

Safety Panel Update – November 2024

1. Safety Panel

The Safety Panel was established in 2017 to assist the Board in ensuring safety in the sport of sailing. During the monthly meetings, the Safety Panel reviews incidents logged and discusses safety related matters which are then reported to the Board.

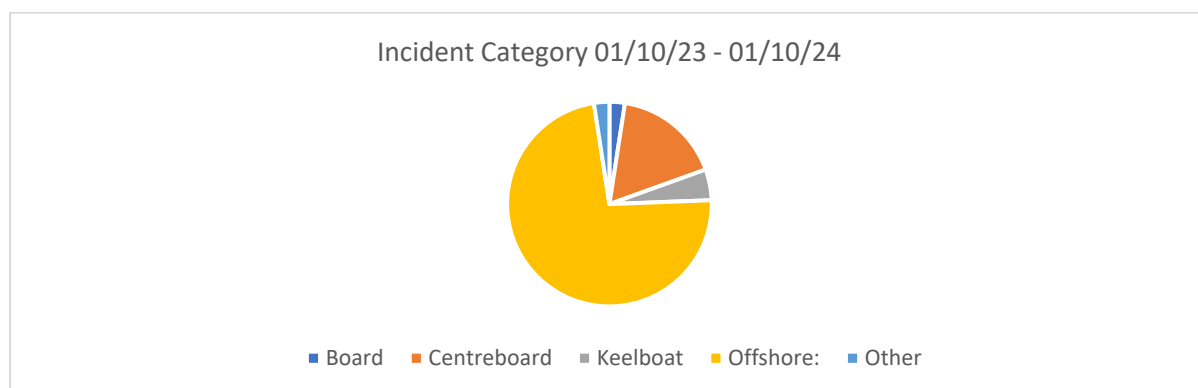
The current members of the Safety Panel are:

Katrina Ham – Offshore and Safety Manager
Jaime Navarro – Director of Technical and Offshore
Urvasi Naidoo – Director of Legal and Governance
Matthew Wheaton – Competitions Manager
Alexandra Rickham – Director of Sustainability
Hannah Stodel – Para Sailing Manager

2. Incident Reporting

Incident reporting requirements are outlined in Regulation 38 which requires MNAs, Classes and Rating Systems to report incidents. Launched in 2018, the [World Sailing Incident Reporting Portal](#) allows logging of incidents. Reported incidents are [logged online](#).

In the year to 1st October 2024 (from Oct 23 to Oct 24) year, 41 incidents were added to the [Reported Incident List](#). Please note that 6 of these incidents occurred prior to that period.

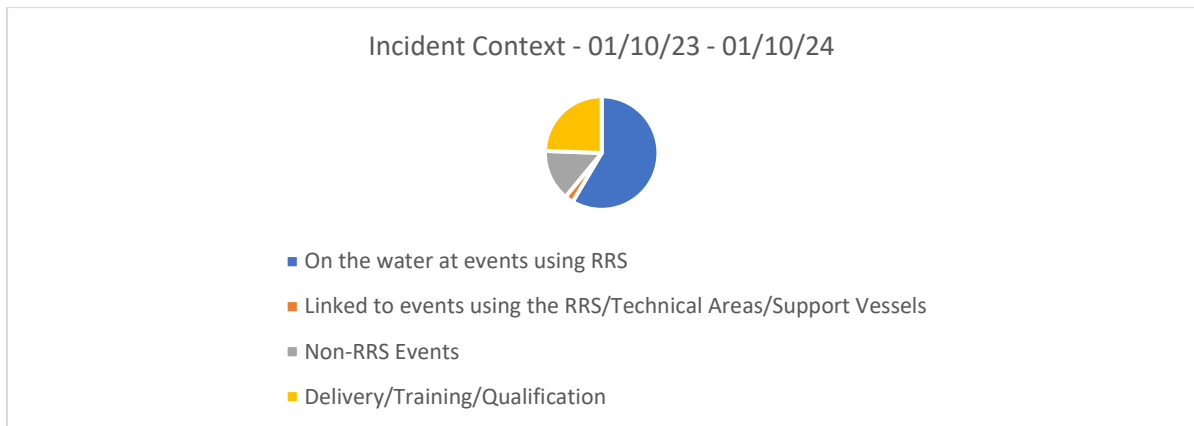


Graph 1: Incidents by category for the period of 01/10/23 – 01/10/24.

