

The Equipment Rules Sub-Committee (ERSC) met from 10:30 to 17:00 (UTC+01:00) in Ireland on Tuesday 4th November 2025

Present:

Dimitris Dimou (DD) Chairperson
Diana Kissane (DK) Vice-Chairperson
Agnes Lill (AL)
Aileen Yam Hoo Loo (AYHL)
Antonio Cardona Espin (ACE)
Bence Toronyi (BT)
Bill Abbott (BA)
James Dadd (JD)
Alfred Pelinka (AP)
Bruno De Wannemaeker (BDW)
Barry Johnson (BJ) (on Teams)

Apologies:

Alexander Finsterbusch (AF)

In Attendance:

David Hughes (DH) WS Vice-President
Glen Stanaway (GS) Equipment Comm. Chairperson
Jaime Navarro (JN) WS Technical & Offshore Director
Antonio Saporito (AS) WS Olympic Eq. QC Manager
Francesco Gulizzi (FG) WS Technical Manager
Obi Groombarke (OG) WS Technical Specialist

1. Opening of the Meeting

Dimitris Dimou (DD) welcomed the Equipment Rules Sub-Committee (ERSC) members, World Sailing staff, David Hughes (DH), WS Vice-President and Chairperson of the Athletes Committee, and Glen Stanaway (GS), Chairperson of the Equipment Committee.

DH presented the top five priorities of the World Sailing Board: Revenue, return to the Paralympic Games, Olympic Vision Project, Digital Infrastructure, and Teamwork: Revenue: This includes the extension of the Rolex partnership and ongoing discussions with potential new partners. Para Olympic Games: The first steps for World Sailing involve submitting the request in December 2025. Between January and April 2026, the International Paralympic Committee (IPC) will review all applications and provide a recommendation by Q4 2026. Subsequently, the IPC may recommend sports for Brisbane 2032. Olympic Vision Project: Sailing remains an important sport for the Olympic movement due to its focus on sustainability, gender equity, and other key topics. World Sailing must take action to maintain the number of athletes participating in upcoming Games. With 35 sports included in the LA2028 program, competition for inclusion is high, and World Sailing needs to improve in areas such as broadcasting. Digital Infrastructure: The World Sailing Academy and Proposals Portals have recently been launched. The next priorities are improving competition management systems. Teamwork: There is a strong working relationship between the Board and the Executive Office, which is crucial for the success of World Sailing. The work of this Committee, along with other Committees supporting World Sailing, is highly valued. DH concluded by thanking the members for dedicating their time to the sport of sailing and for their presence at the Annual Conference.

GS thanked DD for the opportunity to speak at the ERSC meeting and acknowledged the members' contributions. Some members have spent decades contributing to the sport, while others are new to the Committee. He emphasized that newcomers should remain actively involved, noting that sailing is equipment-based and requires time to understand the nuances and technicalities of all governing documents. He stressed that the Class Rules and Building Specifications are critical, as are the Class Rules Interpretations, and members should not underestimate their role. GS reminded the Committee of its responsibility to maintain and update the Equipment Rules of Sailing and the Guide to the Equipment Controls & Inspections. He encouraged members to follow DD's lead while also engaging in discussions and debates with him. He highlighted two Board priorities - Olympic Vision Project and Teamwork - as particularly relevant to the ERSC and encouraged members to communicate frequently with Classes and International Measurers. GS concluded by thanking DD and wishing the ERSC members a

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successful Olympic quadrennial.

DD thanked DH and GS for their introductions and invited members to ask questions.

Antonio Saporito (AS) noted the agenda items for the meeting and listed the members present: 10 in-person, 1 online, and 1 who sent apologies.

DD asked members to declare any conflicts of interest related to agenda items. None were raised.

The ERSC formally approved the minutes of the 5th November 2024 meeting. The minutes can be downloaded from the World Sailing website.

No other matters arising outside the agenda were raised.

