



IRC Congress Meeting 2014

MINUTES

Of a meeting held at Macdonald Windsor Hotel, UK
On Saturday, 11th October 2014 at 09.30

Present:

Chairman Peter Wykeham-Martin
Vice Chairman Alp Doguoglu (TUR)
Vice Chairman Malcolm Runnalls

IRC Technical Committee Mike Urwin
IRC Technical Committee Jean Sans

AUS Rayshele Martin
BEL Carl Sabbe
CAN John Crawley
FRA Jean-Philippe Cau
GBR Ian Macdonald
HKG Gideon Mowser
JPN Kenji Sakamoto
JPN Haru-Hiko Kaku
NED John van der Starre
SEA Simon James
USA Dan Nowlan
USA Eric Baittinger

IMA Peter Lawson
IMA Andrew McIrvine

RORC Michael Boyd (Vice Commodore)
RORC Eddie Warden-Owen (CEO)

UNCL Catherine Pourre (President)

RORC Rating Office Jenny Howells
RORC Rating Office James Dadd
RORC Rating Office Andrew Yates

UNCL Centre de Calcul Jean Claude Merlivat
UNCL Centre de Calcul Ludovic Abollivier
UNCL Centre de Calcul Matthieu Achard

RYA Technical Debbie Smith

ISAF Oceanic Committee Janet Grosvenor



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1. Introduction and welcome from Peter Wykeham-Martin, Chairman of the IRC Congress.

Peter Wykeham-Martin welcomed everyone to the meeting. He thanked Jenny Howells for arranging the IRC 30th anniversary commemorative slate coasters which delegates were free to take home.

2. Apologies for absence and proxy votes.

Apologies had been received from Kay Enno Brink (GER), Godwin Zammit (MLT) who was busy with preparation for the Rolex Middle Sea Race; and Glen Stanaway (AUS) who was absent for health reasons. Peter Wykeham-Martin sent best wishes for his recovery on behalf of the Congress.

Proxy votes were held by UNCL for GRE and ITA, and by Mike Urwin for MLT.

3. Minutes of the meeting of the IRC Congress held on 12th October 2013.

There were no comments on the Minutes and they were signed as a correct record.

4. Matters arising not covered by the agenda.

Multiple TCCs: the Technical Committee is researching options regarding multiple TCCs and had asked the Policy Steering Group for their opinion.

5. Election of Chairman and two Vice-Chairmen

Dan Nowlan (USA) proposed Peter Wykeham-Martin to continue as Chairman for a further term, this was seconded by Gideon Mowser (HKG). No other candidates were nominated. PWM was elected having indicated his willingness to continue as Chairman for a further term.

Peter Wykeham-Martin proposed Alp Doguoglu (TUR) to continue as Vice-Chairman for a further term, this was seconded by Ian Macdonald (GBR).

Peter Wykeham-Martin proposed Malcolm Runnalls to continue as Vice-Chairman for a further term, this was seconded by Rayshele Martin (AUS).

Both were elected having indicated their willingness to continue as Vice-Chairmen for a further term.

6. To note IRC 2014 Notices.

5.1 Spinnakers Set Reefed. May 2014

Mike Urwin (TC) explained the background as a recent trend towards reefing spinnakers particularly in classes such as the Mini Transats and Class 40s, and the concerns about setting them partially reefed. The Technical Committee does not wish to discourage them, but we need to be wary of the potential for abuse. There had been no comments on the subject since the notice was published.



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Mike Urwin asked for opinions on whether it should be considered as one sail or two? Catherine Pourre (UNCL) replied that treating it as one sail (as currently) is consistent with Class 40 rules.

In-House Certification

Although not a formal notice, Mike Urwin noted that the IRC Endorsement guidelines had been republished for 2014 with one change to include IHC (In House Certification) in 4.1 as generally acceptable for sail data. Mike explained the basis of IHC. GBR use it for Endorsed certificates and it had also been adopted in HKG, and more recently AUS. It would be good for it to be accepted worldwide but it is up to each country to make the decision.

Rayshale Martin (AUS) said there had been a lot of follow-up to do regarding incomplete or inconsistent information supplied on input sheets but hoped that this would be sorted out in time.

7. To receive contributions from attending National IRC Representatives (not including submissions for proposed rule changes).

Written reports are shown in [APPENDIX 1](#).

