

ISORA – Irish Sea Offshore Racing Association



ISORA - 2024 AGM Minutes

In Person meeting at the National Yacht Club Dun Laoghaire
On Saturday 2nd November 2024 at 15.30hrs

Welcome

Peter Ryan, ISORA Chair, welcomed everyone to the AGM.

The meeting was not recorded and is for the confidential purposes of the ISORA Officers and for those attending, the discussion, and contents not to be shared in part or in whole to any other party without the consent in writing of the ISORA Officers.

Statement from Hon Sec.

Dear Peter.

It is with great regret that I re-confirm my decision to resign from the role of Honorary Secretary of ISORA

This is a role that I have thoroughly enjoyed since 2010.

In that time, we have worked together, tirelessly to promote offshore racing in the Irish Sea. We have seen the fleets grow, and by the introduction of technologies we have kept ahead of the game in providing fair and competitive racing.

In recent years, and more so in 2024, we have seen the sailing calendar becoming even more congested with competitors making last minute decisions to compete. Crew exhaustion being the most quoted reason not to sail. This crowded calendar has resulted in reluctance to see races postponed or cancelled.

I have read the 'Marine Casualty Investigation Board's' (MCIB) report into a marine casualty involving the sailing yacht Jelly Baby in Cork Harbour in October 2021.

The report findings concludes that the Organising Authority can't delegate all responsibilities to the Skippers (the Risk Statement) and it does place a higher duty of care on the Race Management Committee than what was appreciated previously. Although, some (including me) argued that this duty of care was always there.

I believe that the obligation to keep crews safe was always taken seriously, and was always considered, by Peter and me, before all ISORA races. We always assessed the ability of the fleet to cope with the conditions expected in the race. This assessment of risk always considered the abilities of the least experienced boat, and crew, in the fleet.

It is now, however, very clear that in the event of an incident, or accident, during an ISORA race the crew would be scrutinised. The skipper would, of course, be held responsible for the safety of the crew and boat, the Race Management Committee would be challenged for putting the fleet in a position of danger, the Organising Authority would be questioned on its involvement and its role in ensuring compliance with World Sailing Offshore Rules, and the Governing Bodies would be responsible if all guidelines and rules were not followed by the affiliated body. Everybody is in the firing line!

In August this year this assessment of risk resulted in a race being postponed. The risk was clear and undeniable, and most accepted the decision without hesitation. This was not, however, universal through the fleet and the resultant impasse put me and Peter in a most difficult position.

I am not prepared to be placed in a position of risk. But more than that, I do not want to carry the burden of guilt for the rest of my life on the loss of a friend, competitor or sailor, this is why I resigned my position as Hon Sec.

I must stress that the role of race management in organising offshore racing has changed. We are responsible.

We have reached out to our governing body for guidance, and for protocols.

I am prepared to withdraw my resignation if we have clear guidance and a workable format for managing and the mitigating the risk.

This will involve a significant amount of effort from all parties involved, and I am prepared to contribute positively to this work. If someone else wants to take on this mission, then I will gladly step aside.



