Gelcoats

Gelcoats provide the exterior surface layer of most fibreglass surfaces. They are specialist resins, which not only give the surface its aesthetic appearance (colour; finish; gloss), but also provide critical performance factors. These factors include water resistance; chemical resistance; fire retarding properties (special halogenated formulation required); gloss retention and weathering properties.

It is important to understand that all Gelcoats are not created equal and can vary significantly in both quality and performance. It is also important to be aware that even the best gelcoats will underperform if not correctly and expertly applied when used in the manufacturing process for your fibreglass product.

Exposure to sunlight, water, dust and chemicals can be detrimental to the gelcoat surface, causing chalking, discolouration, yellowing or loss of gloss. Simple periodic maintenance procedures will minimise these changes.

Basic Maintenance

When not in use, keep the gelcoat surface out of the sun or covered with a canvas tarpaulin. Do not use sheet plastic or other non-porous materials, which can trap moisture between the cover and the surface.

Wash the surface with a mild detergent. For best results, use cleaner recommended for fibreglass and follow label directions.

DO NOT use automatic dishwasher detergent, abrasives, bleaches, and strong chemicals with acids/bases or ammonia.

Wax at least twice yearly to restore gloss and protect the finish. Use only wax recommended for fibreglass and follow instructions carefully.
NEVER wax a gelcoat surface in direct sunlight.

Corrective Procedures

Chalking

A fine rubbing compound as well as a mild detergent will reduce the weathering and chalking accumulated on the surface. Use only a fine grit compound and follow label directions carefully. For best results, wax after compounding.
DO NOT apply a rubbing compound in direct sunlight.

Scratches and Nicks
Most will be removed by using a rubbing compound followed by waxing as described above.

Stains
Most will be removed by washing with a mild detergent. For stubborn stains, use a fine abrasive household cleanser followed by waxing to restore original lustre.

Non water-soluble stains such as grease and oil, rubber heel marks, etc. can often be removed by using a solvent such as acetone, rubbing alcohol, toluene or xylene, followed by a mild detergent. If these solvents are not effective, try a rubbing compound or fine sanding followed by waxing.

Deep Marks, Gouges or Holes

These should be repaired professionally. Gelcoats can be well repaired by professionals, and in most cases the repair will be undetectable.

In cases where the damage has pierced the gelcoat layer, further exposure to water or chemicals should be avoided. Failure to observe this precaution may result in extensive and potentially costly damage to the underlying laminate structure.

RAL Colour Codes

For Hull number #1 - #999
Colours are all RAL codes which are available internationally:

Red 3020
Yellow 1018
Green 6018
Light Grey 7035

Please note these colours apply to the new ‘Ferrari red’- not the older blood red (approx hull #56 onwards) and the lighter
‘Lemon yellow ‘(approx hull #150 onwards).

Wētā gelcoat for hulls #1000+

As gelcoat cannot be sent by courier, the factory supplies pigment to Wētā dealers.
The pigment can be added to a clear (or neutral) gelcoat to get a good match as gelcoat can fade. You can also just add pigment to white gelcoat which is easily available from marine chandlery shops. Only a small amount of pigment is required eg 2%
We do not use a RAL code for the pigment but the RAL code for the #0-999 Wētā would be a close match.