

## **Oceanic and Offshore Committee (OOC) Report 2025**

**Chair: Matt Allen AM (AUS)**

**Vice Chair: Corinne Migraine (FRA)**

Oceanic and offshore sailing continues to provide some of the most challenging and exciting sail racing in the world with examples of Vendee Globe and Admirals Cup being prominent examples during the past year.

Offshore capable keel boat sailing accounts for over half of global sailing participation.

Greater variation in yacht performance in the fleet creates increased challenges for rating offices, organising authorities (OA) and Offshore Special Regulations (OSR).

It remains the responsibility of OA's to supplement their notice of race with any additional requirements they deem necessary for their race. It is critical that changes to the OSR's improve safety and not just increase the cost to the yacht owner.

Increasing technology and yacht construction costs hinder participation growth. As technology advances, some sailing tasks need less human input. These changes require thought as to how they will change the way we compete and if any action should be taken.

As a sport we should aim to increase participation not only among youth in sailboats but also among new or returning sailors in keelboats.

### **Navigating Offshore**

Led by the Technical and Offshore Department of the Executive Office, the Oceanic and Offshore Committee supported the development of Navigating Offshore 2025-2028 - World Sailings plan to develop offshore sailing. This included regular consultation during the development process which helped shape the document.

The OOC also supported the critical wider consultation process carried out with offshore stakeholders to ensure the document is fit for the future. The OOC support the ambitions of the document to raise the profile and appreciated of offshore sailing within World Sailing, recognise the challenges and align expectations. It also supports the recommendations made that provide a roadmap for World Sailing to be more ambitious in the future.

The OOC has proposed implementing certain short-term recommendations, including adding OOC representation to the Race Rules Committee and the Growth of Sailing Committee.

### **Offshore Double Handed World Championships.**

2025 Offshore Double Handed World Championship was held in Cowes, UK and featured 21 teams representing 14 MNAs across 5 continents. The format included 2 qualification races, a repechage race and a final.

After a tight repechage race, 11 teams representing 10 MNAs across 4 continents competed in challenging final which was shortened due to light winds. The significant effort of the Host Group (Lorient Grand Large, Cap Regatta, Royal Ocean Racing Club, Yacht Club de France and Jeanneau) in the equalisation of the fleet was appreciated by participants who felt the event provided a fair platform to showcase the international appeal of double handed racing.

The event underscored both the advantages of the provided equipment and the associated challenges and considerations for organisers and Race Officials, offering valuable insights for future events. The next edition is planned to be held in Marseille, France in September 2026.

### **Offshore Special Regulations Sub-Committee (SRSC)**

I encourage you to read the Chair of the SRSC, James Dadd's report.

A considerable amount of work has been achieved by the members of the SRSC with regards to stability and keel ISO construction standards. These changes will make sailing safer for the foreseeable future.

See below for more detail on these two topics:

#### **Keel Improvement Working Group**

The recent revision of ISO 12215-9, approved late last year, will nearly double the operational life of new keels to 16 million stress cycles. This project began many years ago.

Thanks to all who assisted this important project.

#### **Stability Working Group**

Yacht stability is essential for safety. Work has been conducted to ensure that yachts in different offshore event categories possess adequate stability for anticipated conditions.

The initial project examined whether yachts racing in categories 0 and 1 should undergo an inclining test. This review has been completed and submitted a proposal OOC-2025-011, which is scheduled for discussion at the November meeting.

A related project involved a feasibility study on maintaining and publishing a stability database. This phase has also been completed, and the findings have been provided in a report sent to the OOC and SRSC.

I would like to especially thank Dan Nowlan, Richard Hinterhoeller & Andy Claughton for their work. It also required the support of both ORC and IRC ratings systems and staff.

### **Safety reporting**

In collaboration with the safety commission, we have updated the incident reporting portal and revised the criteria for reportable incidents, now also covering activities during training, preparation, or travel related to a race.

### **Offshore Event Organisers Forum**

We are hosting a meeting of Offshore Event Organisers Forum during the annual conference. This will focus on category 1, 2 and 3 races. Observers are allowed to attend.

Topics to be covered include:

- Offshore Special Regulations.
- World Sailing's plan to support offshore sailing
- Offshore Special Regulations
- Technology and its impact on offshore sailing
- Outside assistance rules and interpretations.
- Mega-Fauna guidance and status update.

### **Advocacy Working Group**

The Advocacy Working Group continues to advance its remit of strengthening safety, environmental awareness, and responsible conduct within the global sailing community. The group has focused on three key areas of communication and policy advocacy:

1. Safety reporting and incident education
2. Technical updates to rating systems (UMS measurement for IRC and ORC)
3. Marine mammal mitigation and strike reporting

### **Conclusion**

Thank you to the OOC and SRSC for their support during the year. The changes to our governance have meant new ways to do things that have required patience at times. I want to thank all those who have assisted and persisted.

I wish to thank Katrina Ham for all her efforts. In addition, my thanks to Jaime Navarro and Vice Chair Corinne Migraine, and Vice President's Josep Pla and Dave Hughes for their support and guidance.

### **Special Regulations Sub-Committee Report 2025**

**Chair: James Dadd (GBR)**

**Vice Chair: Richard Hinterhoeller (CAN)**

The first year of the quad has been a challenge for us all. The members include 7 returning members and 4 new members. Their hard work and commitment have been greatly appreciated, as has the continued hard work of the office staff, particularly Katrina Ham. Vice Chair Richard Hinterhoeller needs also to be specifically recognised for his contributions throughout.

We have held 3 online meetings through the first 9 months of the year. At the last 2 meetings having voted on proposals. A total of 21 proposals have been considered (including Dublin meeting) and passed to O&OC for their consideration. Incident reports have been reviewed, and the Sub-committee is looking ahead to not only continue the hard work of the previous quads, improving the text and readability of the document, but also to ensure that current design approaches are fully considered in both the wording and the diagrams for coming years.

It is very encouraging to have such a wide group of members to the sub-committee, and this includes MNAs who currently do not invoke OSR. We are hoping that this will progress well, and we can encourage them to review this position. That can however only happen if the document meets the expectations.

Focus remains on improving safety but ensuring that requirements are based on a genuine opportunity to improve safety for all. Making changes that may increase costs and not have a corresponding improvement to safety within our sport needs to always be forefront in our minds. Improving our sport requires participation and we need to ensure that numbers of incidents are reducing due to improved safety, not reducing number staking part!

As a sub-committee, we appreciate the hard work of our parent committee and look forwards to a quad of open discussion and development.