	<p>The work involved include, but by no way limited to, the following: Reinforcing the 'Risk Statement', Strengthening our 'Race Risk Assessment', 'Protocols' on when races should not be run, Ensuring compliance with World Sailing Offshore Guidance.</p> <p>As a starting point I urge all skippers to consider using the Skipper Briefing Template which has been on the ISORA web site for many seasons.</p> <p>I do wish to see the continuance of Offshore Racing in the Irish Sea, but this must be in a safe and sustainable manner, and for this to succeed we must all play our part.</p> <p>Stephen Tudor MRICS FNAEA MARLA Hon Sec ISORA</p> <p>-----</p> <p>The Chairman approved the Statement and confirmed that if ST resigned so would he.</p> <p>ST explained that he would complete the Secretarial duties for the AGM and would assist with the process of establishing a safe environment for the continuance of racing in the Irish Sea.</p> <p>PR explained that the Governing Bodies need to lead on this and that ISORA would issue a press statement after the AGM to drive this process forward. This statement would include the need for no compromise on safety.</p> <p>AH agreed with everything but wanted to know how compliance with Cat 3+ would work in practice and that crew experience and training is correct.</p> <p>PR hoped that this topic would be on the agenda for the race officials conference in Galway next week and in the WS meeting in Singapore.</p> <p>In anticipation of reconfigured governance and Race Management processes being established for 2025 the Chair indicated that the AGM agenda could now be followed for the meeting, but things could change.</p>
<p>1. Apologies: -</p>	<p>Apologies received from Brian Dixon and Michelle Farrell.</p>
	<p>Present: - Peter Ryan, Peter Dunlop, Stephen Tudor, Mark Thompson, Andrew Hall, Sam Hall, Victoria Cox, Grainne Ryan, George Bird-Jones, Tom Shanahan, David Townend, Gareth Jones, Simon Hardy, Ffiona Phillips, Luke Murphy, Thomas Tudor, Hugh Perrette, Will Shanahan, and Michael Horgan.</p>
<p>2. Agree Minutes of Last AGM</p>	<p>Minutes of the 2023 AGM held on 11th November 2023, had been circulated and published on the ISORA.org web site. <i>These were agreed as a fair record of the meeting. Proposed by GR and seconded by TS.</i></p>
<p>3. Chairman's report</p>	<p>The Chairman (PR) summarised his report and added that the feedback to the Review was positive and on balance the mix of racing was about right.</p> <p>This was accepted by the meeting.</p> <p>Chairman's 2024 Report to ISORA AGM is attached as Appendix I</p> <p><i>Proposed by MT and seconded by MH.</i></p>

<p>4. Accounts for 2023</p>	<p>The Treasurer (GR) reported that in simplistic terms ISORA has again lived within its means and the bank balance have remained almost static having taken account of all income, expenditure, and sponsorships.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">This section has been removed from the Published version of the Minutes.</p>
<p>5. Election Of Officers</p>	<p>Hon. Sec. read out the List of Officers, The General Sailing Committee, the Technical (Race management) Committee, and the Club Representatives as shown in Appendix III.</p> <p>The role and responsibilities were outlined but it was explained that these may well change following the defining of responsibilities of the Race Officers and and Safety Officer.</p> <p>The Chairman proposed that the committee Remit would change as found necessary and that new members could be co-opted so that the workload in running ISORA can be shared.</p> <p>The following were confirmed / re-confirmed:</p> <p>Officers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chairman – Peter Ryan (appointed 2007) (subject to opening Statement) • Vice Chairman – Peter Dunlop (appointed 2019) • Hon Secretary - Stephen Tudor (appointed 2010) (subject to opening Statement) • Finance – Grainne Ryan (appointed 2022) • Social Media Secretary Victoria Cox (appointed 2019) <p>Proposed by MT, seconded by GBJ, and by all present.</p> <p>General Sailing Committee – Remit: Decide on Racecourse - taking care to accommodate all competitors. Ambassadorial roles in the pre- and post-race gatherings. Provide guidance and encouragement for other competitors. Members as shown in the list in Appendix III and with the ability to co-opt new members.</p> <p>Technical Committee (Race Management) Remit: Prepare Sailing Instructions and Supplemental Racing Information. Organise Start and Finish arrangements with the Relevant Club Representative. Organise Trackers, before during and after racing. Publish Race Results. Attend to any Protest. The remit was again confirmed. Members as shown on the list in Appendix III but with ability to co-opt new members. Committee Members as above accepted by all present by poll and</p> <p>Club Representatives - Members as shown on the list in Appendix III but with ability to co-opt new members.</p> <p>Safety Secretary: TBA Tracker Co-ordinators – Grainne Ryan Trophy Secretary – Michael Horgan <i>Proposed MT and Seconded by GBJ - All agreed.</i></p>
<p>6. Race Management</p>	<p>ST, Hon Sec, outlined the important Race Management considerations for ISORA and noted where changes are to be applied.</p> <p>Professional Crews – PR explained the change in definition by WS. It was agreed that there is no restriction applicable again in 2025, but the Technical Committee will consider this again as the implications of the new WS definition is known. The spirit of 'Corinthian' sailing should be promoted.</p> <p>Protocol on Starting Races is adverse weather conditions: It was agreed that the Race Management Committee can postpone the time of the start of a race if it is considered that the conditions are, or are anticipated to be, beyond the abilities of the least experience boat in the fleet. Safety of all boats and crews is the priority. The final decision to sail is the skippers. AH proposed that postponed races could be re-run in the next 24 hrs but thereafter cancelled. \it was agreed that the Technical Committee would decide if the race should be re-run at a later date.</p> <p>Changes to IRC, RRS and OSR - There are small changes to the regulations and ISORA will incorporate these into the Sailing Instructions and will highlight the important changes by articles on the web site and through e-newsletters.</p>

