

IFDS Technical Committee Report

The Technical Committee continues to review and revise the IFDS Race Management Manual (RMM) to simplify and clarify the documents. Two notable achievements were the development of the IFDS Technical Delegate Guidelines, lead by Henry Sleutel, and now incorporated in the RMM as Part 3 as well as the on-going development, by a working group (David Staley, Bernard Destrube, Roberto Armellini and Henry Sleutel) to update the Appendix for Blind & Vision Impaired Sailing.

Other significant issues included the question of enhanced methods of communication between skipper and crew in the Two-Person Keelboat (SKUD18). The committee recommend that any such systems be either wired or, if wireless, using Bluetooth or similar very short range technology. The use of marine VHF was categorically not recommended.

In addition, given the level of physical ability required to manage three sails and all but one of the control lines in the boat, the strength and mobility of a crew in the Two-Person Keelboat (SKUD18) must be significant and places such persons on the more able part of the disability spectrum. The committee has recommended to the Access Class Association that it review the current restrictions on movement in the boat as well as the requirement for restricting the crew (TPB) to a centreline seat.

The Technical Committee would like to note that it has had a productive relationship with the Chair of the Measurement/Classes Committee (Gene Hinkel) with respect to many of these issues.

All of the current members of the committee have agreed to continue to serve except for Keith Burhans and myself who are resigning. Unfortunately, this leaves the committee with no members who are eligible to compete in IFDS events. It is a matter of urgency that IFDS management make every effort to recruit eligible sailors to lead and manage our corner of the sport.

On a personal note, I have resigned as Chair and from the Committee. I have been involved with the management of sailing for person with disabilities, with US SAILING and IFDS, since 1996 and my best ideas are in the past. It is time for new blood.

I have enjoyed my service on the Technical Committee and I wish all who are involved with IFDS Executive Committee Members, Committee Members, sailors, coaches, classifiers, measurers etc. – the very best for the future and I look forward to reading about IFDS's on-going success.

Respectfully submitted,

Hugh Elliot
Chair, IFDS Technical Committee