

The Oceanic and Offshore Committee met at the Suntec Singapore Convention & Exhibition Centre, Singapore at 09:30 – 17:00 (UTC+8) on Thursday 7 November 2024

Please refer to the World Sailing <https://www.sailing.org/inside-world-sailing/organisation/governance/conferences/2024-world-sailing-annual-conference/> for the details of the submissions on this agenda.

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Present:

Matt Allen (AUS) – Chairman
Corinne Migraine (FRA) – Vice Chair
Sally Honey (USA) - Chair Special Regs SC
Paddy Boyd (IRL)
Bruno Finzi (ITA)
Denise Caffari (GBR)
Simon James (THA)
Yasutaka Funazawa (JPN)

Philip Baum – Vice-President
Yann Rocherieux – Vice-President
Stan Honey (USA)
Glen Stanaway (AUS) – Chair Sailor Classification Commission
Alan Massey (GBR) - Chair International Regulations Commission

Apologies:

Hylton Hale (RSA)
Cuneyt Buyukucek (TUR)
Kun (Vicky) Song (CHN)

Jose Frers (ARG)
Diane Ried (CAN)
Claire Renou (FRA)

Also in Attendance:

Alexandra Rickman (WS Director of Sustainability)
Jaime Navarro (WS Director of Technical & Offshore)
Zoran Grubisa – Offshore Racing Congress
Jason Smithwick - IRC
Jeremy Wilton - RORC

Katrina Ham (WS Offshore & Safety Manager)
Richard Hinterhoeller - Special Regs SC
Phil Lawrence – The Ocean Race
Dan Nowlan – Stability Working Party Chair

1. Opening of the Meeting

- (a) An introduction and welcome to the members of the Committee.

Matt Allen welcomed committee members and observers to the meeting.

- (b) Apologies for absence

It was noted that apologies had been received from Hylton Hale, Jose Frers, Cuneyt Buyukucek, Kun (Vicky) Song, Claire Renou and Diane Ried.

- (c) Declaration of conflicts of interests

No additional conflicts of interest were declared by members.

Oceanic and Offshore Committee Minutes (cont.)

Philip Baum welcomed members to the meeting and provided an update on behalf of the Board. Special thanks were given to the host city, MNA and local tourism board for hosting the 2024 Annual Conference. He highlighted the events over the past year including the World Sailing Youth Sailing World Championships, the Olympic Games and the 2024 Offshore Double Handed World Championships. He also highlighted the contributions of World Sailing Special Events including the Americas Cup and SailGP. As well as providing an update of the ongoing governance reform, Philip Baum thanked committee members for their contribution over the quad. David Graham echoed Philip Baum's importance of the work of the Oceanic and Offshore Committee.

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

(a) Minutes

The minutes of the Oceanic and Offshore Committee meeting of 16 November 2023 were noted.

(b) Minutes Matters Arising

Matt Allen noted that an additional item regarding the Offshore Vision will be added to the agenda following item 4 on Technology and Offshore Racing.

3. Chairman's Report

Matt Allen thanked members for their contributions over the year and outlined progress made. He recalled progress made by the committee over the year including the 2024 Offshore Double Handed World Championships, the approval of tougher ISO requirements for keel fatigue as well as the work of the Special Regulations Sub-Committee. He also noted the desire for more focus on advocacy going forward.

4. Technology and Offshore Racing

Stan Honey outlined the challenges facing the offshore community regarding technological developments. He highlighted that to varying degrees, organising authorities are setting policy for the use of emerging technology in offshore racing by amending the Racing Rules of Sailing or the Offshore Special Regulations to permit:

- Autopilots, (amending RRS 52)
- Canting keels, movable ballast, (amending RRS 51)
- Powered winches (amending RRS 52)
- Outriggers (amending RRS 55.3)
- For-fee weather data (amending RRS 41 and Case 120)
- Outside routing (amending RRS 41)
- Winches operated from below decks (amending OSR 3.11)