BEL (Carl Sabbe) It is notable that the average age of sailors is increasing and the trend is towards decreasing numbers of participants. However, this was an issue within the sport, not specifically related to IRC.

AUS (Rayshale Martin verbal report). IRC is still the rating rule of choice in Australia and this is driven by the main trophies at events. After a peak in 2006-7 there had been a decline in entries and certificate, but this was not specifically IRC. The 2015 AUS IRC Nationals will be held at Hamilton Island in August.

Some teleconferences had been held relating to both technical and competition issues. There had been some discussion regarding spinnaker and headsail classification, which had led to the submission to be covered later in the meeting. Crew weight had also been the subject of discussion

There seems to be a general lack of understanding of the IRC rule amongst owners and participants. Rayshale suggested dissemination of information through other media such as information videos. She did not think that social media (Twitter, Facebook) is necessarily the best way to get information out, as it was not the right demographic.

IRC is considered to be well-administrated and efficiently run. Yachting Australia is considering relaxing its Endorsement guidelines for remoter fleets such as WA and NE QLD where weighing and measurement is not so easy. However this will be researched first. YA has been trying to educate sailors about the ease and simplicity of IRC rules, and also want to find out more about why people do or do not participate. The number of certificates is holding equal with 2013 at the moment. NSW has the most certificates as it has the most boats, but WA has the most certificates per capita.



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There was a discussion about getting information through to owners and it was agreed that this would need to be country specific.

Malcolm Runnalls pointed out that he has found the IRC Yearbook to be the most effective tool in getting people to understand. The answers to 9 out of 10 questions are in the Yearbook.

A suggestion was for well known sailors or experts to film short videos on different topics, not just measurement issues. Peter Wykeham-Martin suggested using existing links with Yachting World.

Simon James is putting together measurers and public events in SE Asia which will also explain general aspects of IRC. China is an example where people buy standard production boats and are only given the basic measurements on the sales literature. It is a big step for the owner to get together the information to get an IRC certificate. Simon suggests big production boat builders such as Beneteau/Jeanneau could produce a package of the standard data for owners.

Mike Urwin pointed out that we have standard hull but not rig/sail data as there are too many variations. However, where IHC is adopted, getting the sail data is easy.

CAN (John Crawley) The IRC fleet is very local to Toronto and numbers are down overall. The biggest issue is one-design classes. PHRF is used for local evening racing, short-handed and point-to-point races. Lake Ontario has the biggest PHRF fleet in N. America but it's all mid-week racing.

FRA (Jean-Philippe Cau) The IRC situation this year is better than expected but varies between different areas eg. Med - steady fleets especially big boats. Atlantic – number of boats is steady but they are doing fewer races than before. Channel – a decrease in no of boats racing in the Channel. There are no new young people in the crews and owners are not changing boats, and generally participation has decreased over last few years.

GER – no report

GBR (Ian Macdonald) The situation is similar to France, ie. variations in participation in different areas. Contrary to popular belief, only around half the fleet is central south coast, the other half is spread around the country. The National Handicap for Cruisers (NHC) was started by the RYA last year. Promotion of NHC and cruiser racing generally is a joint effort between RYA, RORC and others who are interested in the sport. There is a constant difference of opinion about who IRC is for? It is perceived as being for top end racers eg. Brewin Dolphin Commodores' Cup, IRC Nationals, but lots of other events are doing well. It has been the second year of Limited Validity TCC (LV) and GBR are still trialling it. It is difficult to know the effect on the IRC fleet as yet. There has been growth in short-handed racing.

Ray Martin expressed an interest in the LV and how it works in the UK. Research is now showing that people don't like committing to things, and Ray thinks there may be value in offering LV TCCs. Mike Urwin agreed, and added that commitment issues extend to crew as well as owners. Regarding LV, RORC still don't know how many boats they've gained or lost; they would like to expand it but have to be careful about the effect on IRC overall.



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Ian Macdonald suggested that we need to get the message out to the sailors about what is on offer and how good IRC racing is. Mike Urwin advised that the Rating Office will be doing some club seminars over the winter, in partnership with the RYA.

IRL (Michael Boyd) Michael was attending as RORC Vice Commodore and is not involved in IRC administration in Ireland. He was sorry not to see an IRL representative present, and hoped there would be one at future meetings. There had been 120 entries in the IRL IRC championship and the Rule still seems strong in IRL.