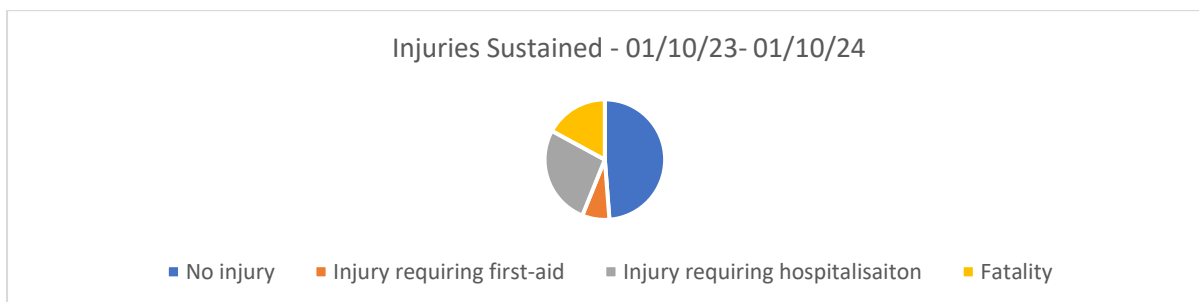
	<i>Number of Recorded Incidents</i>	<i>Percentage of all Recorded Incidents</i>
<i>Involving a WS Class</i>	12	29%
<i>Involving a WS Special Event</i>	1	2%
<i>Involving foiling</i>	4	10%
<i>Involving a head injury</i>	4	10%

Table 1: Incident statistics for the period of 01/10/23 – 01/10/24.

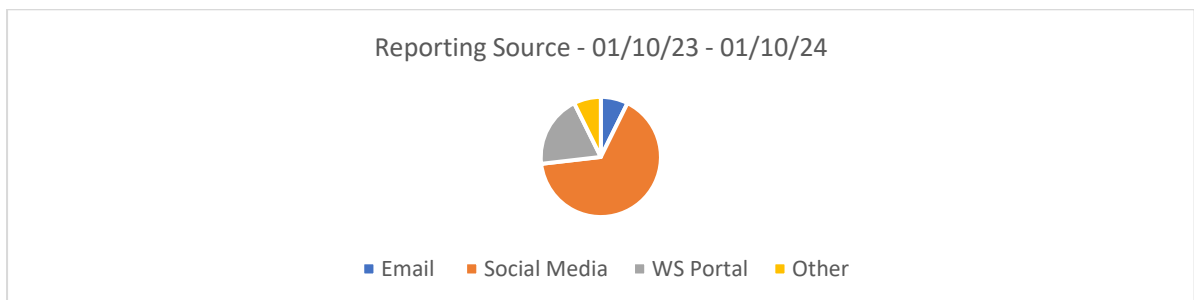
Please note that while linked to WS Classes, not all incidents occurred at Class organised events.



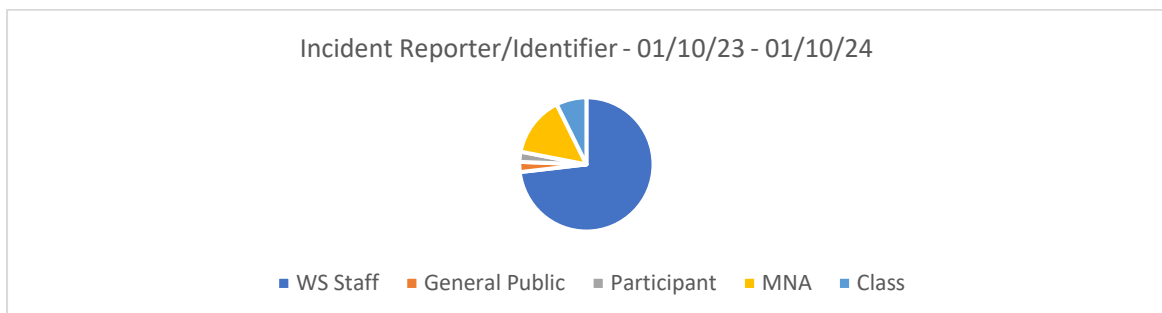
Graph 2: Incident contexts for the period of 01/10/23 – 01/10/24.



Graph 3: Injuries sustained for the period of 01/10/23 – 01/10/24. Please note that 7 incidents involved a fatality.



Graph 4: Reporting source for the period of 01/10/23 – 01/10/24. Reporting source is identified as the method the incident is first brought to the attention of the Executive Office.



Graph 5: Reporting Source for the period of 01/10/23 – 01/10/24. The person who first brings the incident to the attention of the Executive Office is recorded as the incident reporter/identifier.

During the follow up on incidents, the Safety Panel has identified a number of challenges:

- Despite requirements under Regulation 38, there remains a general lack of engagement from stakeholders including MNA's, Classes, Rating Systems, Event Organisers and Race Officials. This results in an increased workload on the Executive Office and limits the resources available to follow up with wider stakeholders. A lack of willingness to provide details once requested also hinders the Safety Panels ability to understand the causes of incidents and therefore be able to provide guidance and share learnings.
- A number of the identified incidents occurred during events that do not use the Racing Rules of Sailing. This poses challenges to incident investigations and limits World Sailing's ability to influence the events as there is no jurisdiction. However, this presents a reputational risk as the general public's perception will not distinguish and it will reflect poorly on the sport.
- While only 10% of reported incidents involved a head injury. 50% of them are believed to have resulted in a fatality. While neither of the fatalities reported in this period were linked to foiling, the Safety Panel has identified of an increase in the severity of head injuries linked to foiling across the sport (boards, centreboards and offshore).
- While the Safety Panel has struggled to get confirmation of the battery type in all the suspected incidents, it is believed that up to 3 incidents in the past year have resulted in major fires linked to lithium batteries. In two of the incidents, boats were abandoned and crew rescued.
- The lack of resources in the Executive Office impacts the ability to follow up on incidents. This limits the ability to accurately determine the primary cause as well as influencing factors. This limits the Safety Panels ability to identify trends and take appropriate action.