OSR Categories. - The Secretary explained that ISORA is following the World Sailing Category definitions, Category 3+, Category 3 and Category 4 which are published on the web site. These will be noted on each race schedule.

Entry to Racing – Boat Stability - The ISORA Races that are 'Category 3' and 'Category 3 with Life Raft' are open to all boats that have a valid IRC Certificate with STIX value not less than 23, AVS not less than 130 and Minimum SSS base number of 15 and comply with Section 3 of World Sailing Offshore Regulation.

Coastal Races that are Category 4 are open to all boats that have a valid IRC Certificate

Pre & Post Race Declarations. - Skippers' declaration is part of the on-line entry form. All boats to promote and use the 'ISORA Crew-Manager' app This lists all crew participating in each race and is a safety tool accessed by shore-based race Safety Officer and as a post-race declaration of compliance. PR stressed the importance of this on-line system and hoped to see the App being developed to incorporate more safety compliance by declarations

YB Tracker - ISORA has used the YB tracking system with great success since 2016 and are used not only for visual enjoyment of shore crew but as a safety tool and an invaluable race management tool for recording race finishes. Agreed that this should continue until we are unable to afford.

TSS - TSS will again not be an exclusion zone in ISORA in 2025 but will be subject to the usual rules of the road. A boat can only be protested by the sailing committee on receipt of a complaint from the Coastguard and not from the YB tracker. This will be added to the Notice of Race and Sailing Instructions. Note the ISORA Virtual waypoint in Dublin Bay to keep the fleet out of the shipping lanes.

Virtual Waypoints - Virtual Waypoints form part of the tool menu available to the technical committee to set courses and to keep the fleets away from shipping lanes and other dangers. These can be turning marks, deflecting marks or gates.

Auto Helms - Auto Helms will be allowed again in 2025. The spirit of the intention is to encourage participation not to provide leading boats an added advantage and this will be monitored.

AIS - The use of AIS is mandatory for all competitors in Category 3 and Category 3+ Life Rafts races. Category 4 races – AIS is recommended and encouraged and if installed must be used.

For Coastal Races - all competitors are encouraged to purchase a transmitting and receiving AIS on safety grounds and will work towards compulsory use in Cat 4 in 2026.

All AIS must be 'Type B'

ISORA has arranged for AIS shore bases to give better coverage in the Irish Sea.

Crew Numbers - It was again agreed as follows:

- **Cat 4 Races** - Max crew is IRC cert +2.
- **Cat 3 + Races** – Max Crew is the IRC Cert number (or Liferaft capacity if less than the IRC Cert).

This may be subject to review by the PRO or Safety Officer

Weighting – Following discussion it was agreed that for 2025 the following weighting would be applied:

Ay Coastal – 0.7, Night Coastal 0.9 (night race defined as a start after 20.00hrs and finishing in the dark. Short Offshore 50 miles 1.1, Offshore less than 75 miles 1.2. Long Offshore (more than 75) 1.3.

