

IRC Rating System - 2024 Annual Report to IRC Congress and World Sailing

1. IRC OVERVIEW

The IRC Rating System is managed by the IRC Rating Authority (RORC Rating Office & YCF Centre de Calcul) and further administered by 38 additional rule authorities worldwide, on seven Continents, making it the most widely used Rating System available, with IRC certificates issued in 34 countries in 2024.

► IRC Boat and Certificate Numbers

Joint figures from RORC and YCF show that at the end of August the overall total valid rated boats (including single event ratings (SERs)) is 3450, this is a reduction of 6.5% (240 boats) from the end of August 2023. A total of 4967 certificates have been issued to 3558 boats since 1 January in 2024. The secondary certificate permitted by rule 8.2.1 continues to prove popular with 282 boats holding a valid secondary certificate on 31 August 2024.

2. EVENTS AND CLASSES

IRC remains the principal International Rating System for a long list of events around the world, with the offshore classics, including the RORC Transatlantic Race, Rolex Fastnet Race, Rolex Sydney Hobart Race, Rolex Middle Sea Race, RORC Caribbean 600, Aegean 600, Rolex Giraglia Race, and regattas such as Cowes Week, Hamilton Island Race Week, Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup, Phuket King's Cup Regatta, China Cup Regatta, Spi Ouest France, SNIM and the Voiles de Saint-Tropez using IRC as the rating system for the principal trophies.

There are thousands of boats club racing around the world using IRC rating. For more information, please refer to the individual [country reports](#) submitted to the annual IRC Congress.

For news about IRC regional and championships please visit [IRC News](#).

3. IRC CONGRESS

The IRC Congress will meet on 12 October in person in Dubai, UAE at the Dubai Offshore Sailing Club, and via video conference call. The IRC Congress will discuss the organisation of IRC and IRC Events around the World. The proposed technical development will be presented and approved. There will also be considerations of the Championships for the future. Papers can be seen on the [IRC website](#).

4. TECHNICAL DEVELOPMENTS 2025

► IRC Program and Certificate Processing

The IRC processing program continues to work well, and the major addition this year of publication of [IRC valid boat data](#) for boats rated since 1 January 2024, providing relevant information for competitors and for measurers doing equipment inspection at events. This has been a great addition to IRC and has improved transparency at events with technical committees and competitors having the confidence to check other boat's configuration and challenge any irregularities.

There have been further developments throughout the year with more data checks and tools for research. The program and calculation methods will be updated for the 2025 IRC formulation and rule, and development will continue in 2025.

► **IRC Technical Committee**

The IRC Technical Committee consists of nominated representatives from RORC and YCF. The committee continues its many discussions via digital meetings etc. Rule changes have been developed to present to the IRC Congress in October and a good number of IRC rating calculation developments are being discussed.

► **IRC Rating and Rule Changes for 2025**

The IRC Rule and formulation have worked very well this year with only the need for some minor changes to the rule and formulation. Also there will be a new edition of the Equipment Rules of Sailing 2025-2028 which requires some rule updates to be in line with this version. Proposed rule/rating changes for the following areas:

- Rules clarifying sail measurement.
- Rules for internal ballast.
- Rules for rig factor and rotating rigs.
- Rules for sheeting of sails.
- Rules to update to the new Equipment Rules of Sailing 2025-2028.
- Rules clarifying spare headsails with a single furling headsail.
- Definitions for sails types.
- Rating of keel trim tabs.

5. MEASUREMENT AND RULE AUTHORITIES

We continue to help our Rule Authorities around the world who look after the network of IRC measurers while offering resources for appointing and training measurers. The Rating Offices will be happy to receive any requests that the rule authorities may make in this regard.

The [IRC Measurement Manual](#) was updated throughout the year and includes measurement and policy guidance for measurement of hull, appendages, rig and sails.

The work on UMS with ORC and World Sailing continues and we maintain the use of IHC for sail measurement around the world expanding its use for IRC.

The IRC Rules for 2024 added a new rule 21.4 which requires boats with an Endorsed IRC Certificate to have a sticker or stamp with the measured dimensions where applicable the calculated sail area on all new or re-measured sails.

This rule was added to allow owners, crew & equipment inspectors to clearly identify if a sail being used is compliant with the maximum rated dimensions or area. It greatly facilitates rapid inspections and pre/post checks on the pontoon or at sea, without having to measure sails, which is time consuming for the sailors and the equipment inspection team.

The new IRC 21.4 rule effectively accompanies the quick check of the IRC Rules 21.6.1 (number of spinnakers), 21.7.1 (number of headsails) and 21.7.5 (number of flying headsails)

6. RACE MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

We continue to offer advice on IRC race management, both directly to event organisers and through published [Race Management Guidelines](#). The Rating Authorities monitor events and their use of the IRC Rule and update guidance to the organising authorities when we see issue arise or further advice is needed. The guidelines have been updated during 2024 including use of secondary certificates, permitting of autopilots and sail limitations.

7. IRC FLEET STATISTICS

To provide suitable statistics for comparative purposes we have included the total number of certificates issued as well as the number of boats rated for each of the last 5 years in a table below. From this we can see that the predicted number of certificates for the end of 2024 is in the region of 6000 worldwide, to approximately 4000 boats. Information on fleet distribution is shown below.

