



## IRC Congress Meeting 2016

### MINUTES

**Saturday, 8<sup>th</sup> October 2016 at RORC Cowes Clubhouse**

**Present:**

Chairman	Peter Wykeham-Martin (PWM)
Vice Chairman	Alp Doguoglu (AD)
Vice Chairman	Malcolm Runnalls (MR)
IRC Technical Committee	James Dadd (JJD)
IRC Technical Committee	Jean Sans (JS)
AUS	Glen Stanaway (GS)
BEL	Carl Sabbe (CS)
CAN	John Crawley (JC)
FIN	Annika Paasikivi
FIN	Olof Rytovaara (OR)
FRA	Nicolas Gourio (NG)
GBR	Ian Macdonald (IM)
HKG	Gideon Mowser (GM)
IRL	Mark Mills (MM)
JPN	Muneo Matsutani
JPN	Haru-Hiko Kaku (HHK)
JPN	Akimitsu Hirai
NED	Erik van Vuuren (EV)
SEA	Simon James (SJ)
SWE	Eva Holmsten (EH)
TUR	Cahit Uren (CU)
USA	Eric Baittinger (EB)
IMA	Andrew McIrvine (AMcl)
RORC	Michael Boyd - Commodore (MB)
RORC	Steven Anderson - Vice Commodore
RORC	Eddie Warden-Owen - CEO
RORC Rating Office	Jenny Howells
RORC Rating Office	Emma Smith
RORC Rating Office	Charlene Jackson
RORC Rating Office	Mike Urwin (MU)



## IRC Congress Meeting 2016

RORC Rating Office      Andrew Yates

UNCL                      Jean Philippe Cau - President (JPC)  
UNCL                      Philippe Serenon - Vice President (PS)  
UNCL                      Jean Claude Merlivat

UNCL Centre de Calcul    Ludovic Abollivier (LA)

RYA                        Sebastian Edmonds  
RYA                        Jack Fenwick

World Sailing              Janet Grosvenor  
USA/NYYC                Robert Ouellette (RobO)  
MyIRC presentation      Alastair Badman (AB)

### 1. Introduction and welcome from Peter Wykeham-Martin, Chairman of the IRC Congress.

PWM introduced the meeting. All papers for the meeting are available online:  
<https://www.ircrating.org/committees/congress>

### 2. Apologies for absence and proxy votes.

Godwin Zammit. FRA holds proxy votes for ITA and BUL.

### 3. Minutes of the meeting of the IRC Congress held on 7<sup>th</sup> October 2015.

These were accepted as a correct record.

### 4. Matters arising not covered by the agenda.

PWM reported that he has been chairman for 6 years and felt there was a need to look at the governance of Congress and Chairman succession. PWM was voted in as Chairman for this meeting and a formal election would be held in 2017.

### 5. Report from the IRC Technical Committee (see appendices)

JJD presented the report that had been written for the World Sailing Conference in November. It is important to provide a better understanding of what a Standard IRC certificate is (compared with an Endorsed certificate) and the validation process that data goes through. A Standard certificate is still audited and controlled, not just owner-declared and un-checked.

The abbreviation IRC now formally stands for International Rating Certificate.



## IRC Congress Meeting 2016

The rating calculations for sportsboats and water ballast/canting keel boats are being reviewed.

Leeward foils (eg DSS and similar) – developing the system of rating these, remaining cautious but we now have better understanding of how they work.

Outriggers. IRC currently relies on ERS. However, whisker poles now being used on big boats and the ERS requirement for a whisker pole to be attached to the mast creates high loads. Need to consider whether it is a healthy development or not – ie. should we allow outriggers and rate them. Delegates were asked to think about whether it is something we want to see, and were reminded that we must think about normal boats not just pro boats/sailors. **ACTION ALL DELEGATES**

Carbon in smaller boats. Techniques and materials are developing, we don't want race boats to be discouraged from using carbon because of the rating effect.

Contrary to the report re Forestay Length (FL), the IRC Technical Committee has decided to postpone this change until 2018.