2. Proposals

There were no proposals submitted for discussion by the ERSC.

3. Equipment Rules of Sailing & Racing Rules of Sailing

DD highlighted that certain definitions in the Equipment Rules of Sailing (ERS) need to be amended. For example: The definition of “certification” should be clearer and more comprehensive to improve certification management. There is currently no definition for a “patch”, which is used in sail repairs. These examples are not exhaustive but serve as a starting point for ERSC’s review. DD acknowledged the strong collaboration established with the Special Regulations group during the previous Olympic quad, which helped introduce definitions useful for larger boats. He encouraged continued cooperation to further improve the ERS. DD noted that organizing an in-person meeting would be very beneficial to begin reviewing the ERS and to compile proposals for the next version.

DD also noted that an ERS Panel will be formed in collaboration with the Race Officials Chairperson, in accordance with Policy D8. In addition, there is a need for a panel to manage questions regarding Class Rules that do not require a formal Class Rules Interpretation. It must be clarified whether these requests should be handled by the ERSC or by International Measurers to avoid overlap between the groups. Jaime Navarro (JN) and DD discussed whether a policy or a regulation change is required. Bill Abbott (BA) emphasized that the ERSC should work closely with International Measurers on this matter, suggesting that the panel should include representatives from both groups. JN proposed expanding the ERS Panel to also cover Class Rules, creating a combined ERS & CRC Panel. DD noted that this process is not currently defined in existing regulations or policies, and that the ERSC will be working on formalizing it in the coming months.

4. Safety Equipment

Obi Groombarke (OG) presented the recent work conducted by the International Regulation Commission regarding updates to ISO 12402 on Impact Vests. DD emphasized that Classes using Impact Vests should provide their feedback and comments to the International Regulation Commission. He also noted that most accidents to date have involved limbs rather than the torso, so consideration should be given to limb protection. Antonio Cardona Espin (ACE) asked if statistics exist on incidents involving current Impact Vests. OG replied that the Safety Commission may have relevant data. Bill Abbott (BA) noted that the ERSC will be involved in defining how to control the weight of personal equipment at events. DD suggested potential solutions: The maximum weight allowed in RRS 50 (10 kg), or treating the impact vest outside the definition of personal equipment, as the crew harness James Dadd (JD) agreed that more information from the Classes is needed before deciding on changes to Impact Vests. Jaime

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Navarro (JN) clarified that the ERS already defines Impact Vests, while the Classes set the standards. He noted that it will take approximately three years before a new ISO standard is released.

JN then presented work regarding supplied helmets for LA2028, referencing issues encountered during Paris 2024. Key challenges in previous Olympic Games included inconsistent approaches across Classes regarding the definition of High Visibility and the implementation of cameras on helmets. A market study of Olympic-level helmet brands showed a clear leader: at the 2023 Allianz Sailing World Championship, Forward WIP was the leading provider in Olympic foiling classes, used by 60% of competitors. Forward WIP has confirmed that they will provide helmets free of charge for the next Olympic Games. World Sailing will confirm and communicate this decision to the sailing community by the end of the year, allowing sailors to test and train with the same models that will be supplied at LA2028. Beyond the Olympic Games, the ERSC aims to pursue uniformity in Class Rules for Olympic Classes to avoid inconsistent interpretations of the High Visibility requirement. ACE asked whether helmets would feature a one-directional or 360° camera. JN responded that this level of detail has not yet been defined and will be the responsibility of OBS. ACE noted that 360° cameras are particularly useful for Race Officials.

AS invited ERSC members to discuss the High Visibility definition for helmets. DD reminded the group that the Safety Commission is responsible for defining standards, while the ERSC's role is to write the rules to ensure these standards are enforceable. Francesco Gulizzi (FG) suggested that the ERSC could focus on the wording to be used and incorporate it into the next version of the Standard Class Rules. DD noted that this issue affects not only Olympic Classes but also many other Classes. JD added that Special Regulations may draft the formal High Visibility definition. JN summarized the proposed approach: the ERSC will define standard wording for High Visibility, which will then be applied by the Classes, while the Safety Commission and Special Regulations will provide the detailed standards.

