

Para World Sailing Committee –

Classification Working Party Report 2024

The Classification Working Party, created in 2022, includes five members: Lynne Beal (CAN), Walter Mielke (GER) Adrian Stoggall (GBR) Sarah Ross (AUS) led by Bernard Destrubé (FRA).

Since being constituted, the most relevant topics discussed related to increasing number of ICs, training to become an International Classifier requires sufficient ‘hands-on’ training to acquire proficiency in anatomical and physiological evaluation of athletes’ abilities and limitations. Hence a training session must be part of a big event where sufficient number of athletes are to be classified. This has recently been made difficult by the separation of the different Para championships to different venues.

Online training techniques

Online training material could slightly reduce the time needed at an event to acquire classification competencies. However the present IC training program tends to alternate between hands-on training and theory at an event. Furthermore, the investment needed to develop an online program should be balanced with the small number of trainee classifiers.

Accreditation and re-accreditation of ICs,

Insufficient classification opportunities around the world over recent years has made it difficult or impossible for some ICs to officiate

sufficiently to be eligible to apply for re-accreditation, except in Europe. Involvement of ICs at events around the world must be encouraged and supported by World Sailing. A recent attempt to include a remote classifier has not proven to be optimal, but could possibly be used in future for training purposes.

Race Official Roles, Qualifications and Competences Application Document for World Sailing International Race Officials (February 2020) presently requires in Section 2.3 that an IC applying for re-accreditation requires a letter of support from the WS Head of Classification and one of the following officials: Jury Chairman, Principal Race Officer, WS Technical Delegate. This choice of officials may not be most appropriate as they have little or often no contact with the classifiers. It may be advantageous to modify this regulation to request recommendation from a second IC who has classified with the candidate.

More recently discussions on how to qualify sailors wishing to compete in the "Inclusive" category of World Sailing Championships along side the Para title.

This working party met remotely with the PWSC Inclusion WP in April 2024 where different views were shared. Opinions ranged from simply accepting self declaration of suffering a handicap, to a more structured approach with a very inclusive list of identified eligible health conditions that significantly impact daily life. As no distinct option emerged, a further meeting was planned in order to come to a consensus, that is yet to be scheduled.

I would like to sincerely thank each WP member for their input and participation, and WS staff for their assistance.

Respectfully submitted,

Bernard Destrubé, WP Chair and (retired) Head of Classification