Championships: The European Championships were held in Cork July 2016. There were 45 entries (70 were registered but weather prevented some boats from getting to Cork in time). It was a useful event and a lot was learnt for future European Championships especially regarding the timescale for equipment inspection.

One Ton Cup was held for Fast 40+ Class – it is great to see the trophy out of the cupboard.

Fewer people are out on the water than 10 years ago, and this is sport-wide not just IRC. Regarding Single Event Rating and Start Up schemes in GBR: SER has limited value as many boats are moving from full certificates to SER as vice versa and it is not considered value for money. However, the Start Up scheme is really helping IRC and the Rating Office is intending to expand this through advocates who help owners and organise forms.

GS expressed perplexity as to why fewer people are choosing to be scored under rating system compared with performance handicap, and is considering a survey of Australian owners to explore attitudes to race scoring.

A 2012 survey of GBR owners showed the situation to be very complex, everyone has different reasons for their racing choices. Performance handicapping is good to get people participating and it is important to push the understanding of the difference between a handicap and rating system, and the option of dual scoring. One problem with handicapping is that it is not transferable to other clubs.

CS voiced his appreciation for being informed of IRC Technical plans for 2017 and 2018.



## IRC Congress Meeting 2016

### 6. Development of MyIRC, the IRC application portal.

JJD introduced Alastair Badman (AB). In 2008 at the request of the Rating Office, AB developed an online payment system known as MyIRC; in 2016 AB has taken what has been learned and is producing a standalone, robust MyIRC application.

AB: the idea has been to bring it more up to date and simplify functionality. He introduced the application from user registration, to adding existing rated boats and managing applications. The process of revalidation with no data changes was shown as an example.

JJD explained that the new system will be used in the UK from end of November but that the intention is for every country to have access to this and make application easy. Fees would be paid in local currency to a central hub bank and distributed to Rule Authorities. The Rule Authority has an individual login to see their jobs for their country, checks the application and then transfers the job to the appropriate Rating Office (RORC or UNCL). This will save fee processing time and allow more time to check measurements and other data. Still works for countries with small numbers of boats, where infrastructure is not available. Input and questions were invited from delegates.

PS requested a written tutorial of how the process works and an explanation of what is being offered as there is a lot of information.

**ACTION JJD/AB**

A discussion was held about ensuring that the geographic location for the owner is correct, so their application goes through the right Rule Authority office. For existing boats this will be based on the IRC 'area code' which determines the Rule Authority. For new owners it will initially be based on their IP address.

#### **Other points:**

- Different offices will have unique requirements and these can be catered for. For instance VAT is unique to the UK.
- The system is for all rating applications including amendments, trials etc.
- Questions and queries will still go through the relevant Rule Authority.
- Some options may not appear for all countries (eg. SER).
- It could be arranged so that measurers / sailmakers can enter measurement details.
- Owners can login with Facebook.
- It also works on a tablet or smartphone.

#### **Future possible considerations:**

- Logins for Start Up administrators (currently GBR only).
- Links to access previous certificates; purchase copy certificates of other boats.
- Links to SailGate (RORC's entry system)
- Google login.



## IRC Congress Meeting 2016

- Sharing fact of application on social media.

SJ asked about pricing as it can be a problem with exchange rates changing. JJD acknowledged that this is an issue to resolve; we want pricing to be standardised as much as possible, however there are options to consider eg. should we set price at beginning of the year, or let it fluctuate throughout the year? Is it cost effective for the owner and for the rule /rating authorities? It is vital to ensure everyone's interests are protected in the structure. In reply to a question from AD, JJD noted that it is not intended to impose use of MyIRC to Rule Authorities but rather design and develop it so its use will be preferred by its own merits.

In response to a question from AD about installing checkpoints as a disincentive against boat owners challenging whether both Rating Authorities provide the same TCC for the same set of data by making duplicate applications, it was confirmed that RORC and UNCL both use the same IRC software on the same server, so the same data will produce the same rating. The two rating offices regularly discuss and agree data on new designs, technical parameters and hull factor calculation, including for trial certificates for new designs.