The principle that a win in a large fleet would score better than a win in a small fleet using the CHIPS 3 formula was questioned. Following discussions. It was also agreed that the Technical Committee would score all entered boats in the race for fleet size purposes and not the number of starters.

It was noted that the scoring system is with Sailwave.

Consideration is to be given to YTS (or a progressive YTS) for Coastal Races.

Crew Pool: Agreed that this should be left with the Skippers via the ISORA WhatsApp Groups.



<p>7. 2025 Race Schedule</p>	<p>AH had prepared a suggested Race Schedule for 2025 based on the 2024 format.</p> <p>It was agreed that the AGM would consider the prepared Draft Race Schedule as a great starting point providing 16 Races in total with 7 Offshore Races, 4 Irish Coastal Races and 5 Welsh Coastal Races.</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>5th April</td> <td>Irish Coastal</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Welsh Coastal</td> </tr> <tr> <td>12th April</td> <td>Irish Coastal</td> </tr> <tr> <td>19th April</td> <td>Welsh Coastal</td> </tr> <tr> <td>26th April</td> <td>Welsh Coastal</td> </tr> <tr> <td>27th April</td> <td>Irish Coastal</td> </tr> <tr> <td>10th May</td> <td>Offshore Holyhead to Dun Laoghaire</td> </tr> <tr> <td>17th May</td> <td>Offshore Dun Laoghaire to Holyhead</td> </tr> <tr> <td>7th June</td> <td>Offshore Pwllheli to Dun Laoghaire</td> </tr> <tr> <td>11th June</td> <td>Offshore D2D Race</td> </tr> <tr> <td>29th June</td> <td>Welsh Coastal</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5th July</td> <td>Offshore Holyhead to Dun Laoghaire –</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2">Royal Dee Championship</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2">10th – 13th July VDL Regatta</td> </tr> <tr> <td>9th August</td> <td>Offshore Dun Laoghaire to Holyhead</td> </tr> <tr> <td>15th August</td> <td>Irish Coastal Night Race</td> </tr> <tr> <td>16th August</td> <td>Welsh Coastal</td> </tr> <tr> <td>6th September</td> <td>Offshore Pwllheli to Dun Laoghaire</td> </tr> </table>	5 th April	Irish Coastal		Welsh Coastal	12 th April	Irish Coastal	19 th April	Welsh Coastal	26 th April	Welsh Coastal	27 th April	Irish Coastal	10 th May	Offshore Holyhead to Dun Laoghaire	17 th May	Offshore Dun Laoghaire to Holyhead	7 th June	Offshore Pwllheli to Dun Laoghaire	11 th June	Offshore D2D Race	29 th June	Welsh Coastal	5 th July	Offshore Holyhead to Dun Laoghaire –	Royal Dee Championship		10 th – 13 th July VDL Regatta		9 th August	Offshore Dun Laoghaire to Holyhead	15 th August	Irish Coastal Night Race	16 th August	Welsh Coastal	6 th September	Offshore Pwllheli to Dun Laoghaire
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<p>Race Schedule: Subject to review by the Technical and Sailing Committee – to correct errors and confirmation on start/finishing port arrangements.</p>																																					
<p>AOB</p> <p>Next Steps</p>	<p>Next Steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair to follow up on IS following WS meeting and establishment of protocols. • Zoom Meeting to be arranged to discuss issues further. • Hon Sec. to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Prepare Statement ○ Prepare Minutes and circulate, ○ Publish Draft 2025 Schedule, ○ Prepare Draft Notice of Race incorporating all the points agreed in the AGM. • Olivier from NYC to work on the 2024 online entry form before Christmas? • Race starts and finish to be checked with destination Clubs/ports. <p>There was no other business. Peter Ryan, from the chair, thanked everyone for their valued contribution and hopes that issues would be resolved for 2025 and that we would see growth in ISORA racing with more opportunities for post-race gatherings.</p>																																				
<p>Meeting Ended 17.03hrs</p>																																					
<p>Minutes prepared by ST 03/11/2024 and Finalised/circulated 03/11/2024</p>																																					

Appendix I

Chairman's Report



Chairman's Report to ISORA AGM.

