

Women's Forum 2024 Minutes

The Women's Forum met at World Sailing Annual Conference between 17:15 to 19:00 hrs SGT 6th November 2024.

Please refer to the World Sailing website www.sailing.org for the details of the submissions and papers on the agenda referred to in these minutes.

Agenda:

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| 1. Opening | 5. Gender Panel |
| 2. Governance Reform | 6. Diversity and Inclusion Panel |
| 3. Safe Sport and Inclusion | 7. Stories from the Community |
| 4. Paris 2024 and Race Officials Report | 8. AOB |

1. Opening

Welcome from Forum Chair, Elena Papazoglou (EP).

World Sailing President, Quanhai Li, welcomed the attendees to the forum and emphasized the importance of this space and the power of females feeling included in our sport.

EP ran through the apologies of absence and conflicts of interest. No conflicts of interest were noted.

The minutes from the 2023 Women's Forum were approved. Proposed by Jan Martin and seconded by Cary Lee Byerley.

2. Governance Reform

Alexandra Rickham outlined the timeline of the governance reform change from the Women's Forum to the EDI Committee. The purpose of the committee and its' Constitution was outlined.

No questions were asked in relation to the Governance Reform.

3. Safe Sport and Inclusion

Gillian Sanders, Integrity Manager, provided an update on World Sailing's Safeguarding and Transgender Policy.

The process of safeguarding at World Sailing events was outlined, including the fact all WS staff are vetted against criminal records. Additionally, all staff and race officials attending the Youth Sailing World Championships have to complete the IOC Athlete 365 Safeguarding training before attendance. For the 2024 edition of the Youth Sailing World Championships a safeguarding risk assessment was undertaken for the first time to ensure safe sport. The requirement for MNAs to have a safeguarding policy will likely come in to play in 2027.

There are minor word changes for the Transgender Policy,

4. Paris 2024 and Race Officials Report

a) Paris 2024 Report

Rebecca Videlo outlined the geographical diversity of medals won at the Paris 2024 Games, for each medal colour and by gender of event. The number of female coaches and support persons at Paris 2024 were presented, noting that there was a significant lack of female coaches, only 7% female, and support persons, 15% females in total, at the Games.

Questions were asked if this trend continued into the youth level of the sport and if nations were actively sending both male and female coaches to events.

Suggestion to mandate a 50:50 ratio of male and female coaches for each country at the Youth Worlds.

Other classes showcase that gender-equal participation is possible with many examples at the junior level and beyond Olympic sailing. Equally, events are moving towards gender equal race official appointments when this is their focus.

There was discussion including the suggestion that female coaches may not be able to be away for extended periods. This was refuted on several levels and recognition that the systems in place need to offer the correct levels of support to promote equity. One example of these provisions could be providing babysitting services at the Annual Conference for example to encourage parents of small children to attend.

b) Race Officials Report

Sylvie Harle reported on the status of Women Race Officials (ROs) and progress towards the 50% gender parity goal. Work conducted by the Women's Race Officials Working Party was presented, noting a low number of female race officials, 14% of international ROs are female, and in turn appointments, with typically females comprising 30% of appointments. The disparity between overall official numbers and the ratio of male to female appointed officials, sitting at around 70:30%, was highlighted. Additionally, the potential conflict of interest was noted between committee membership/appointments versus simultaneously being an active race official.

The power of female only race official seminars was commented on from the audience and suggested that World Sailing needs to investigate the return of investment of running female only clinics.

It was also noted that females often form part of the race committee in a non-formal capacity and are a critical part of the race management team.

The work of the iQFoil class, was commented on from the floor. The class run a 50:50 gender ratio across their Jury and Race Management team, achieved by making it a top priority for the class.

Two suggestions from the audience were the provision of family services along with technological advances, such as remote officiating is an opportunity to further increase female participation.

5. Gender Panel

Cat Duncan introduced and presented the Gender Panel called Women in High Performance in Sailing. Panellists included, Saskia Clark, Jo Aleh and Sofia Papadopoulou. The panel focused on females in Olympic Sailing and the experience of the first Women's America's Cup along with the transition to coaching at the Olympic stage.

Key points

- The Women's Americas Cup displayed greater opportunities but highlighted the disparity between opportunities available to female Olympic and male Olympic sailors .
- The pathway for females from youth to professional should not be so heavily reliant on Olympic success.
- There is still a culture of entitlement from male sailors.
- Despite striving for equity, females are still the minority in sailing, including coaches and so in order to succeed it requires a certain type of personality on top of the required skillset.

6. Diversity and Inclusion Panel

Hannah Stodel introduced and presented the Diversity and Inclusion Panel called Our Inclusive Journey: Parasailing the Springboard for Inclusion. Panellists included Yuki Hariwaga, Emma Hallen and Grant Alderson. The panel focused on World Sailing's shift to include a more inclusive approach to disability in the sport.

Key points

- The importance of inclusivity in sailing, highlighting the need to include people with disabilities and create opportunities for everyone to participate in the sport. Emma stressed the importance of including people with disabilities in leadership roles within the sailing community to reflect the diversity of society.
- Grant shared experiences of coaching both able-bodied and para sailors, highlighting the importance of treating all sailors equally and providing necessary adaptations.
- Yuki Discussed the need for inclusive events that allow para sailors to compete alongside able-bodied sailors, promoting a mindset of equality and inclusivity.
- Panelists highlighted the positive impact of inclusive events on changing societal mindsets towards people with disabilities, promoting acceptance and understanding.

7. Stories from the Community

Due to technical difficulties, stories could not be shared but were distributed to all registered attendees of the session.

8. AOB

Closing remarks from EP, thanking the Women's Forum for their dedication and support over the years.

David Graham, World Sailing CEO, concluded the session thanking the forum once again for their work and highlighting the importance of the forum to provide a collaborative space for discussion over the years.