

Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Committee Amendments

1. Introduction

Following the Annual Conference in 2023 there have been a number of discussions with the Women's Forum. This paper proposes a few important amendments to the provisions in the 2024 Constitution and the Regulations for the establishment of an ED&I Committee. The changes need to be made by a Circular Resolution of the MNAs because of the timing of appointing the new ED&I Committee.

2. Background

The Women's Forum raised a number of points regarding the new ED&I Committee in November last year. It was agreed that the Governance Working Group and the Women's Forum would meet to resolve these issues after the Conference.

3. Proposals

In their discussions the Governance Working Group and the Women's Forum quickly reached agreement on the following:

- 3.1 The ED&I Committee would be appointed each quad by the Board just like any other committee. There would not be any elections. This would require a change to the 2024 Constitution removing the provision of the ED&I Committee electing their Chair and Vice-Chair.

Rationale: the view was that a Forum is not taken as seriously as a committee. The Women's Forum representatives were of the view that the work in the Federation gets done in committees. The approach solves two issues. There is the practicality of running an election but much more importantly is the difficulty of identifying the voting constituency.

- 3.2 There should be the option to appoint no more than three members to the committee who have not been nominated by their MNAs or one of the Classes. It would require a change to the 2024 Constitution to allow individuals to make nominations themselves and to allow the Class nominations under Article 50.3.(b) to be made without MNA consent.

Rationale: It was considered necessary to widen the base of those who can nominate to be truly representative.

Article 50.3 currently provides:

(a) any Member National Authority may nominate persons to any Committee or Sub-committee

(b) "any World Sailing Class Association may, **with the written consent of a person's Member National Authority**, nominate such persons to the:

...(ix) Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee

In this area of societal development, the personalities who could make the biggest contribution to the ED&I Committee might not be supported by their home countries, especially if they come from a conservative culture. The Board when considering appointments to the ED&I should check in with the MNA to see if there were any objectively determined fatal flaws in the proposed appointment but would not be bound by the MNA's response. (The working group debated whether this feature should be applied to all committee appointments but decided to leave that for future consideration).

- 3.3 Introduce in Article 50.4 of the new Constitution a caveat to the principle that nominating bodies must pay for their members or reach an agreement with them as some may be self-nominating or be a Class representative and thus responsible for their own costs.

Rationale: Someone without MNA support would need to fund their own attendance at Conference.

- 3.4 Introduce a requirement that, beyond 2028, at least one of the ED&I Chair or Vice-Chair must be female and require that the committee will not comprise more than 60% of any one gender.

Rationale: It was quite easy when as a Women's Forum one was either a female or a male with a vote or without. With many more gender identities participating in the EDI group it is not only about identifying each participant's gender but also ensuring the intended constituency is not overwhelmed by, say, heterosexual males if they participated in numbers.

4. Recommendation

- 4.1 The Council is requested to note and approve the proposed amendments outlined above.
- 4.2 If approved at Council, the amendments will then be drafted, in consultation with the Constitution Committee. Once finalised the amendments will be sent to the MNAs for approval by way of a Circular Resolution in May/June 2024.

Prepared on behalf of the Governance Working Group