SJ said that a system is needed when at events for amendments etc. *[post meeting note JH – for such contexts it would still be possible to use the existing system]*

Overall support for the system was expressed. It was agreed to set up some test accounts so the Rule Authorities could try it out. **ACTION AB/JJD**

### 7. Comments on National IRC Representatives' reports (see appendices)

AUS GS: Congratulated Philippe Serenon on his marketing plan (*see point 9.*) Suggested tying rating into events, for instance a tick box on race entry forms asking 'do you need an IRC rating for this event?' that automatically starts a conversation with the Rule Authority. Regarding Standard certificates, GS did not have information or comment on whether it is having an impact. However, Australian clubs prefer Endorsed certificates as they have the perception of greater integrity; now knows this is not necessarily the case (*see point 5.*) Some areas are discussing accepting Standard IRC certificates. Plan to conduct a survey amongst current and lapsed IRC owners in Australia.

BEL CS. The concern is critically low number of boats sailing (<20), see report. Rating systems can be seen like a religion, some owners will always support one or another. JJD commented that race courses are regularly discussed around the country and it is an important issue; also running different types of race such as pursuit races. It was noted that in 2017 the federations will merge so there will be just one Flemish Federation.



## IRC Congress Meeting 2016

CAN JC: Lake Ontario is split CAN/USA, most certificates are Endorsed. Weighing and measurement in Toronto is relatively cheap. There are now more larger boats, fewer smaller boats.

FRA NG/JPC: PWM queried the sail measurement consistency comment in the report. JJD pointed out that the World Sailing sail measurement training course is aimed at this (inconsistencies not seen with WS trained sail measurers or IHC lofts). All measurers should be using the official method. In GBR for Endorsement only use IHC or a measurer who has done and passed the RYA sail measurement course. LA reported that he had run a sail measurement training in Marseilles and would be in other regions next month. Regarding the query in the report about overhang measurement, MU advised that IRC calculates a sailing length which has a side effect that if there are variations in static measurements these are minimised in the calculation of sailing length. PS said that PROP-IRC (French IRC owners group) does a great job using Facebook for promotion and recommended other IRC owners' associations make use of social media.

GBR IM: The Start Up scheme has been a great success due to the enthusiasm of local individuals and it is intended to try and extend eligibility to areas or even events. This would answer the problem of SER which we have tried for 4 years. It has been decided to discontinue it apart from 4 major events, and the Start Up Scheme may be the answer to get boats into IRC for racing in more than one club event. Apart from IRC there is a huge variety in different handicap/local rating systems used around the country.

HKG GM: The main issue is crew, boats withdraw from events as can't get a full complement of crew. PWM asked about IRC in China. GM reported that there is a big push with new boats and also more sailing schools are being set up. SJ reported on the upcoming China Cup which has 50 boats entered in the IRC classes, with only 4 rating below 1.030. Most boats are 50+feet.

IRL MM: IRC events enjoy high quality racing and are relatively well attended. The Irish IRC Nationals is the flagship event. Dual scoring with ECHO is key component to get boats coming up from lower to higher level. ICRA has requested that their disillusion with predictable winners be put forward, especially modified QT, HT and J/109s; however it was recognised that this may be an Irish-specific issue. Both IRC and ORC representatives have been invited to talk at the next AGM. ICRA is re-negotiating their position within the ISA structure to try and increase activity.

JPN HH: (report now included with appendices). No additional comments.

NED EV: IRC continues with boats racing in other countries eg. Cowes Week, GBR IRC Nationals. The prospective IRC European Championship in 2019 in Scheveningen will be beneficial to IRC in the Netherlands.

SEA SJ: There is little club racing in Thailand, Singapore or Malaysia and racing is mainly regatta-driven. Six TP 52s are racing competitively in the area including HKG. Crew from smaller boats are going out on larger boats. There are trained measurers in Singapore, but not much racing area left,



## IRC Congress Meeting 2016

due to development. Singapore Sailing promotes keelboat sailing and recently bought 6 Swedish Match boats. Most racers are ex-pats rather than locals. Measuring weekends are being held, and planning to do the same in Malaysia and Thailand.

TUR CU: no additional comments.