5. Class Rules Changes, Interpretations and Building Specification Changes

AS presented the supporting paper on Class Rules Changes, RRS87, Class Rules Interpretations, and Building Specifications. It was noted that a higher number of requests were processed this year compared to previous years, as Cycle II of 2024 was frozen due to the Paris 2024 Olympic Games.

DD highlighted that Regulations 15.10 to 15.15 define the process for managing Class Rules Interpretations. These Regulations were updated last year to establish that a panel consisting of: the Chair or Vice-Chair of the Equipment Rules Sub-Committee (ERSC), the technical representative of the World Sailing Class Association, and a member of World Sailing technical staff, decides whether a request is valid. If the request is valid, it is then sent to the ERSC for decision according to World Sailing policy. DD noted that previously this process was different and that the Regulations should be amended to allow the Chairperson to delegate their role to another ERSC member, especially in cases of conflict of interest or if another member has greater expertise. JD supported this, asking how the Regulations could be changed to allow delegation. JN explained two options: submit a proposal to change the Regulations, or define a Policy (currently missing) to specify that Class Rules Interpretations could be approved by a vote within the panel. It was agreed that defining a new Policy is the preferred approach. The draft prepared by JN will be circulated to ERSC members before submitting the proposal.

OG presented the draft updated Class Rules Changes procedure, which includes references to updated WS Regulations and Policies, requires Classes to provide minutes of meetings where CRCs were approved, and introduces procedures for managing RRS87 requests. JN noted that World Sailing Policy states that a statement confirming approval according to the Class constitution is sufficient. DD responded that it is safer to retain an official document, citing a recent case where a copyright holder had not approved changes after submission to the ERSC.

DD referenced Policy D5 1.3, which states: "For equipment with a confidential building

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specification, approval to changes shall be handled by the Chief Executive Officer in consultation with the Chair of the Equipment Rules Sub-committee (or, if conflicted, another Sub-committee member appointed by the Chair of the Equipment Committee). The relevant copyright holder or manufacturer applying for approval must provide the report required by section 1.2(c).” DD noted that currently the Chairperson can only delegate if conflicted. He argued that the Chairperson should also be able to appoint a member of the Sub-Committee with relevant expertise, even if no conflict exists. JD supported this proposal. FG highlighted that similar wording appears in Policy D5 1.4, so the same amendment should be applied. DK agreed with the proposal. DD concluded that the policy should read: “... in consultation with the Chair of the Equipment Rules Sub-committee or its delegate ...”

DD noted that during the previous Olympic quadrennial, the process for transitioning to the Standard Class Rules (SCR) involved each Class manually transferring its existing rules into the new format, with all changes tracked in a spreadsheet. DD proposed that a more efficient approach would be to require Classes to submit directly to the ERSC a new version of their rules in the SCR format, without reference to the previous version. Each Class would be responsible for ensuring that all relevant rules are incorporated into the new document and would be required to formally confirm that the new version has been approved in accordance with the Class Rules Change process. DD emphasized that this approach would provide Classes with an opportunity to resolve existing issues and improve the overall quality of their rules. AP asked whether an AI agent could assist Classes with this process. JN noted AI could be a long-term solution, but only after updating the SCR template. DK suggested a phased approach: AI drafts the initial document, Class reviews and aligns the draft with its needs, ERSC finalizes the document to ensure rules are correctly placed and properly written. DD confirmed that all new Classes must submit rules in SCR format before approval. Four Classes are currently ready to transition. ACE asked whether all Olympic Classes have adopted SCR. DD noted that the ILCA has not yet completed the transition but is working on it. JN highlighted discussions at the Class meeting regarding compliance with the regulatory framework, including whether World Sailing should set a deadline for compliance, after which Classes would not be endorsed if non-compliant. JD noted that some Classes, such as the International Maxi Class, may require exceptions due to their unique nature. DD emphasized that setting a deadline alone would not solve the problem; writing Class Rules is complex, and a task force could be established to assist Classes for a nominal fee. JD added that the RYA previously imposed a hard deadline for national Classes, resulting in ~90% compliance, but it required considerable effort.

