

ISAF Racing Rules Question and Answer Service



G 007

Q&A 2010-18

Published: 24 May 2010

Situation:

A starting sequence with flag P as preparatory signal.

Approximately 6-7 seconds before the start several boats were over the line close to the pin end, and the race officers on the signal vessel lost view of the orange line flag and staff on the pin end boat. The orange flag did not become visible from the signal committee vessel until after the start.

Four boats were called OCS by the race officer on the pin end boat.

1-2 seconds before the start the race officer on the signal boat observed another boat near the pin end crossing the starting line and called it OCS too. Since the orange flag was not visible, he used a landmark (house roof in the hill a few miles distant) as an extension of the starting line.

Question 1:

Can the starting line really be that fuzzy?

Answer 1:

The starting line is not fuzzy, it is between the staffs displaying orange flags on the two starting marks (race committee boats).

Question 2:

Did this method meet the definition of starting line as described in the sailing instructions (i.e. 'The starting line will be between staffs displaying orange flags on two race committee boats')?

Answer 2:

Yes. As long as there were orange flags displayed from staffs on the starting marks, the requirements of the sailing instructions are met.

Question 3:

May these facts be grounds for redress if lodged by the boat?

Answer 3

The facts stated do not describe any error or omission of the race committee. For a boat to be given redress after being scored OCS, conclusive evidence must be presented to the protest committee that the race committee has made an error.

NOTE

Different methods may be used to sight the starting line, depending on various parameters such as the number and the type of boats on the line, the conditions and the available infrastructure. The choice and the responsibility lie with the race committee. For the race committee to use a transit to sight the line is not an improper action.