While discussing the differences in attitudes across the offshore community, questions were posed on the implications of developments such as LIDAR. All organizers and sailors value the use of LIDAR for collision avoidance, but some want to limit its use by autopilots. The differences in approaches taken by organising authorities towards RRS 41 were considered. The work undertaken in the development of Appendix M of the Offshore Special Regulations was recalled noting the benefits of keeping the wording in a document controlled by the Oceanic and Offshore Committee. However, it was also noted that a future step could be to include it in the Racing Rules of Sailing. The possibility for Rating Systems to assist in influencing policy in these areas of the sport was also discussed, with the possibility of Rating Systems potentially including suggested wording templates for event organisers to consider

for use in their Notice of Race and Sailing Instructions. While discussing the use of Appendix M, the potential for a preamble to explain the work to date was suggested.

The committee discussed the differences between the three sectors of the offshore community: conventional/traditional, intermediate and high-tech and also the varying attitudes between the mostly French major commercial shorthanded oceanic events and the more traditional sectors of the community with events often organized by yacht clubs. New connectivity provided by developments such as Starlink were discussed. There are clear benefits of reduced costs, media visibility and increased safety resulting from increased communications, however, this increased connectivity opens more possibilities for inadvertent cheating. Real life examples were discussed and the challenges of self-policing were discussed. It was agreed that this could be a focus for an educational piece going forward. The potential benefits of technology in areas including collision avoidance were also noted, particularly in reference to increasing concerns regarding marine mammal interactions.

5. Offshore Vision

Katrina Ham outlined the project of the Executive Office to develop a document to outline the vision for offshore and bigger boat racing within World Sailing. Noting the Olympic Vision document published last year, she outlined the ongoing process of consultation. The contribution of offshore and keelboat sailing to both the marketability and participation numbers within the sport was highlighted. She also recalled the ongoing education project within the Executive Office to raise the profile and understanding of offshore sailing internally. Referencing the World Sailing Strategy 2024-2029 to be considered by Council at the end of the week, Katrina Ham highlighted the specific references to the offshore community. She also reported on the progress to date regarding development. She thanked Simon James for his contribution to the Development Symposium which would directly follow the 2024 Annual Conference, emphasising the opportunity posed by including offshore on the agenda.

While discussing the project, the role and contribution of yacht clubs was raised. It was agreed that these groups should be considered if resources allow and it did not impede the importance of the MNA's role. The role of Rating Systems, major offshore events and other bodies was highlighted. Katrina Ham emphasised the objective of adding value to the offshore community. She recalled the learnings from interactions with a variety of MNA's through the 2024 Offshore Double Handed World Championships, noting the vast differences in the links between MNA's and the offshore community in their countries. Katrina Ham highlighted the importance of big boat sailing to World Sailing objectives to grow the sport, specifically in the retention of sailors through various stages of their lives. Simon James provided examples of how World Sailing could assist in developing offshore racing in Asia by providing support to MNAs and events. While discussing the challenges faced in raising the profile of offshore sailing, the clash of the Annual Conference with the Vendee Globe was noted. It was agreed that topics regarding offshore sailing needed to reach beyond the confines of the Oceanic and Offshore Committee, which would require increased resources.

6. International Regulations Commission

Alan Massey provided an update on the work of the International Regulations Commission over the past year. He noted the work of the volunteers who cover meetings from the International Maritime Organization, the International Standards Organisation as well as the European Boating Association. He noted the importance of the Commission's work in providing visibility. He outlined the main points raised in the various meetings including the rise in the number of piracy and armed robbery incidents which has increased 15% since 2022. While highlighting the trend, Alan Massey noted that current guidance produced by World Sailing was still applicable.

Alan Massey updated the Committee on the trend of increasingly tougher environmental protections, including the tendency to capture ever smaller craft. The increase in the number of Particularly Sensitive Sea Areas and Emission Control Areas was also highlighted. He emphasised the importance of the Commission's work in ensuring that any new requirements are both practical and proportionate, noting the need to avoid unintended consequences for sailing boats.

The developments regarding marine autonomous shipping were noted as well as progress made regarding lost freight containers. Alan Massey reported that a requirement for ship masters to report losses of shipping containers overboard will come into effect from January 2026. Stuart Carruthers' work regarding safety equipment standards was also highlighted.