6. Class Status Review

FG presented the supporting paper on the Class Status Review. Based on the Equipment Committee’s 2025 review of 12 Classes and the Board’s final decision: Classes retaining World Sailing Status: Dart 18, Melges 32, Micro Copper, 505, Fireball, Tasar. Classes with suspended World Sailing Status: IKA Open, Windsurfer. Classes recommended for withdrawal of World Sailing Status: Melges 20, X-35, B14, RS500. The Board endorsed the Equipment Committee’s review and submitted the withdrawal recommendations to the Annual General Meeting (AGM) for final approval.

7. New Class Application Review

FG noted that the Office received applications from six Classes: X-15 Class, RS Venture Connect Class, VX One Class, 11 Metre One Design Class, Formula Wing Class, and WASZP Class. The Board recommended that the General Assembly approve, subject to signed agreements, the following applications: X-15 Class, RS Venture Connect Class, VX One Class, 11 Metre One Design Class, Formula Wing Class. FG highlighted the work undertaken by the WASZP Class since the Mid-Year meeting to amend their constitution and Class Rules to comply with regulatory requirements. DD noted that under the new Regulation, there is no longer a fixed

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deadline for Classes to apply. He emphasized that the process should be clarified in the future to allow sufficient time for Classes to complete the necessary work. JN suggested that the ERSC prepare a Proposal to define a timeline and process aligned with the new Regulations.

8. World Sailing Classes

AS noted that the Office received a very high number of Class Rules Changes this year. This increase was partly due to Classes updating their rules to align with the new version of the ERS, although some Classes still need to review and update their rules. DD asked the members to consider how the ERSC can mandate that Classes update their rules. He emphasized that this process should be clearly defined in consultation with the Chairperson of the Equipment Committee.

9. Olympic Classes

FG presented an overview of how the IKA – Formula Kite registration system operates. By the end of the year, World Sailing is expected to issue licences to manufacturers, and the Office audited all IKA – Formula Kite equipment during 2025. It was noted that the current Formula Kite registration system is not fully aligned with Policy D11, which allows manufacturers to request changes for specific reasons. In contrast, the registration system restricts manufacturers from making changes after the registration deadline (March 2024 in this case). FG highlighted that Chubanga has requested a building specification change, which will be discussed at the Equipment Committee meeting.

JN presented the work undertaken regarding kite identification for the Los Angeles 2028 Olympic Games. The Format Working Group had submitted a recommendation on athlete identification during the Games. Although this recommendation did not go through the Equipment Committee, it was directly related to the equipment used by sailors and was therefore approved by Council. The decision established that all equipment should feature identification markings equal to or larger than those used at Paris 2024. The Office subsequently developed a process to determine how such decisions would be made and by whom, while also consulting with the relevant Classes and manufacturers to assess practical feasibility. A decision was finalized in August 2025, and the Office began by focusing on Formula Kite equipment, given its complexity. Consultations with manufacturers revealed that some identification options could affect kite performance. For example, having the entire kite display the national flag was deemed unfeasible because asymmetrical flags could cause performance differences between starboard and port tack. The Office presented four potential options to the brands and manufacturers for feedback:

1. Full-flag design: The entire kite would be branded with the national flag. However, this would require altering panel shapes, resulting in different kite constructions for each country and performance inconsistencies. All manufacturers agreed that this option should not be pursued.
2. Partial-flag application: A smaller flag of limited dimensions would be applied to a designated area of the kite. The challenge with this approach is that the flag must be integrated during manufacturing rather than added afterward.
3. National colour branding: Kites would feature the primary national colours (e.g., orange for the Netherlands, blue for Italy, etc.). Manufacturers noted potential difficulties in sourcing a wide range of fabric colours but agreed that the main colour areas could be customized. This issue was particularly highlighted by Flysurfer, the most commonly used kite brand in the fleet.
4. Colour-based identification: Twenty colour variations would be produced, with each athlete randomly assigned a colour.