JPN (Haruhiko Kaku) 2014 was the 9th season of IRC in Japan. Around 300 boats were rated at 30/8/14, about half of which are Endorsed. The newcomers are reducing each year, with 39 in 2014. Haru believes there is a potential for 500 IRC boats in JPN. Economy is an issue and not many new racing events are being held; there is perhaps a need for new events. Otherwise people are happy with IRC. JSAF also offers ORC but all major events use IRC. Most events are inshore, with two or three offshores and the 800 mile Okinawa race is longest race. A JPN IRC championship is planned for 2015.

HKG (Gideon Mowser) News is positive with a steady fleet of 90-100 boats. New boats are coming in but there is a shortage of mooring space in HKG so boats also leave, this is unlikely to change in the next 5-10 years. It is mainly older boats leaving and going over the border to where there is more space.

NED (John van der Starre) John provided some history of yacht racing in the Netherlands where for some time there has been racing under two systems varying over the years between IMS, ORC, ORCClub and IRC. ORC Worlds held locally have influenced the fleets and affected the IRC numbers. There are over 100 boats rated IRC but work had to be done to prevent further losses. There are other factors such as perception of fairness in ratings. An Open Dutch championship is planned for 2015. There is dual scoring in some events with ORC and IRC with all boats racing in the same fleet. The results are not always the same in each system. In reply to a question from Mike Urwin, John said that differences were in individual races rather than overall, and this is what competitors look at. People are sailing few days per year and only 10% of boats are sailing all races in an event.

Regarding triple v. single number ratings, inshore races all use triple number, while offshore races use single number. Race Committees now have good equipment to work out conditions eg. light/medium/heavy.

SEA (Simon James) Thailand has maintained about the same number of boats, but it is regatta orientated. This year THA had merged with SIN and MAS to form IRC SE Asia. More people are buying boats to travel around the region (including HKG). The Asian Yachting circuit includes 12 events and this year have involved 296 skippers in 283 boats, and the final winner had been decided in the final 200 metres! Problems in the region are: 1) where the increasing number of performance boats fit in amongst other boats. 2) The difficulty of creating classes for a small number of eg. older IOR boats that are being restored. Measurement seminars planned for next 6 months, and customer based seminars. It was hoped to hold one in January with James Dadd (RORC Chief Measurer). Weighing events are also planned at clubs, doing 10 boats at a time and aiming for Endorsed certificates. The last 3 regattas have been dual scored with NHC and were very successful. Some clubs are trialling it for their club scoring rather than using local handicap. The advantage is that people like to use an 'official' system rather than local.



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Debbie Smith said NHC works well where people understand how it works, but some people think it is a rating rather than a progressive handicap system. NHC helps promote IRC where people progress beyond NHC.

Note: *NHC is a progressive handicap system administered by the RYA*

MLT (absent) There are 133 boats in Middle Sea Race, IRC in Malta is fairly steady.

TUR (Alp Doguoglu) Alp summarised the IRC numbers show in his written report.

USA (Dan Nowlan) The 2014 IRC numbers are higher than forecast. USS administers ORR, IRC and HPR certificates. Buoy regattas are mainly IRC, distance racing mainly ORR. IRC used to have active marketing group US-IRC (USS remains neutral and does not promote any particular rule). US-IRC is not actively marketing but is using residual funds to underwrite a discount on new applications and lapsed certificate renewal. 50 boats have used that this year. However there is a need for marketing as well as financial incentives.

No other countries are actively marketing IRC. Malcolm Runnalls thought that all countries do active marketing but it's not formal. Eg. measurers are usually the ones out there 'marketing' the rule, relying on their enthusiasm. However that is not a long term solution.

Alp Doguoglu said that in TUR they are losing cruisers. Racing boats and cruisers are racing in the same league and this is a problem. He does not think that progressive system eg. NHC is the answer. Mike Urwin said that a part of NHC is engagement with those who produce computer packages to run results, including the process for adjusting the handicaps, which is public. Owner can see how the change works, unlike secretive local handicapping systems.

8. To receive a report from the IRC Technical Committee, including IRC distribution worldwide, Mike Urwin and Jean Sans.

Some members had not received this report and it would be re-sent when the Minutes are distributed. ([APPENDIX 2](#))

Mike Urwin summarised the report. One correction – Technical Committee in 2014 was in Paris not London. Mike Urwin noted that in addition to measurement done at Brewin Dolphin Commodores' Cup and Maxi Cup, Jenny Howells and Malcolm Runnalls attend Phuket King's Cup to do check measurement. All this improves consistency of measurement around the world.