The Safety Panel has also noted positive observations of the past year including:

- The Safety Panel would like to note the work of Australian Sailing regarding Incident Reporting and their proactiveness in following up on incidents.
- The Safety Panel also would like to highlight the proactive work of the Royal Ocean Racing Club and the Royal Yachting Association in their investigation and report into the 2023 Fastnet Race.

3. Safety Equipment

- Helmets

Noting the concerns regarding head injuries, currently there is no specific standard for sailing helmets. This results in classes, events and equipment manufactures using a variety of different standards from other sports including horse riding, snowsports and white-water rafting. The potential to develop a specific standard through British Standards Institute was raised with the Safety Panel earlier this year. Following the learnings from reached out to industry including manufacturers and Special Events for their interest in this project.

Following some positive engagement with industry, a proposal was submitted in early September for consideration. Please see [report](#) for more information.

The Safety Panel highlighted the keen interest from industry and see this as an opportunity to engage with the community and in particular Special Events. However, it also notes that support of Classes, Events, Special Events and manufacturers would be vital for the success of such a project. It also noted that the Safety Panel does not currently have the resources to sufficiently lead the project from the Executive Office.

- Impact Vests

Following the challenges in defining an impact vest, as well as discussions with manufacturers, the Safety Panel recognises the benefits of a specific standard. In September at the ISO/TC 188/SC1 meeting, World Sailing raised the question of potential inclusion of impact vests in part 6 of ISO 12402 Personal Flotation Devices which is under review. Please see [report](#) for more information.

Similar to any potential helmet standard, if this objective is to be taken forward, World Sailing will need the engagement and support of industry. The Safety Panel also note that additional resources would also be needed to support the process including in the Executive Office as well as to support attendance at meetings.

4. Safety Focus

To further highlight the focus on Safety, the Safety Panel developed a survey that was distributed to MNA's, Classes, Rating Systems and Special Events. The aim was to collect information on current safety practices as well as establish a database of contacts while raising awareness of the requirement to report incidents.

The results highlight challenges going forward in the endeavour to increase the reporting of incidents. This includes the lack of engagement in the process or pathway/requirement for incidents to be reported by members/clubs/class associations/event organisers/teams or for that information to be forwarded to World Sailing. Challenges around the resources required to follow up on incidents was also highlighted. The recommendations from the Safety Panel can be found in the [full report](#).

To further develop the focus on Safety, the following objectives have been identified by the Safety Panel:

- Upgrading of the Incident Reporting page to make it interactive (eg: ability to search by category). This has been raised by various stakeholders however is not possible with the current technical provider. This request has been passed onto the new Head of IT and Digital Infrastructure however it must be noted that additional resources would also be required from other departments in addition to the technical capabilities to progress on this objective.
- Upgrading of the Incident Reporting Portal to add additional features and questions (eg: additional fields added regarding mega-fauna strikes). This has also been raised by various stakeholders however is not possible with the current technical provider. This request has been passed onto the new Head of IT and Digital Infrastructure however it must be emphasised that additional resources would also be required from other departments in addition to the technical capabilities to progress on this objective.

- Incident Information Policy – To further encourage reporting of incidents, the Safety Panel believe that a clear policy regarding how the information gathered is used is required to give confidence to the community and to encourage more reporting. This could include a review of the benefits and drawback of the incident reporting list. Given the personal information often collected, the Safety Panel identifies this is a high priority, however notes that there are not sufficient resources available in the Executive Office to progress this at the moment.

5. Regulation 38 Working Party

Following the 2023 Annual Conference a working party was established with members of both the Safety Commission and the Oceanic and Offshore Committee to review Regulation 38. The members of the working party include Nick Sloane, Philip Baum, Shevaun Bruland, Matt Allen, Sally Honey, Stan Honey, Walter Boddener, Christophe Gaumont, Michele Marchesini, Alan Massey, Nebojsa Nikolic, Urvashi Naidoo, Jaime Navarro and Katrina Ham.

Following the work of the working party the Board and the Chair of the Oceanic and Offshore Committee made a [submission](#) for consideration at the 2024 Annual Conference which includes a changes to Regulation 38 as well as a new Safety Policy. The objective of the changes is to clarify the requirements regarding incident reporting to further support the work of the Safety Panel and Safety Commission.

Please note that all Committee and Commissions were invited to provide feedback during the process and that the Regulation and accompanying Safety Policy were written with the forthcoming governance changes in mind.