Zealand's confirmation that part of the approved traffic management plan was not implemented correctly, specifically related to the correct direction of travel for vehicles.
2. RATS and TMNZ have established new processes to double check the course before it is officially opened and ensure future traffic management plans are implemented accurately.
3. We, RATs, are working to identify further checks and balances that support greater connectivity between contractors, our organising team and our wonderful volunteers.
4. We, RATs, are reviewing our Operational Plan, Health and Safety Plan and documentation to identify any further practical improvements that can be made.

We remain thankful to those who helped on the day, and are open to any further feedback or ideas about how the event can be improved. If you have any further information or would like to provide feedback, please don't hesitate to contact ratsrotorua@gmail.com

Nga mihi

Rotorua Association of Triathlon and Multisport Inc.

Traffic Management New Zealand

We would like to apologise for the incorrect implementation of part of the approved traffic management plan at the Blue Lake Multi Sport Festival on 26 January 2020, that caused risk for athletes and road users navigating the event course, particularly at the Tarawera/Okareka Loop Rd intersection.

Health and safety process and policy is critical to TMNZ's business, and we sincerely regret this error.

We are working closely with Rotorua Association of Triathlon and Multisport Inc (RATS) to establish new processes for course and traffic set up and monitoring. It is our pleasure to continue to be involved with triathlon and help to ensure the safety of all athletes, volunteers and the wider community, and we'd like to thank those who helped to identify the error on the day.