It was noted that due to the South countries' certificate running 5 months later, comparison of boat numbers at 31 August is not representative for those countries. However, the total for each certificate year is also shown.

In reply to a question from Michael Boyd about statistics for other rating systems, Mike Urwin reported that we believe the ORC publishes the number of certificates, not boats.



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9. To receive, consider and decide proposals for IRC Rule changes for 2015.

9.1 From the IRC Technical Committee. (APPENDIX 3)

Mike Urwin summarised each proposal.

- 1) Rule 4.3. After some discussion, the proposal was accepted.
- 2) Rule 21.3.4 (c) deletion. The proposal was accepted.
- 3) Series Date. Following a query from Carl Sabbe and subsequent discussion, it was agreed to delete 'the **boat** or' in the first line. The proposal was accepted.
- 4) Age Date. The proposal was accepted
- 5) Rule 15.1 correction. The proposal was accepted

8.2 From IRC Rule Authorities. (APPENDIX 4)

BEL Carl Sabbe explained the proposal and said that certificates need to be more consistent between RORC and UNCL regarding Notes. Mike Urwin pointed out that it is standard wording for batteries and/or cushions and this would be looked at for 2015. The proposal was accepted.

AUS Rule 2 simplification. Rayshela Martin accepted the Technical Committees comments and agreed there was no need to change the rule.

AUS Code zeros. Feedback from sailmakers and boat captains from the top end of the fleet is that sail design is hampered by the IRC rule, they would like to see evolution of code zero sails to enhance the choice of sails. However, it was recognised that this would not be simple. James Dadd pointed out that a 'code zero' is defined by its use not dimensions, which makes it very difficult to define. The Rating Office had been looking at this subject for almost 20 years, but a problem is that they work on certain types of boat but not the vast majority of fleet. Mike Urwin said that it could be done by eg. reducing the minimum SHW to 65% of SF, but this would just mean the cruiser/racer is disenfranchised against the race boats. Rayshela Martin accepted this and said issue at the top end of the fleet is that code zeros are constantly evolving and they don't want development hampered by the rules

FRA Peter Wykeham-Martin asked that discussions on crew number/weight did not cover old ground from previous Congress meetings. Jean-Philippe Cau pointed out that there had been no conclusion to the previous discussions. The crew weight is a factor in the speed of the boat, and IRC crew number should be reduced. He does not agree with the PSG decisions on the subject.

There is a difference of opinion between countries whether crew number should be lower to reflect the difficulties in finding crew, or higher so that owners can eg. take family members racing. Malcolm Runnalls pointed out that the current rule allows race organisers to do what they like, and there was no need for more discussion.



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It was pointed out that weighing crew is a big problem except for professional events, but Catherine Pourre asked why crew would have to be weighed at an event if no other measurement checks were being done? She also asked that more parameters should be taken into account to calculate a more accurate crew weight. Mike Urwin said that this could be done technically, however the result would be production boat sisterships with different crew numbers. Catherine Pourre & Jean-Philippe Cau did not think that this would be a problem.

Peter Wykeham-Martin suggested Congress ask Technical Committee to look at this and come back with the results at Congress 2015. He pointed out that the current rule as written allows flexibility for event organisers which is to the benefit of both organisers and competitors.

In reply to a question from Carl Sabbe, Mike Urwin confirmed that there is nothing in the current IRC software to take account of crew weight.

FRA Sail measurement/Endorsement. Jean-Philippe Cau thought that boats attending an event with an Endorsed certificate and stamped sails should not be penalised if the measurer's data is wrong. Instead it should be accepted and action taken against the measurer. (The specific example was boats at the Brewin Dolphin Commodores' Cup (BDCC) that were asked to recut sails found not to comply with the rated data)

Malcolm Runnalls and Eddie Warden-Owen asked about examples where a measurement was written down 1 metre wrong, either too large or too small. It would not be logical that such an error should be accepted and not corrected.

Michael Boyd asked whether the Rating Office had the ability to issue an amended certificate at event inspection such as BDCC? Mike Urwin confirmed that this could be done for regattas when we have arrangements. However, BDCC rules were specific to that event, and were notified via a notice to competitors. The reason for the rule is to prevent potential for abuse by optimising for a short-range weather forecast and then getting an amended certificate during registration.