ACE asked why the same approach used for the 470 and 49er Classes could not be adopted. JN explained that the manufacturing process for kites is considerably more complex than that for

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spinnakers or gennakers, making such an approach impractical.

JN also presented a proposal to appoint WS Technical Auditors for Olympic Classes. Nine out of ten Olympic Classes are manufacturer-controlled with confidential building specifications. These Classes participate in the Manufacturer Certification System (MCS) to monitor production quality. The Board approved this proposal, allowing World Sailing to conduct pre-event inspections and verify compliance with confidential building specifications. WS Technical Auditors will report findings directly to World Sailing, which will inform the Equipment Committee. This is a complementary activity to the work of International Measurers and is not intended to replace their role. The next steps involve defining policies to manage this information, in consultation with the ERSC. DD acknowledged this approach as a method to prevent manipulation of equipment by manufacturers or sailors. The alternative considered was moving away from manufacturer-controlled classes, recognizing that athletes currently have no mechanism to verify rule compliance. Another approach is to have the Equipment Committee identify critical parameters for inclusion in Class Rules.

JN noted that several Classes are now exploring the use of onboard technology. World Sailing received a request from the 49er Class proposing that every boat be required to carry a specific model from a particular brand of onboard equipment. In relation to this request, World Sailing should carefully consider what is needed to support such a decision within the Class Rules, while also assessing potential implications from a FRAND (Fair, Reasonable, and Non-Discriminatory) perspective. This matter should be referred to the Board to confirm whether they are comfortable with the ERSC approving such a rule. A second consideration concerns the management of records if a third-party supplier provides a technological component. Specifically, World Sailing must determine whether such equipment should be treated as part of the manufacturer-controlled environment with confidential building specifications, and whether the supplier should be required to provide the software and version information for World Sailing to keep on record. The ERSC should begin developing guidance on what the rules should include to enable Classes to implement this type of technology, as there is a strong desire to support its adoption. Another key aspect to consider is that the software used to determine boat positioning relative to the starting line relies on detailed knowledge of the boat's geometry. AP added that onboard technology can greatly enhance the spectator experience by providing more real-time information and improving broadcast quality, and therefore its introduction should be encouraged. JN concluded that the ERSC could develop Class Rules on the assumption that the use of such technology will be approved, either for a generic item meeting defined characteristics, or a specific branded item.

FG introduced the topic of measurement rules and protocols for manufacturer-controlled Classes in preparation for Los Angeles 2028. It was noted that, based on experience gained during audits at Olympic manufacturers, many measurements taken at the factory could potentially be replicated at events. FG highlighted that some Classes currently limit their pre-event inspections to verifying equipment serial numbers, and that this process should be strengthened. DD emphasized that the goal at this stage is not to convert manufacturer-controlled Classes into measurement-controlled Classes, but rather to identify relevant measurements that can be used to compare boats without disclosing nominal values or tolerances. DD further noted that ERSC members can provide valuable feedback to help define suitable procedures and methodologies while maintaining confidentiality. FG added that, with the introduction of the World Sailing Technical Auditor, the expertise of the ERSC will be crucial in improving measurement protocols for manufacturer-controlled Classes ahead of LA2028.