7. Working Parties

(a) Keel Improvements

Richard Hinterhoeller provided an update from the ISO/TC 188 WG35. Referring to the supporting paper provided by Stuart Carruthers, he outlined the progress made to date, noting that the proposal was passed 12 to 1. It was agreed that this was a great outcome for the sport, even if the process had taken longer than initially expected.

(b) Universal Measurement System (UMS)

A brief update on the current status was received. Zoran Grubisa reported on progress to date regarding inclusion of ORC in the In-House Certification program, noting the original ambitions regarding a universal sail sticker. Jason Smithwick highlighted challenges regarding the measurement of flying headsails and the need for more work on standardisation. It was agreed that it is important for boat owners and sailors that more progress is made in this area.

8. Safety Update

(a) An update from the Safety Panel

While referencing the supporting paper, Katrina Ham provided an overview of the work of the Safety Panel, noting the objective of identifying trends and sharing information across the community. She reported that 71% of the 41 incidents logged in the year to October 1st related to offshore sailing. While outlining the statistics regarding incident reporting, Katrina Ham highlighted that the majority of incidents are identified through social media.

While recalling the increasing severity of head injuries, Katrina Ham highlighted the links to offshore incidents for both the high-performance and the more traditional sectors of the offshore community. She also noted the challenges in gathering accurate information regarding incidents involving lithium batteries, emphasising the importance of identifying trends in particular with reference to World Sailing's sustainability objectives and the increased need for energy.

Katrina Ham praised the proactive reporting by Glen Stanaway and Australian Sailing. She also highlighted the work of the Royal Ocean Racing Club and the Royal Yachting Association in their review and subsequent report on the 2023 Fastnet Race. She commended the good practice demonstrated by the proactive reporting and follow through to submissions which improve the Offshore Special Regulations. The work regarding safety equipment was also noted.

- (b) Submission 030-24 from the World Sailing Executive Board and the Oceanic and Offshore Committee Chair regarding Regulation 38 Safety Incident Reporting

Matt Allen provided an overview on the submission and the work of the Regulation 38 Working Party. He reported on the friendly amendments suggested by the Constitution Commission as well as the inclusion of the Safety Policy developed with the governance changes in mind. It was noted that the threshold for reporting was deliberately set high, keeping in mind the limited resources available in both the Executive Office as well as with the various stakeholders. The challenges in gathering information during incident investigations was emphasised. Paddy Boyd questioned the inclusion of organising authorities in the policy given the lack of direct link with World Sailing. While noting the potential areas for development, it was agreed that the submission was a step forward.

Recommendation from the Oceanic and Offshore Committee: Approve with friendly amendments as suggested by the Constitution Commission.

9. Reports from Rating Systems

Reports from World Sailing International / Recognised Rating Systems:

- (a) ORC International and ORC Club

An overview of the report provided by the Offshore Racing Congress was provided by Bruno Finzi.

- (b) IRC Rating Rule

Jason Smithwick provided an update on the progress of the IRC over the past year.

During the reports from the rating systems, the potential of combining both systems into one was raised. Various options were noted including the potential increased costs for owners as well as the current positives from “healthy competition”. The Committee also discussed the benefits and challenges of weather routing scoring.

10. Submissions

- (a) Note any other submissions of interest.

No other submissions were raised by members for discussion.

11. Offshore Advisory Group

Matt Allen updated the Committee on the work of the Offshore Advisory Group. He recalled the establishment of the group and highlighted the importance of the links with the Events Committee and other stakeholders. While outlining the progress made to date it was noted that the proposed Olympic event to be put forward would be called the Sailing Marathon. In discussing the importance of a simple format to appeal to the wider community, the significance of the first boat over the line winning the medal was emphasised. While discussing the work to date and linking to the Offshore Double Handed World Championships, it was noted that a control tower approach is needed going forward to co-ordinate the double handed calendar and minimise event clashes. This raised questions regarding the variety and quantity of World Championship titles that could potentially be awarded in one year. It was noted that the defining factor in the potential Olympic event and the Offshore Double Handed World Championships was the one design aspect. The bid process for potential inclusion in the 2026 and 2027 World Sailing World Championships was also noted. The benefits to sailing of broadcasting if a longer duration/overnight event was included as part of the Olympics was also highlighted. The potential to increase the group was agreed.

