

EQUIPMENT STORAGE GUIDANCE

Safe Storage of Scrum Machines

These guidelines have been issued by New Zealand Rugby Union (NZR) following a request by the Coroner to assist with the communication to the New Zealand rugby community of the need for scrum machines to be stored safely. The request has come about as the result of two Coronial inquests into the tragic deaths of two children crushed by upended scrum machines. Both deaths were found to be preventable.

A **scrum machine is a potential hazard** when it is left unattended in a place where it can be moved and played on in an unsupervised or unauthorised manner.

Under the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 (**the Act**), all schools and clubs should have on their risk registers the safe storage of scrum machines, and other pieces of sports equipment, which, if accessed by the public, could cause harm if used without supervision.

The Act imposes legal obligations on people conducting any business activity in New Zealand which will include most, if not all, rugby clubs and all schools to take all practicable steps to eliminate or, if not possible, minimise the risk of harm to people in the vicinity of their places of work. In general this means clubs and schools must ensure the health and safety of:

- their staff;
- any other workers they influence or direct; and
- other people who could be put at risk by the work carried out, for example visitors or the public who enter places of work that they control.

Risks must be managed so far as is reasonably practicable. This involves balancing a risk with the resources (time and cost) needed to manage it.

Based on the above, NZR **strongly recommends** the following measures are put in place by all clubs and schools **as soon as possible**:

1. **Elimination:** At all times when not in use, scrum machines must be stored in a way that cannot be accessed by the public, ideally in a locked storage shed.
2. **Minimisation:** If there is no storage shed available, scrum machines must be fenced/padlocked off with clear signage identifying it as a danger and not to be used by any unauthorised persons. An example of such signage is "DANGER, DO NOT USE" that can be purchased online: <https://www.hazard-signs.nz>. In particular, the steps taken need to prevent young children or persons who might be inclined to play on the apparatus from being able to do so.

