

Racing Rules of Sailing

New Rule 56.3

A submission from the Chairs of the Oceanic and Offshore Committee and the Racing Rules Committee

Purpose or Objective

To add new rule 56.3 to promote safety for boats sailing near commercial vessels or in conditions of limited visibility.

Proposal

Change the title of rule 56 and add new rule 56.3 as shown below:

- 56 FOG SIGNALS AND LIGHTS; TRAFFIC SEPARATION SCHEMES; AUTOMATIC IDENTIFICATION SYSTEM**
- 56.1** When so equipped, a boat shall sound fog signals and show lights as required by the *International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea (IRPCAS)* or applicable government rules.
- 56.2** A boat shall comply with rule 10, Traffic Separation Schemes, of the *IRPCAS*.
Note: Appendix TS, Traffic Separation Schemes, is available at the World Sailing website. The notice of race may change rule 56.2 by stating that Section A, Section B or Section C of Appendix TS applies.
- 56.3** **When a rule requires a boat to be equipped with an automatic identification system transponder, or a specific tracker, this shall not be switched off or its operation intentionally worsened.**

Current Position

None. The proposed rule is new.

Reasons

1. In recent years Automatic Identification Systems (AIS) have become commonplace and have made a major contribution to boating safety when the racing area for an event is also an area in which there is commercial traffic. Many events now require (in the NoR, the SIs, the class rules or the Offshore Special Regulations, for example) that boats be equipped with AIS transponders. At night or at other times when visibility is restricted, a boat can gain a tactical advantage by switching off her AIS transponder. A boat that does this puts her crew and, possibly, the crews of other boats or vessels at risk.
 2. As new technology improves boating safety, the RRS should be changed appropriately. Proposed new rule 56.3 is a step in towards improved safety.
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