IRC Certificate Numbers at 31/8/24

	CUMULATIVE FIGURES - NUMBER OF CERTIFICATES (ALL TYPES)											
	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC
2020	705	1371	1968	2146	2374	2664	3056	3352	3854	4204	4301	4399
2021	180	607	1376	2012	2711	3450	4018	4248	4667	5097	5316	5440
2022	656	1208	1963	2774	3490	4105	4526	4853	5217	5570	5787	5926
2023	757	1313	2310	3065	3789	4424	4885	5120	5422	5787	6025	6171
2024	664	1301	2267	3027	3743	4202	4625	4967				

Note: IRC Fleet statistics table on next page

IRC Boat Distribution at 31/8/24

Full certificates only, excludes SEC (worldwide) and SER (GBR/FRA)													
IRC area	Country	Continent	Region	End of certificate year						To 31 August			
				2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2023 to 31 Aug	2024 to 31 Aug	boats 2024 - 2022	if >10 boats % difference
118	IRL	Europe	North	301	293	204	254	274	264	258	245	-13	-5.0
136	CAN	N America	North	27	22	3	1	1	0				
138	DEN	Europe	North	4	1			2	2	1		-1	
139	FIN	Europe	North	19	12		2	14	4	3	16	13	433.3
140	GER	Europe	North	47	38	11	25	24	41	39	26	-13	-33.3
141	NED	Europe	North	118	113	74	74	70	90	85	63	-22	-25.9
142	NOR	Europe	North	9	1	1	1	2	35	34	22	-12	-35.3
143	SWE	Europe	North	12	4	3	10	11	7	8	12	4	
144	ISL	Europe	North	13	11	12	10	9	6	6	8	2	
146	ISR	Europe	North	2	0				1	1	1	0	
147	MLT	Europe	North	49	33	32	33	31	39	33	35	2	
148	JPN	Asia	North	269	286	225	230	266	258	236	218	-18	-7.6
150	KOR	Asia	North	3	1						3	3	
152 & 452	Worldwide			57	70	39	54	57	60	51	49	-2	
153	TPE	Asia	North	5	9	8	8	18	21	20	18	-2	
203	AUT	Europe	North				1						
206	BUL	Europe	North	20	21	20	27	31	29	27	22	-5	
209	CRO	Europe	North	12	10	5	10	6	5	2	5	3	
210	CZE	Europe	North				2	2	1	1		-1	
211	EST	Europe	North								2		
218	GRE	Europe	North	23	25	6	24	29	23	19	25	6	
223	LTU	Europe	North				1	1	1	1		-1	
225	MON	Europe	North						1	1	1	0	
226	POL	Europe	North				1	4	5	5		-5	
227	POR	Europe	North						1	1		-1	
228	ROU	Europe	North	1	3	2	8	3	2	1		-1	
229	RUS	Asia	North	13	11	10	18	11	12	8	11	3	
234	SLO	Europe	North	0	1	1	1		2	2		-2	
237	SUI	Europe	North	4	10	6	6	9	7	6	3	-3	
241	UKR	Europe	North						1	1		-1	
242	MRI	Africa	North	9	0				10	9		-9	
244	BRA	S America	North	61	89	57	7	2					
408	NZL	Oceania	South	13	1	1	1	3	7	1		-1	
409	RSA	Africa	South					8					
410	HKG	Asia	South	84	84	65	65	77	74	50	59	9	
412	PHI	Asia	South	6	6	2	7	8	10	6		-6	
414	SE Asia	Asia	South	92	78	16	31	58	65	19	17	-2	
416	UAE	Africa	South	41	38	45	51	72	62	6	6	0	
421	IND	Asia	South	16	11	7	15	11	11	9		-9	
501	ARG	S America	South	10	5								
505	MEX	S America	South				1						
507	MRI	Africa	South						1				
509	URU	S America	South	18	17	18	12	10	2				
510	NCL	Oceania	South	0	0		12	2					
511	CHI	S America	South	17	20	1	7	36	32	1	1	0	
512	COL	S America	South	6	4				8		2	2	
101-117	GBR	Europe	North	1424	1399	950	1133	1178	1181	1142	1086	-56	-4.9
120-133	USA	N America	North	157	156	68	14	22	30	27	20	-7	
204-205	BEL	Europe	North	56	45	16	31	40	41	38	43	5	
207-208	CHN	Asia	North	86	93	20	0	17	64	28	8	-20	-71.4
212-217	FRA	Europe	North	603	608	469	492	562	591	567	533	-34	-6.0
219-220	ITA	Europe	North	459	440	269	320	317	360	281	274	-7	
235-236	ESP	Europe	North	96	115	63	77	104	106	96	97	1	
238-240	TUR	Europe	North	281	291	260	244	287	294	247	242	-5	
401-407	AUS	Oceania	South	442	439	380	339	372	324	211	189	-22	-10.4
Totals:				4985	4914	3369	3660	4061	4191	3588	3362	-226	-6.3
As % of previous year:					98.6	68.6	108.6	111.0	103.2		93.7		

RORC (UK) and YCF (France).

www.ircrating.org