Peter Wykeham-Martin suggested that one particular incident should not be used as a basis for an overall rule change. This is a question for event management. James Dadd said that the focus should be on reducing errors in measurement, not changing IRC rules.

Catherine Pourre requested that the rule be changed for the next BDCC to allow amended certificates to be run. That question would need to go to RORC as the event organisers.

ESP (not present). Mike Urwin summarised the proposal. Any IHC (In-House Certification) measured sail has a sail sticker and ID number. It is also possible for a Rule Authority to specify detail of requirements for Endorsement within their jurisdiction. So the Spanish can ask for sail stamps if they wish. It does not need to be in the IRC Rule.

JPN definition of Heavy Weather Jib (HWJ). Mike Urwin explained the limitation in IRC that it does not have IG, which is required for calculation of HWJ area. The definition and area on the certificate were to help owners comply with IRC rules. However, he agreed that OSR definition of HWJ (and Storm Jib) should be used and it was proposed to amend the IRC definitions.



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It was agreed to delete the printed HWJ area from IRC certificates.
The amendments to the two IRC definitions (HWJ and Storm Jib) were agreed.

BEL Carl Sabbe asked how mistakes on certificates are handled and suggested that there should be more checks for data errors. Mike Urwin explained that there are many error checks both on the application form and in the IRC software, and these are continually developed.

Other subjects:

UMS – Dan Nowlan presented the Universal Measurement System. In USS Offshore Office there are 3 databases for ORR, IRC and HPR. Sometimes the boats are in different configurations. USS needed a way of having all the data in one database. Mike Urwin (RORC), Nicola Sironi (ORC) and Dan Nowlan (USS) were working together towards common definitions and database. For instance, all rules now measured boats in lightship trim and a common nomenclature paper had been written by Mike Urwin. USS are due to sign a contract with a company for a new cloud database to develop the first version of UMS. This was to be at no cost except the company logo on certificate; they will maintain the database for 3 years and it is then to be reviewed.

ISAF CLASSIFICATION CODE. Regarding the proposed deletion of the Code, Peter Wykeham-Martin said that it would be good for Alp Doguoglu and Janet Grosvenor to take the IRC Congress views to the ISAF conference in November.

Dan Nowlan reported that the Newport-Bermuda race organisers had requested that USS rejects the submission.

Peter Wykeham-Martin asked whether anyone supported the submission? No-one did.

Peter Wykeham-Martin tabled a motion that **IRC Congress does not support the ISAF submission**. This was seconded by Dan Nowlan. The motion was accepted unanimously.

10. To discuss and consider the future direction of IRC.

Mike Urwin presented the statistics on percentages of new applications and revalidations (RORC rated boats). [APPENDIX 5](#) To clarify, new applications are boats not previously rated under IRC, not necessarily a new boat. It can be seen that IRC is not currently attracting new boats/owners.

Eddie Warden-Owen asked whether the trend in new applications reflects a trend in the production boat business? It is assumed that it must do; people are keeping their existing boats for longer and it is also symptomatic of a deeper change in the sport.

Single Event Ratings (SER) *previously known as LV TCC.*

Mike Urwin gave the background to Limited Validity TCCs, now re-named as Single Event Rating (SER), used in GBR. Clubs are willing to accept SERs but we need to get word out to owners. The work to apply for and issue the certificate are no different from a standard certificate, so this scheme does not deal with the complexity issues of IRC [that is a disincentive for some owners]. The cost of an SER is £1.50/m plus £5.00/day racing. A boat could apply for SERs for a maximum of 2 events per year.



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If the scheme is to be extended overseas, the initiative has to come from the Rule Authority. They have to be fully engaged and prepared to help owners through the application process. There is also a need to be fully engaged with clubs and in contact with them, a level of knowledge and understanding of what clubs are doing is needed so that the SER doesn't get abused. It is not a trivial undertaking for a Rule Authority, it won't make money and it takes work.

Rayshele Martin argued that it is beneficial if you make conversions to IRC. This was agreed. It was noted that Yachting Australia had restructured their ORC fees to encourage participation, and James Dadd suggested that YA could reduce their standard IRC fees as another option. Rayshele Martin suggested that the Rating Office gets feedback from owners on their reason for getting an SER or for upgrading to a full certificate.