2nd November 2024

2024 continued to be a challenging year for ISORA and offshore racing generally. The challenges arose from extremes of weather that dissuaded many boats that had entered particular races, from taking part in the race. Many of the races were exceptionally long and this prevented the collegial ISORA "Apres Sail" from taking place.

The schedule to host 16 races that included 7 offshores, and 5 coastal races on the Irish Sea and 4 coastal races on the Welsh only attracted 44 boats, slightly up 2023. However, a significant reduction on our highest number back in 2018 when 67 boats took part.

An issue that requires consideration is that despite reasonable numbers of boats entering most races the numbers of boats taking part in each race rarely exceeded 12.

Many of our "regulars" were missing and some who entered races, did not race at all. A few of our "regular" boats are either up for sale or sold. It is hoped that these boats and skippers will reappear and participate in ISORA.

In August, in conjunction with Arklow Sailing Club, an offshore weekend was arranged that took the fleet from Deun Laoghaire to Arklow and from Arklow to a mid-Irish Sea finish. The weather was good for this weekend. Those boats that made the races were rewarded with a great reception in Arklow SC.

Coastal racing is now an accepted part of every major racing event. This is mainly due to the constant promotional work of ISORA.

The use of "staggered starts" continues to prove very successful, particularly in the coastal races. This practice will continue in 2025.

Things are not "healthy" in big boat racing in Ireland and the UK. Numbers taking part have been decreasing particularly since Covid. The Irish fleet has been badly affected. New events being created in Ireland has caused "crew exhaustion". On the other hand, the fleet numbers in Pwllheli are growing.

Prior to creating the race schedule for this season, the feeling from the fleet was that there was a preference for more coastal races. This was included in the final race schedule for 2023. However, the effect of having more races in the ISORA series, appears to have resulted in a dilution in the number of boats taking part in each race.

Subject to the decision of the AGM, it is proposed that the points for coastal races will not be included for the Overall Wolf's Head trophy next season. The Wolf's Head will be decided by points from offshore races only.

The highlight in the offshore racing is the D2D race in June. In Dun Laoghaire the Volvo Dun Laoghaire Regatta takes place in July.

A huge thank you to our title sponsor for this season, **Musto**. I also want to thank our continued sponsors on the Irish side, **Viking Marine**, **Hendrick Ryan Associates** and **Jack Ryan Whiskey**; and on the Welsh side, **Plas Heli** and **Tudor Auctioneers**.

With reduced entries being received and most of our costs being fixed, we now have to rely on our sponsors to help us fund our racing. I would, however, like to appeal for other possible sponsors or benefactors for 2025.

ISORA is run by volunteers who generously freely give of their time during the season. They are as follows:

- Website Manager – Stephen Tudor.
- Race results – Stephen Tudor.
- Online Entry – Olivier Proveur.
- Bernard McGranaghan - ISORA CrewManager App.
- Race Starters - Larry Power, Barry MacNeaney, Robin Evans, and Dawn Russell.
- Safety Officer - Anita Begley
- YB Tracker Manager – Grainne Ryan
- Facebook Page Manager – Vicky Cox.
- Trophy Secretary – Michael Horgan.

I would like to thank the Officers and committee of ISORA:

- Vice Chairman – Peter Dunlop
- Hon Secretary – Stephen Tudor
- Hon Treasurer – Grainne Ryan

I would like to thank our two committees – The **Race Management Committee** and the **Sailing Committee**. The Race Management Committee dealt with the back of house work. The Sailing Committee decided on courses and details associated with races.