USA EB: Nathan Titcomb sends apologies for not being here. There is no club level IRC racing, only large regattas. A mixture of rating rules is available in the USA and this has caused considerable instability. An example is one boat owner having IRC, ORC, ORR, PHRF & CSA ratings. This is causing frustration with owners and rating administrators. US Sailing is rule-neutral and does not promote any single rule. JJD introduced Rob Ouellette who is on committees at New York YC. RobO reported that the NYYC committee is doing a study and comparing rating rules; there is some confusion over the discrete differences between some rules. There had been a good response to the visit from JJD and others from RORC. There is confidence that IRC will continue at NYYC and Storm Trysail Club, two of the original clubs to use IRC in the US.

FIN OR: Long tradition of offshore racing in Finland; there is racing in IRC, ORC and local rule. It is mainly big boats, Swan 45s etc. that race IRC; all boats have a local rule certificate. Events and races need help with marketing; the [IRC] rule is not the problem. People do not have the time and do not race every weekend, plus it is a problem to get good crew.

SWE EH: IRC certificates are issued for overseas racing, eg. 2 in 2015 for the Rolex Fastnet. The Royal Swedish YC motto is "how do we get more people out on the water". Same comment as Finland about lack of crew and time, there is more single and double handed and racing. Another consideration is that compliance with Offshore Special Regulations makes racing expensive.

### 8. Proposals for IRC Rule changes for 2017 (see appendices)

#### 8.1 From the IRC Technical Committee.

JJD advised that as well as the changes below, there are some typographical errors to be corrected in the rule text, and thanked Carl Sabbe for his work on this.

**STL** Currently IRC does not specify what STL stands for but it is assumed to be Spinnaker Tack Length. Big boats often don't have spinnakers, only large headsails which are tacked to the end of the bowsprit. New STL therefore becomes effectively forward Sail Tack Length. There has been a recommendation from RORC Tech Committee to re-write the rule in a shorter version rather than adapt the existing definition; it was agreed that the IRC Technical Committee will look at it again. The meaning to be conveyed is the distance from mast to forward most point where a sail may be tacked, but to extremity of the pole or bowsprit. **AGREED**



## IRC Congress Meeting 2016

**Aft Rigging:** 18 months ago the Rating Office asked ISAF for an interpretation of 'rigging point' on a backstay when the arrangement passed through the mast and attached to a pin. Some arrangements were very similar but rated differently so were seeing illogical effects on rating. The submission is a complete review of the treatment of aft rigging following discussions with prominent spar makers about all different styles of rig, to simply count the number of controls on the mast. No intention of a change in effect on rating from the current system. JJD explained the various diagrams of aft rigging (see appendices). Regarding the 10%P limit between attachment points on the mast, there is no performance/rating benefit from going to 9.9% as you will not get the control you need. Diagrams will be in the Yearbook. **AGREED.**

**Lead in fins:** JJD explained the change. It is important to try and avoid expense for owners thinking they have to do this [move lead from bulb into fin] to be competitive, it is not healthy for yachting. It will have an effect on rating, and that will probably increase in time. **AGREED.**

**ERS changes:** JJD explained we would be referring to new ERS definitions which have been brought in line with IRC definitions, and not repeating them in IRC. However, he asked for delegates' opinion on Measurement Condition being included in the Yearbook, as it is a useful reference for owners and measurers. Following some discussion on other options, it was agreed to include Measurement Condition in the IRC rules as a copy/paste of the ERS words and format. JJD also commented regarding finding the corner point of a sail – a 1m batten is not always suitable so IRC rules may amend the size of the batten; this was being looked into.

**Crew Quantum and Multiple Ratings** MM raised a question of rating crew quantum in relation to the difficulty in finding crew for racing, and suggested there could be a rating reduction for reducing crew number by eg. 75% or 50%. MM considered that although the current default Crew number/weight printed on the certificates was not being discussed, he felt that for some boats meeting this number is difficult, resulting in a reduction in competitiveness in the majority of conditions, and ultimately perhaps in non-participation. It was acknowledged that sailing with the full crew contingent is the most competitive solution. MM stated that the aim of his suggestion was to offset this reduction in competitiveness for those users who routinely race with fewer crew than the default. In the following discussion, concerns were expressed on issues which might arise including :

- Avoiding the reduced crew quanta becoming more competitive than default.
- Avoiding too specific a choice in crew quantum leading to numerous certificate changes of little significance with a suggestion that there could be only limited alternatives to the default, eg 75% and 50% of default.
- Avoiding changes made in response to weather forecasts with a delay before any new certificate became valid.