IRC Start Up

Mike Urwin introduced IRC Start Up, previously known as Incentive Schemes. Start Up is aimed at clubs who have not previously used IRC. Rule Authorities are encouraged to adopt similar scheme but the Rating Office would struggle to share the financial effect.

16 boats had been rated through the scheme in GBR in 2014. Success was down to an active local liaison and a lot of time spent on the phone by Faith Lawson (Rating Secretary) helping owners. These types of incentives are not easy work but we have to make the efforts to protect IRC.

Peter Wykeham-Martin asked for ideas for getting more people into IRC.

Simon James – rating packages for production brands such as Beneteau and Jeanneau for their standard boat packages. A lot of people in SE Asia buy standard production boats and this would make their lives easier.

James Dadd warned that it mustn't see it as dumbing down IRC. Mike Urwin agreed that it could work for new boats but would be a problem for older boats.

Eric Baittinger suggested that owners think the application form is too difficult to complete, and that the user experience could be improved. Nb. in the US for Endorsed certificates the application is filled out by the measurer. Mike Urwin replied that UMS will bring an improved application experience and that is why the Rating Office has not done independent work on this.

Carl Sabbe thought there are two issues: 1) the perceived complexity of filling out the form. For instance it is not possible to use standard rig and sail data. If this was possible the owner would get a high TCC, but it would not be wrong in his favour.

2) the perception that the 'ordinary boat' will never win against the grand prix boats.

James Dadd suggested that all sports have this problem, it is not just sailing. It is down to clubs to find ways to get more people participating.

Alp Doguolgu agreed, in Turkey IRC is losing certain boats because fleet is becoming more technical and more competitive. Family cruisers are opting out as they do not have a chance. He suggested:

- 1) Split cruisers from C/Rs and racers.
- 2) IRC needs to be more user friendly. For instance, the Rule should not limit when the non-spinnaker rating can be used, the race organiser should be able to decide. Also, let double



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handed boats be scored in same results as the main fleet. IRC rules should not block trends.

3) Single Event Ratings are a good idea and other countries should offer them.

Mike Urwin, regarding Technical Committee suggesting fleet splits – every regatta has a different constituency, IRC cannot give a fixed definition as it needs to be flexible. Andrew Yates suggested that event organisers could be more active with proposing fleet splits based on quantifiable data such as DLR to create a ‘cruising’ class for instance. James Dadd suggested following the example of events that work. For instance offering coastal / round the buoys courses and not windward/leeward, and perhaps having a DLR cut-off to exclude racing boats.

Ian Macdonald said this was tried in Scotland and worked OK. If you don’t have enough boats it makes splitting them harder, but novel class splits may attract more boats. He felt that members should be getting out and talking to clubs about opportunities for their fleets.

John van der Starre said that opposite to TUR, in NED people race ORCi because they think IRC is not sharp enough. Every country is different.

Peter Wykeham-Martin pointed out that despite apparently depressing country reports, there are still 6000 boats in over 30 countries, out there enjoying themselves racing IRC.

Andrew McIrvine felt that examples such as Holland, S. France, Aus, Malta, places that are using more than one system should be studied to find out why people move between systems?

CREW

Peter Wykeham-Martin introduced the subject of crew search websites and forums, using the example of the Cowes Week crew search. Crew were finding that they can no longer walk pontoons and find a boat to race on. Events and clubs need to have forums/crew search to get more youngsters involved.

Regarding the RORC crew match website, it was confirmed that it asked for credentials, but there is no validation of information as such.

Dan Nowlan said that people are bored with windward/leeward courses. There is a need to educate race organisers on what racers are looking for in courses. There needs to be a strategy to get people racing.

Rayshale Martin noted that in AUS there is pressure to create a set of cruising Special Regulations, as there is a shift of people moving out of racing entirely.

11. To discuss any proposed amendments to the IIRCOA Constitution.

None.

12. Any Other Business.

None.

The meeting closed at 1650.



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Sunday, 12th October 2014 at 10.00

Open discussion on the topic IRC – ISAF, Chaired by Peter Wykeham-Martin.