12. Offshore Double Handed World Championships (One-Design)

- (a) A report on the 2024 Offshore Double Handed World Championships

Referring to paper circulated to the committee prior to the meeting, Katrina Ham provided an update on the event, noting the challenges posed by the weather conditions. While outlining the lesson learnt from the event, she highlighted the differences in expectations from participants who came from a wide range of backgrounds/sectors of the offshore community and the need for proactive communication in future event to manage these. While recalling the challenges posed by supplied equipment, she emphasised the need for a sustainable approach by all parties for events such as this to be successful in the future. Katrina Ham highlighted the work done by the Technical Committee and the Equipment Supplier in preparing the boats for the event and the level of detail in the equalisation process. She also mentioned the cost implications of this process which was provided as feedback from the host group. The communication from the event was also discussed, noting the clash with the Women's Americas Cup. Members noted that while the content was great, they found the event difficult to follow and it was agreed that this is an area for improvement. Katrina Ham also reported on the information collected at the event including participant feedback as well as other data to start creating an event profile.

- (b) An update on the plans for 2025 and 2026 Offshore Double Handed World Championships

Plans for next year's event were briefly discussed, noting that the date will be late September. It was noted that the fleet will increase to 14 which will allow 26 teams, with the objective of one team per MNA. Different perspectives on the length of races were debated, with the desire to increase the number of MNAs participating emphasised. The question was posed over how MNAs would be selected in the case of too many requests for invitation. It was agreed that it would be a good problem to have. Katrina Ham noted the list of recommendations in the report for World Sailing and the request for the development of an Offshore Emerging Nations list.

13. World Sailing Class Status

- (a) Review of Class Status

Paddy Boyd provided an update on the Equipment Committee Working Party to review existing classes. It was noted that no offshore classes are currently under review. He reported that since the last meeting, the outstanding items with IMOCA had been resolved, therefore they were no longer being considered for removal of class status.

14. Offshore Special Regulations

In accordance with World Sailing Regulation 15.17.6(c) the Oceanic and Offshore Committee is responsible for approving the Special Regulations on behalf of Council and the submissions are numbered 'SR'.

- (a) To receive an update from the Stability Working Party.
- (b) To note the agenda and supporting papers of the Offshore Special Regulations Sub-committee
- (c) To receive recommendations from the Special Regulations Sub-committee on 'SR' submissions.

Sally Honey provided an update of the Special Regulation Sub-Committee meeting. While recalling the incidents identified over the past year, Glen Stanaway provided more insight into one of the incidents that resulted in a fatality following a keel failure. He emphasised the report by Australian Sailing and the potential problem with welded keels. He noted that Australian Sailing will be continuing to work on this ahead of the next annual conference.

While introducing the submissions, Sally Honey noted that two urgent submissions had been approved during the year. She then outlined the submissions received and the recommendations including any friendly amendments from the Special Regulations Sub-Committee to the Oceanic and Offshore Committee. While discussing SR-05, which was rejected by the Special Regulations Sub-Committee, it was noted that an interpretation will be submitted by the ORC to manage the issue. While discussing SR-08, its link to the 2023 Fastnet report was highlighted, which led to the submission. When the Committee reviewed the recommendation for SR-12, which was to reject, Denise Caffari noted that 11% of tested lifejackets did not inflate. The need for further advocacy and training was agreed.

The committee then voted unanimously to approve SR-01, SR-02, SR-03, SR-07, SR-08, SR-09 and SR-11 as a block with the friendly amendments as suggested by Special Regulations Sub-Committee. An additional vote was then held to approve SR-11 as an urgent submission. This vote combined with the vote from the Special Regulations Sub-committee the previous day meant the urgent submission was approved with the effective date of 16 December 2024.