MU suggested that this is a philosophical issue of whether or not IRC should address the fundamental lack of crew which is the single most relevant issue today. MB pointed out that the



## IRC Congress Meeting 2016

Policy Steering Group (PSG) had previously asked the IRC Technical Committee to produce a new formula for calculating the current crew number, and that the subject should be kept open and discussed. It was agreed that it was not a question to answer at Congress and that a philosophical question should be presented to the PSG:

*"Should IRC look at different ratings for crews smaller than the crew number?"*

Congress agreed that this question should be passed to the PSG and if the PSG accepted that this was a question that needed work then the Technical Committee should be specifically tasked to see *"What impact on TCC would a crew number smaller than the certificated crew number have?"*

### 8.2 From IRC Rule Authorities.

**USA:** EB explained the submission from Storm Trysail Club to hold the 2017 IRC North American Championship at the 2017 Storm Trysail Club Block Island Race Week in June. BIRW may also include the PHRF nationals and OD championships. **CARRIED unanimously.**

**GRE:** (There was no-one present representing Greece). AD reminded Congress that the Rule is currently silent on (recommended) path forward if a noncompliance is detected under Rule 8.10.3. It was agreed that it would be wrong to dictate actions to juries in this way. **REJECTED.**  
*(Post meeting note AD: This is not necessarily imposing to the jury what to do but to address a situation say on club level when there is even no jury but a protest committee).*

## 9. To discuss and consider the future direction of IRC.

**9.1** An update on ORC had been requested by CS. JJD gave a brief update having talked to designers and in the absence of having the designer software. It was felt that IRC and ORC are protecting each other to some extent, as owners may commission a full-on ORC or IRC boat but then wish to ensure it will work in other rules as well to protect sale value. The ways boats would be optimised to each rule varies.

CS asked about the main philosophical differences? IRC: keep it simple as possible (eg. new aft rigging definition); it assumes that the designer/builder has done the best job outside the parameters IRC asks for, no compensation for bad design. ORC: try to perfectly account for every detail, and for all the variables/characteristics and designer decisions; much more complex. Other views related to transparency of data, expense and robustness. PWM asked JJD to produce a brief written summary of the basic differences and similarities between IRC and ORC to be used by Rule Authorities, IRC Advocates and Measurers. **ACTION JJD**

**9.2** PSG update. MB welcomed delegates to the RORC Cowes clubhouse and thanked Emma Smith for all her work organising the Congress. He reported that efforts had been made over the last year to strengthen the PSG. It consists of the following representatives: 2 from RORC, 2 from



## IRC Congress Meeting 2016

UNCL, plus Malcolm Runnalls as an independent member. Current members are Michael Boyd (RORC Commodore), Jean Philippe Cau (UNCL President), Stephen Anderson (RORC Vice Chairman), Philippe Serenon (UNCL Vice President). In addition Eddie Warden Owen was usually present and RORC/UNCL rating office staff to present information on technical issues.

The previous day's meeting included: reports from UNCL & RORC; UMS update; discussion on particular countries and areas where there were specific concerns (IRL, USA, UK, Caribbean). In response to concerns about marketing performance, PS has produced marketing paper on a voluntary basis. MB thanked PS on behalf of the PSG for his efforts.

The PSG has met 4 times since Congress 2015. Governance arrangements were discussed, particularly relating to short/longer term members and the possibility of having senior acknowledged experts in the field to serve more than 3 years. IRC events are important for Rule promotion. The RORC programme, in particular the RC600, has attracted many sailors (RC600 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2018). The IRC Europeans have been re-inaugurated with the 2016 event in Cork, Ireland. Future dates are:

2017 Marseilles (FRA-Med) July  
2018 Cowes (UK) combined with Commodores' Cup  
2019 Scheveningen (NED)  
2020 Cork (IRL) for RCYC 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

The PSG is delighted with news of the North American championship, and Congress members should give thought to other Continental championships. There would be another attempt to get the right to a World Championship approved at the World Sailing conference in Barcelona in November. Mixed double handed offshore sailing is a possible future Olympic event. There will be new RORC prizes next year in double handed racing for mixed crews.