For next season it is hoped that a formal Race Organiser will be appointed for each race. Their duties will be to arrange starts and finishes associated with that particular race. This person will be on land and not taking part in the race. I am asking for suggestions from all boats taking part on how this might work for 2025 to ensure that all participants are actively engaged in providing support to the sailing we all enjoy.

The ISORA website continues to grow in content and is managed solely by **Stephen Tudor**. It is the main information source for ISORA. I would also like to thank **Vicky Cox** who looks after the **ISORA Facebook** page. This is proving to be a huge success and a great way to communicate within ISORA.

The WhatsApp groups is proving to be a great method of communicating with those taking part in the races.

The CewManager app, developed by Bernard McGranaghan has been used extensively to date. It is hope that the app will be the main instrument in the Safety and Responsibility” regime being proposed for 2025.

The social highlight of the year is tonight’s annual ISORA prize giving dinner in the NYC. Over 120 people are expected to attend.



I would like to thank the **National Yacht Club** for their continued support and assistance for ISORA. They are the **Organising Authority** for our races. The Commodore of the NYC, **Peter Sherry**, is attending the dinner tonight. Also attending is **Mark Thompson**, Commodore of Pwllheli Sailing Club and **Daragh Connolly**, Commodore of SCORA.

In finishing I would particularly like to thank our Hon Secretary – **Stephen Tudor**. Without him, ISORA would not run as efficiently as it does.

Wishing ISORA a safe and engaged year in 2025. As Chairman since 2007 I wish to thank all of you for your support to me. I look forward to handing over the stewardship of ISORA in good stead in the near future.

Peter Ryan
Chairman ISORA

2nd November 2024

Appendix II

Treasurer's Report

Appendix III Officers for 2024

Officers Election Listed 2023/2024

ISORA OFFICERS 2023/24	
Chairman	- Peter Ryan
Vice Chairman	- Peter Dunlop
Treasurer	- Grainne Ryan
Secretary / Webmaster	- Stephen Tudor
Social Media Secretary	- Victoria Cox

General Sailing Committee 2024	
<p>Remit: Decide on Racecourse - taking care to accommodate all competitors.</p> <p>Ambassadorial roles in the pre-and post-race gatherings. Provide guidance and encouragement for other competitors.</p> <p>Subject to Change</p>	
Peter Ryan	Peter Dunlop
Stephen Tudor	Mark Rosenthal
Mark Thompson	Victoria Cox

Technical Committee (Race Management) 2024	
<p>Remit: Prepare Sailing Instructions and Supplemental Racing Information. Organise Start and Finish arrangements with the Relevant Club Representative. Organise Trackers, before during and after racing. Publish Race Results. Attend to any Protest.</p>	
Peter Ryan	Peter Dunlop
Stephen Tudor	Grainne Ryan
Mark Thompson	Vicky Cox
Joe Conway	



Club	Club Representative 2023/4
Remit: To make all pre-race arrangements at the port and club. Provide information for inclusion in the SIs. Arrange hospitalities for pre/post-race. Arrange start or Finish lines.	
National Yacht Club	- Peter Ryan
Pwllheli Sailing Club	- Sam Hall
Holyhead Sailing Club	- Dawn Russell
Royal Dee Yacht Club	- TBC
Dublin Bay / Royal Alfred	- Barry Mac Neaney AND TBC
Howth Yacht Club	- Simon Knowls
Liverpool Yacht Club	- Paul Hampson
Wicklow Sailing Club	- KYran O'Grady
Royal St George Yacht Club	- Chris Power-Smith
Poolbeg	- TBC
Douglas Bay Yacht Club	- Kuba Szymanski
Royal Irish Yacht Club	- Joe Conway
Arklow Yacht Club	- Seamus Cramer
Royal Cork YC	- Daragh Connolly
Royal Ulster	- Ross Boyd