

Proposal Template: Regulations, Constitution and Policies



rev: v1 26/06/2025

Proposal Number: CO-2026-001

Title of Proposal:	RECOGNITION FRAMEWORK FOR AUGMENTED RACE MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS (ARMS)
Subtitle:	<i>New Policy</i>
Related proposals:	<i>N/A</i>

Proposal:

- 1.1 To approve the attached Policy that;
 - (a) defines the principles, scope and governance requirements for Augmented Race Management Systems (ARMS);
 - (b) defines the process to determine the suitability of ARMS for use at World Sailing owned or sanctioned events, including Olympic Qualifiers and Olympic Class events;
 - (c) establishes the process for determining which ARMS may be required by Olympic Classes, for which events and purposes, and identifies the systems recognised for use by Organising Authorities.
 - (d) provides a clear and transparent framework against which vendors and developers may design and evolve ARMS to meet World Sailing requirements.

Current position:

No Policy exists.

Reasons:

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Advances in digital positioning, communications and race management technology are enabling new systems that can support race management, umpiring and media with sailor information in an objective and data-driven manner.
- 1.2 Such systems have already been deployed in a number of elite sailing environments, including the America's Cup, SailGP and some World Sailing classes, and are now being proposed for wider use at high-level international events, including Olympic classes.
- 1.3 Vendors and stakeholders have begun engaging with World Sailing regarding the potential use of such systems, referred to as Augmented Race Management Systems (ARMS), highlighting the need for a clear regulatory position before Olympic classes independently adopt or mandate such systems.
- 1.4 This Proposal recognises that the use of ARMS cannot be treated as a routine class rule change matter. Given the implications for fairness, officiating, data integrity and consistency across events, decisions on the use of ARMS must sit at World Sailing Board level rather than relying on, or deferring to, Class Rule management.
- 1.5 This Proposal establishes a World Sailing Policy, supported by a recognition framework under which systems may be assessed and designated as "World Sailing Recognised ARMS".

Olympic Classes may then require the use of recognised systems where appropriate, within a transparent framework overseen by the Board.

- 1.6 Consistent with World Sailing's Olympic Vision Project, this framework is intended to enable structured testing and evaluation of ARMS at pinnacle regattas from 2026 onwards, with a view to any potential consideration for use at the 2028 Olympic games following comprehensive stakeholder review.

2. Background

- 2.1 Race management at the highest level of the sport increasingly faces challenges related to:

- (a) Identification of boats at start and finish;
- (b) Speed of foiling classes;
- (c) Reliance on subjective judgement for result-critical decisions;
- (d) Number of race formats;
- (e) Expectations for transparency, broadcast integration and auditability.

- 2.2 World Sailing has a responsibility to ensure that any use of digital systems in race management is:

- (a) aligned with the Rules;
- (b) fair and non-discriminatory;
- (c) secure and resilient;
- (d) governed consistently across classes and events.

- 2.3 Several governance approaches have been considered:

(a) option 1 – policy plus recognition framework (recommended)

- (i) A World Sailing Policy supported by a light recognition process, allowing systems to be designated as “World Sailing Recognised ARMS”.**

This option provides governance oversight and flexibility.

- (b) option 2 – policy and guidance only

- (i) A World Sailing Policy setting requirements, with no formal recognition.

This option was discounted due to limited governance control and increased risk of inconsistent interpretation by classes and vendors.

- (c) option 3 – class-led adoption

- (i) Allowing classes to independently mandate systems without a World Sailing framework.

This was discounted due to fragmentation risk, governance inconsistency, and potential vendor capture.

- (d) option 4 – event-only mandate

- (i) Limiting ARMS use to World Sailing-owned events only.

This was discounted as it would limit broader adoption and does not address class-level governance needs.

(e) option 5 – equipment rule pathway

(i) Treating ARMS as class equipment subject to normal rule change processes.

This was discounted as inappropriate for system-based technology, risking different applications by classes and reliance on class rule authorities on policy matters.

The rules apply to all events and the technology may not be available at all events

3. Observations

3.1 Strategy/Objective Implications

The Policy does not mandate the use of ARMS. It provides a framework under which Olympic Classes and Organising Authorities may require the use of ARMS that have been recognised by World Sailing. ARMS offers the sailing community a significant and rapid solution for a World Sailing key priority: the Olympic Vision Project with potential to improve Broadcast presentation, higher reliability and scheduling, and key data for the viewers.

At this stage there are no direct financial implications for World Sailing. However, the framework could, in principle, include an application or recognition fee to recover administrative costs associated with assessment and ongoing review of ARMS, or to establish a revenue mechanism linked to recognition of systems.

3.2 Consultation

(a) The attached Policy is being circulated for consultation to:

- Equipment Rules Sub-Committee
- Equipment Committee
- Events Committee
- Specialist Sailing Committee
- Race Officials Committee
- Olympic Classes Sub-Committee
- Athletes Committee
- Vendors and system developers

Feedback will be consolidated by the Executive Office to present the Board with a final proposed Policy for recommendation to Council and an implementation plan.

The Executive Office will document the draft Technical Requirements for the different levels of recognition.