Dan Nowlan detailed the work of the stability working party, explaining that significant progress had been made since the submission and report were submitted to World Sailing. The submission is expected to have the biggest impact on boats in Category 1 races. He noted the desire for stability to be based on measurement, as well as explaining the approach taken. He explained that it would be ideal if boats were required to meet both the international standard and the ORC standard, but highlighted that 30% of the fleet would be impacted if this was the case. This is why the friendly amendment recommended by the Special Regulations Sub-Committee is to meet either of the standards. Dan Nowlan also noted the collaborative work between the two main rating systems since the submission was made, which fostered the development of the amendments.

Matt Allen thanked the working party and noted the need for the work to continue to develop the database. World Sailing Head of IT and Digital Infrastructure, Stephan Smith provided perspective on the potential and limitations of support available from the Executive Office, and it was agreed that he would be involved in the work going forward. The ability of the Executive Office to support the development and maintenance of such the database was questioned.

It was noted that the requirement in the regulation would come into effect from the 1st of January 2027, which allows owners 2 years to comply as well as time for World Sailing to build the database. Glen Stanaway reiterated the need to consider the expectations being put on the Executive Office, while highlighting the scope of the work is still under development. It was agreed that if the submission is approved, more work would need to be done quickly to assess the feasibility of the database. Challenges around CE markings were also noted as another area for future consideration. It was agreed that the progress made was in the right direction and the work of the working party should continue. Jeremy Wilton requested that the composition of the working party be reviewed to ensure a balanced team. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the submission to be effective from 1 January 2027.

15. Sailor Categorisation Code

Glen Stanaway provided an update on the work of the Sailor Categorisation Commission over the past year. He thanked Bunmi Fatunla from the Executive Office for his work in supporting the Commission. The challenges faced by the Commission in their work was detailed including the use of the database and the resources that are often out of date. While he highlighted the challenges within the Executive Office regarding resources, he noted that the membership of the Commission was stable.

16. Oceanic Concordat

Corinne Migraine highlighted the opportunity meetings provide to connect with major oceanic event organisers and to be aware of their developments and intentions. She referred to the meeting as a think tank for collaboration in which World Sailing should be taking the lead. She reported on the objective of separating the community into two separate meetings to be able to tailor the discussions to the varied needs. Corinne Migraine noted the plan for a meeting in Paris in December with major oceanic events and classes which focus on high performance / professional sailing such as IMOCA, The Route du Rhum and The Ocean Race. A secondary meeting will be planned the 2025 to focus on mass participation events. She noted the second meeting would be held online to allow a wider spread to attendance. Jaime Navarro raised the need for clarification on the role of such meetings going forward to justify the use of resources and to note the progress of meetings.

17. World Sailing Speed Record Council

Stan Honey provided an update from the World Sailing Speed Record Council over the past year. In addition to covering a summary of records broken, he outlined the technology used in the process.

18. World Sailing Sustainability Agenda 2030

- (a) To note the World Sailing Sustainability Agenda 2030 is available [online](#).
- (b) Other WS sustainability programmes can be found [here](#).

Alexandra Rickham provided an update on the progress toward the World Sailing Sustainability Agenda 2030. She noted progress made regarding objectives linked to offshore racing including the use of renewable energy and marine mammal interactions. The Committee discussed the work done towards creating guidance regarding megafauna strikes. Alexandra Rickham reported on the collaborative work by the Marine Mammal Advisory Group, 11th Hour Racing and IMOCA in this area. Matt Allen requested that the Oceanic and Offshore Committee is included in the process going forward and to ensure the Committee is given the time to provide feedback.

19. Any Other Business

Matt Allen thanked the members for the Committee for their work over the quad. He thanked Simon James and Paddy Boyd for their contribution noting they were not standing for re-appointment. Matt Allen highlighted the contributions made by Sally Honey and Stan Honey for their contribution over many years to World Sailing. While noting that they would be stepping down from World Sailing commitments, both Stan Honey and Sally Honey confirmed their commitment to ongoing support where requested.