MB introduced MR to talk about PSG decisions: There was a need for the PSG to make decisions on things that come up at Congress. MR had looked back at the issues and questions laid out for PSG in the last 9 years:

- Multiple TCCs: It had been decided not to implement this.
- Crew numbers: With the information currently held, PSG couldn't make a decision. IRC Technical Committee had been asked to provide a satisfactory formula, yet to be received.
- Numerical measurement: JS's paper had not yet been received.

When the PSG has data it can make decisions and is very effective in its current composition.

**9.3** Marketing Strategy presented by Philippe Serenon. PS had become a member of the PSG in July. PS said that IRC has a solid technical base to work with, and introduced his draft document of IRC Marketing Strategy. All were welcome to contribute.



## IRC Congress Meeting 2016

There are several society factors that affect more than just the sailing community, such as lack of time. It was important to reinforce the value of an IRC certificate, such as adaptability (to design developments), consistency & continuity (long history of the rule) and fairness (retaining value of boats).

Summary of ideas:

Event – use events to promote IRC

Print – yearbook(s), advertorials

Digital – suggested a YouTube channel where sailors/clubs could post videos of their IRC racing.

In future a simple marketing package could be produced for other countries, but for 2017 it needs to be started centrally.

Delegates applauded PS's work to date. EV pointed out the importance of promoting the strength of our product.

**Please send any comments to Philip Serenon so he can report back to PSG.**

[p.serenon@winchmarketing.com](mailto:p.serenon@winchmarketing.com)

An amendment to Rule 2.6 was suggested, to remove the reference to subjectivity as it is no longer relevant. The proposed new text from Technical Committee was **agreed**:

*2.6 Calculation of IRC Ratings is unpublished and based on measurement and data input only.*

**9.4** Update on Universal Measurement System (UMS), MU reported. There have been significant changes to ERS (2017-2020) incorporating various changes to make it more suitable to offshore boats. These were all in the context of UMS and working with the ORC and US Sailing. Sail data is now uniform in both definitions and nomenclature (abbreviations) and these are reflected in ERS. Progress is being made on hull and rig data. Data exchange has been set up between ORC & IRC and is embedded in the software; owners can request that the ORC export their boat's data to IRC and vice versa, although this doesn't deal with all data that ORC requires such as righting moment data. *[note: this needs to be publicised]*. A company (SAP) has been working with USS on a system for other rules (eg. ORR) on pro-bono basis, the Rating Office had hoped to be involved but have not been. EB reported that the first version went live mid-2016 supporting ORR certificate processing as first step, but progress has not been as fast as hoped.

AD asked when the ultimate aim of a "boat passport" is likely to happen? MU replied that it remains the aim but we need central database and structure to achieve it, such as the SAP project. There would still be protocols to be resolved regarding security, access, rights of amendment etc. *(post meeting note: AD appeals to MR to continue to remind the PSG on setting a target date. The UMS was advertised strongly at various forums including World Sailing, the community greeted it and now deserves to know when).*

**ACTION MR**



## IRC Congress Meeting 2016

### 10. Proposed amendments to the IRCOA Constitution.

**IMA submission.** AMCI explained the background and discussion was held regarding possible unintended consequences. At the end of this PWM noted a general feeling that Congress was unhappy with the proposal as worded and should not be pushed for a decision. NOT CARRIED IN THE FORMAT PRODUCED.

### 11. Any other business

SJ asked JJD whether there had been any decisions made about stamping measured sails. JJD confirmed that IRC did not require them to be stamped presently but preferred to accept IHC measured sails. The discussion is to be continued.

*The next IRC Congress will be hosted by UNCL in October 2017 at a location yet to be announced.*

**END**