Racing Rules of Sailing

Rule 21

A submission from the Royal Yachting Association

Purpose or Objective

To extend the scope of rule 21 to include exoneration for all incidents when room or mark-room is not given.

Proposal

1. Amend rule 21 as follows:

21   EXONERATION
When a boat is sailing within the *room* or *mark-room* to which she is entitled ~~under a rule of Section C~~, she shall be exonerated if, in an incident with a boat required to give her that *room* or *mark-room*,

(a)   she breaks a rule of Section A, rule 15 or rule 16, or

(b)   she is compelled to break rule 31.

2. Relocate rule 21 by making it the first rule in Part 2 Section D.

Current Position

As above

Reasons

1. When a boat is sailing within the room or mark-room to which she is entitled, rule 21 now exonerates her if, in essence, she breaks a Part 2 rule because the other boat has not given her the room or mark-room required by a Section C rule. It will provide greater clarity and consistency to generalise rule 21 to include exoneration for all instances of a boat entitled to room or mark-room.

2. This proposal enables exoneration when the other boat has not given the room required by rule 15 or 16 and when no Section C rule applies. At present in these incidents, it is only possible to exonerate the keep clear boat under rule 64.1(a) after a hearing. For example, a boat that breaks rule 11 because she has not been given room by a right-of-way leeward boat has a problem with the Sportsmanship Principle which requires her to promptly take a penalty.

3. The requirement to give room or mark-room exists only in the rules of Part 2, and changes to them in some appendices, so simply deleting the words shown provides the required

scope. Rule 14 relates only to avoiding contact and does not require the giving of room; there should never be exoneration for breaking rule 14, except as stated in rule 14(b), and this is not changed by the proposal.