AS provided an update on the Manufacturer Certification System (MCS), presenting audits conducted in 2025, with a focus on the Formula Kite class. Audited manufacturers included Chubanga, Levitaz, Flying Sardine, North Kiteboarding, Ozone, Element, Flysurfer, Italica/Patrik, and North Sails. Key insights include the need for standardization of measurement environments, load limits, standardized testing, material evaluation, and management of confidential information. The 2026 audit plan was presented, and the Office will participate in pre-event inspections for Olympic Classes.

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AS noted that Policy D11, introduced at the 2024 Annual Conference, allows manufacturers, rights holders, and Classes to request building specification changes for safety issues, structural failure, material unavailability, or significant supply issues. Feedback suggested adding “improvement of the production process to increase quality or reduce waste” as an additional reason. AYHL supported this proposal.

AYHL mentioned that the ILCA class is working on the transition of their rules to the SCR format and that a meeting will be scheduled with FG and a representative of the ILCA Technical Team. It was agreed that ILCA Class Rules in SCR format will be presented to the ERSC by the end of January 2026.

10. In-House Certification Program

FG presented the supporting paper on the In-House Certification (IHC) Program. The recent activities carried out in 2025 include: Internal surveillance: Now managed through an online form completed by sailmakers every three months. Universal Measurement System (UMS): Introduced for the IRC and ORC rating systems. Audits conducted: UK Sailmakers HKG (Hong Kong), Olimpic Sails (Italy), Aqua Dynamics (Sri Lanka), Durtek Lanka (Sri Lanka). World Sailing has stopped selling IHC stickers to US Sailing and is now coordinating with USA sailmakers to organize audits and training.

Next steps for 2026 include: Reviewing Doyle Qingdao and North Sails Palma, Evaluating the cost of the system, including man-hours versus income, and considering whether to increase sticker costs or introduce an additional fee for audits or training, Scheduled audits: SSF and JSF (audited during the 2025 Annual Conference), RYA (audit to be scheduled post-2025 Annual Conference), North Manufacturing (Sri Lanka) in December 2025.

DD raised a concern regarding a sailmaker selling IHC stickers to another sailmaker. FG confirmed that the Office contacted the sailmaker, who immediately ceased the practice. Additionally, the RYA will audit this sailmaker next year to verify compliance with IHC requirements.

DD also noted that one MNA believes that if they discover sails certified under a non-World Sailing In-House system, they should stop the sails and require re-certification. DD clarified that this should not occur: if Class Rules do not prohibit other In-House systems, the certification mark applied to the sails is valid and should be recognized universally. FG agreed to address this issue with the MNAs during the audits.

11. Updates from Working Teams

DD noted that Alexander Finsterbusch (AF) will provide an update on work related to Event Equipment Controls and Regulations at the next ERSC meeting.

DD also highlighted that the Guide to Equipment Control was updated at the beginning of the year, ensuring that the current version aligns with the latest Equipment Rules of Sailing (ERS).

DD emphasized the importance of receiving feedback from the most experienced ERSC members to improve audit protocols and to evaluate builders' processes and standards effectively.

12. To receive any update or feedback from Cross Representation Members

Agnes Lill (AL) noted that there has been excellent communication between the ERSC and the International Measurers Sub-committee throughout the year. She also highlighted that many individuals are members of both groups, which facilitates collaboration.

Bruno De Wannemaeker (BDW) reported that 35 classes attended the World Sailing Classes

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Committee meeting. Key discussion points included: Special Events, the new procedure for approval of RRS87 requests, some MNAs requiring Organising Authorities to approve Race Officials, which conflicts with class preferences for experienced class-specific officials, proposals to modify the types of World Championship titles granted to classes.

JD noted that the Special Regulations Sub-committee meeting is scheduled for the following day. Over the year, the group met three times to review proposals that are now submitted.

AP reported that the Para World Sailing Committee meeting will be held on 5th November, with the main focus on preparations for Brisbane 2032.

13. Any Other Business

No further items were discussed during the open session of the meeting.