

WORLD SAILING 2024 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

RACE OFFICIALS COMMITTEE REPORT TO COUNCIL

In the first two years of this term, the Race Officials Committee was strongly affected and negatively limited by the pandemic, in particular on education of race officials. Despite this, in the last two years and specifically in 2024, it was possible to return to normal activities, with an emphasis on that particular topic and related matters.

In 2024 the committee increased its educational program in terms of clinics and seminars, started, together with the Office, a program aimed at supporting MNAs in their national educational programs that also includes a new pool of appointed national/regional developers, created a formal system for appointing and renewing the pool of instructors well as the committee progressively is returning to the normal scenario of appointment of race officials updating the requirements to eliminate those that mitigated the effects of the pandemic.

Another ongoing theme is technology, on two distinct fronts, such as supporting race officials in their activities with the inclusion of decision support tools as well as supporting the race official's administration with the development of a database to help both the Office and Sub-Committees.

1. EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

1.1 Clinics and Seminars:

With the clinics and seminars held in 2024, the committee ended this four-year period with a total of 46 educational events, 12 clinics and 34 seminars at different geographical areas for IRO, IJ, IU and IM summarized in the tables bellow.

	Clinics	Seminars
IJ		13
IRO	7	9
IU	3	6
IM	2	6
Total	12	34

	Clinics	Seminars
Europe	2	19
Asia	3	6
North America		5
South America	3	2
Central America	3	1
Oceania		1
Middle East	1	
Africa		

As a conclusion, despite an effort and some progress made to focus on underserved areas, Race Officials Committee still not get the ideal scenario of a good balance in between geographical areas.

Relevant to comment, at the 34 seminars, 418 attendees took the exam, one of the requirements to apply for race officials status with 162 approved what in theory could be considered as potential future World Sailing Race Officials. The following table details approved candidates in the exam per discipline.

	Seminars	Took the Exam	Approved
IJ	13	211	76
IU	6	21	11
IRO	9	108	42
IM	6	78	33
Total	34	418	162

1.2 New Instructor Appointment Process:

In 2022, the committee, together with the SCs, began work to define a process for appointing instructors to replace the current system not based on a formal process nor clear criteria. Goal was to set standardized procedures for all disciplines with clear and specific criteria for each one.

After a two years project, this year ROC approved the new Instructors Appointment Process Document with three main principles: formal process of appointment, clear requirements for candidates and criteria for appointments per discipline that took in account geographical spread and gender. Also created a trainee instructor in addition to clinic and seminars, with criteria to progress from trainee to clinic and seminar.

The new process is open to all WS international officials from any continent with application process rounds up to each sub-committee based on needs and limited by regions instead of former system that did not take in account geographical nor gender criteria.

This new process will refresh the pool of instructors same time will provide opportunity for new officials to come into the system.

1.3 – National Training Program:

Early in 2024 the committee was contacted by the Office to support a new educational initiative, a program to assist MNAs that do not have their own national development program. Idea is to offer MNAs a step-based program that ranged from club to national level with both online and in person courses. As an additional gain, this program could be the gateway to the WS race officials educational program.

Another potential benefit would be for World Sailing to develop future instructors in a new category created specifically for the program, the national developers, in summary international race officers MNA based that after a training session could teach the courses. To run the program a coordination group was created with members from Race Officials Committee, Race Management Sub-Committee and the Office with a second group, the content creator with three members to create the contents. Aim of the program is to cover all disciplines in the future, for the first phase, only race officers program.

First step was to offer opportunities for MNAs to recommend future developers same time to create the content in English to be translated to other languages. This step is about to conclude with plans to train the developers early next year to start run in person events during 2025 with an optimistic scenario of potential 18 events in all continents but Europe.

We are optimistic that program will success therefore confident it could be implemented in a short future for all disciplines.

2. Race Officials Numbers

Strongly negatively affected by the pandemic in the first two years, only this year was possible to begin recover the number of race officials. The following table shows a comparison between total number of race officials per gender in 2021 and 2024.

Year	2021			2024		
Gender	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Total	562	84	646	532	93	626
Percentage	87%	13%	100%%	85%	15%	100%

Even a small increase, only 2%, good new more female race officials but still not fully recovered from the pandemic with respect to overall numbers, a decrease of 3% when compared with pre pandemic times. We hope with continuous effort on educational program together with new initiatives like the National Training Program the scenario will change for a better one in next one or two years.

3. Technology

During this term, the committee put effort to make available at least at World Sailing major events, technology to assist our race officials on the decision-making process. With focus on race management, umpiring and judging some actions in place that ended in Paris 2024 Games with tools that improved the accuracy of decisions same time minimizing the human factor that may end in errors. We could list in those tools the high accuracy GPS for start and finish line calls, drones and live broadcast for umpiring also video footage for judging/hearings. In parallel with that initiative, introduction of the digital race officials at events, experts on technology and IT that give support on real time for other officials. There is still a long way ahead but sure World Sailing is on the right one to provide a better decision-making process to our sailing community.

Another initiative started in 2021 is the E-ROC project that after some hard work of planning the scenario is now ready to be implemented. With the support of a new IT person in the Office, now Race Officials Committee can pass to the next step, to program and test the software in 2025 with expected implementation in 2026. This database of race officials activities, skills, geographical location and gender will improve race officials administration also support EAWP on event appointments.

4. Documentation

Last but not less important, all disciplines did review and update their manuals and polices to reflect the current rules and best practices in our sport. Some lessons learned from Paris 2024 Games in terms of polices and best practice, in particular for race management that will be implemented in the next term.

5. Other business

In parallel with those key topics, the committee continue with its usual activities like administration of race officials and through its Working Parties: Conflict of Interest, Rule 42, Q&A (with RRC), International Technical Delegates and Classifiers.

Would like to take this opportunity to thanks to the Office for its daily help, in particular the race official administrator and CEO also to the Board for the strong support to Race Officials Committee initiatives.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Ricardo Navarro', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Ricardo Navarro
Race Officials Committee Chairman

29 October 2024