Present:

Chairman	Peter Wykeham-Martin
Vice Chairman	Alp Doguoglu (TUR)
Vice Chairman	Malcolm Runnalls

IRC Technical Committee Mike Urwin

AUS	Rayshele Martin
GBR	Ian Macdonald
HKG	Gideon Mowser

RORC Rating Office	James Dadd
RORC Rating Office	Andrew Yates

ISAF Oceanic Committee Janet Grosvenor

1. Re-write of OSRs

ISAF Offshore Special Regulations Committee are currently re-drafting OSRs with the aim not of changing them but rather to simplify, to improve the language used and to improve understanding generally. Mike Urwin presented a preview of this work. The starting point for presentation of OSRs will in future be a check sheet of requirements for each category. Within the check sheet, each item is hyperlinked to the relevant paragraph in OSRs. All recommendations have been moved to an Appendix. Wording has been changed in many places to improve understanding and to reduce the length. This has resulted in a reduction in word count from c15000 to c10000.

Mike had reviewed the new text (but not exhaustively) and commented on a few points to Will Apold, Chairman of OSR Committee. This would be shared by E-Mail with the meeting attendees along with the link to the current draft revised OSRs.

The meeting took note and approved of the progress made and the revised method of presentation.

2. Liferrafts

Janet Grosvenor is chair of a Working Party reviewing OSR 4.20, Liferrafts with the aim of simplification and rationalisation including moving towards phasing out completely 'ISAF' and 'ORC' liferafts. Additionally, servicing requirements had been reviewed and it is proposed that all references to 'inspection' of liferafts should be deleted. As a result of this, the WP had made two submissions to this year's ISAF Conference, SR06_14 and SR07_14. These were reviewed by the meeting and were both approved.

The Meeting congratulated Janet Grosvenor on this very significant and useful work.



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3. Lifelines

James Dadd is chair of a Working Party reviewing OSR 3.14.6, Lifeline Minimum Diameters, Required Materials, Specifications, with the aim of reviewing whether Dyneema should remain a permitted material. A WP report has been produced and is available on the ISAF website. The conclusion drawn by the WP is:

Previous research and test suggest that HMPE lifelines are capable of performing the necessary requirements that are met by wire lifelines in an ideal world, with correct assembly, associated materials, maintenance and usage. However, it is apparent that with the allowance of HMPE to be used for lifelines we have and will continue to see more failures than if HMPE is not permitted. The risk of crew members ending up in the water, both inshore and offshore is increased if HMPE lifelines are used rather than stainless steel wire, for reasons other than the materials ultimate strength, and for reasons that may be unrecognised by the crews until it is too late.

On the basis of the above, the WP recommends that OSR 3.14.6 a) should be amended by the deletion of:

~~High Modulus Polyethylene (HMPE) (Dyneema®/Spectra® or equivalent) rope (Braid on braid is recommended)~~

The meeting agreed with the WP's conclusions and recommendations.

4. OSR Categories 4 and 5

Mike Urwin is chairing a Working Party reviewing the content of OSR Category 4. The WP has not as yet produced a report or an submissions. It is likely however that the WP will in due course report that Category 4 is generally satisfactory, but that consideration should perhaps be given to reviewing the necessity for some items. The WP is however likely to report the Category 5 is currently unfit for purpose on the grounds that it requires compliance with OSR requirements for cockpits and hatches which is firstly unnecessarily complex and secondly is anyway today covered by RCD and other regulatory requirements for boats. The WP is therefore likely to suggest that Category 5 should be completely re-written to delete all reference to cockpits and hatches in favour of an updated list of portable equipment.

In discussion, the meeting noted that Category 4 and 5 races were potentially significantly different and that the significant increase in requirements should remain. There was no apparent appetite to significantly dilute the current Category 4 requirements.

5. Lifejackets

As a part of the work on Categories 4 and 5, Mike Urwin had noted that for all of Categories 0 – 4, the required lifejacket must comply with ISO 12402 – 3 (level 150) but in addition must inter alia be fitted with an integral full deck safety harness as specified in ISO 12401. A number of lifejackets on the market which complied with ISO 12402 did not include an integral safety harness and did not therefore comply with any of OSR categories 0 – 4. This was illogical in that



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OSRs do not require either safety harness tethers or jackstays for Category 4. The requirement was also resulting in unhappiness among sailors with non-compliant lifejackets at events such as Cowes Week and other inshore Category 4 events.

Stuart Caruthers had commented on the same point within a general review of lifejackets by a Working Party chaired by him.

The potential solution to this issue would be to remove the requirement for lifejackets to be fitted with an integral full safety harness from Category 4 to start instead at Category 3. The meeting agreed with this suggestion.

Meeting closed at 11.30.