



OBJECTIVE 7 – EVENTS

To enhance the quality and appeal of sailing events

Original Project Group (disbanded in May 2006)

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1. INTRODUCTION

ISAF is in the process of developing its Strategic Plan.

- ISAF's Strategic Plan sees the life-time's sport of sailing as an attractive, united and globally thriving participation sport offering current and future generations a wide diversity of accessible challenges and opportunities throughout their lives.
- ISAF seeks to promote and continually improve the sport globally, without discrimination, and with a commitment to the participation of women.

The purpose of this report is to recommend projects that will ***enhance the quality and appeal of sailing events*** for implementation as part of the Strategic Plan.

The framework for any such projects is an **ISAF Events Strategy**. This strategy has to be agreed, published, and kept under review, and this should be the primary task and responsibility of the Events Committee. This is the Project Group's primary recommendation.

To develop this ISAF Events Strategy, the Project Group has identified a number of core "sub-projects". It recommends that these sub-projects be undertaken simultaneously, by specific expert groups, and their recommendations are delivered to the Events Committee and Council in November 2006. As soon as possible thereafter all recommendations would be integrated to form the ISAF Events Strategy.

The Project Group recognises that in many areas there are already existing studies and conclusions. In such cases this existing work should be reviewed and incorporated as appropriate

Fuller details on all the recommendations follow in the body of this report.

The Project Group has not yet been able to meet in person to review this report. A subset of the Group will meet in Berlin on Thursday 4th May to review and refine this report prior to its submission to ISAF Executive. This version of the report should be regarded as preliminary.

2. PRIMARY RECOMMENDATION: THE ISAF EVENTS STRATEGY

Sailing is a successful sport and should be reviewed on its merits. While it does not mirror any other single sport, it can learn by comparing itself to other sports.

- Sailing is primarily a participation sport, and also holds great appeal to volunteer officials; it is both a competitive and a recreational sport;
- Sailing is a life-time's sport for all
 - it is healthy for young and old;
 - it encourages international friendship and introduces people of all ages to international competition;
 - it suits all ages from 4 to 100, and all physiques;
 - it includes handicap racing, both equipment-based and personal skill-based;
 - disabled sailors are able to compete against non-disabled sailors;
- Sailing is diverse: it can demand athleticism and stamina, tactics and technical prowess; races can last 5 minutes or 5 months; equipment ranges from 1m radio controlled boats on a small pond to 20-crew yachts racing the oceans;
- Equipment is constantly developing and changing, and new equipment is introduced while older equipment continues, resulting in many hundreds of types of equipment and

competition and many hundreds of “World” and “National” champions each year;

- Sailing is environmentally sustainable and events require minimal infrastructure;
- When compared to most other sports, sailing is ill-suited to transmission as a live sport but second to none for still photography.

The ISAF Events Strategy has to embrace and build on these characteristics. It has to:

- promote the diversity and strength of sailing as a participation sport, and grow participation in terms of number of countries and number of sailors;
- promote the elite element of the sport of sailing to elite athletes, the media and public, and sponsors;
- welcome people into the sport at all ages, and, for elite young sailors, give them a pathway to international success;
- improve the quality of (and recognise appropriately) the work of volunteers and race management, for the benefit of sailors, volunteers, the media and the public;
- ensure that major events are co-ordinated and marketed effectively while facilitating simple organisation of grass-roots events;
- embrace, involve and assist other organisations such as class associations, the marine industry, and event organisers whose businesses depend on the success of the sport;
- promote the environmental and international goodwill qualities of the sport.

Referred to:
Events Committee
Executive Committee Feedback:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support proposals.• Project Group Chairman and Events Committee Member, Chris Atkins, to be charged to continue to progress paper in agreement with Events Committee Chairmen.• A clear brief be prepared for each Committee who is identified as needing to provide feedback on the Events Strategy proposal. The brief to be prepared by the end of August 2006, in order that it can be included as a supporting paper on the relevant Committee Agendas for November 2006.• To consider whether input on the World Sailing Games should be provided by the Events Committee, rather than the Youth and Development Committee.• A draft paper to be presented to the 2007 Mid-Year Meeting, with the final proposal in November 2007.• With the exception of points D1, D3 and D4 – the above feedback applies to all proposals in this paper.

3. SUB-PROJECTS THAT TOGETHER WILL CREATE THE ISAF EVENTS STRATEGY

The Project Group recommends the four groups of sub-projects and actions described below, whose purpose can be summarised as:

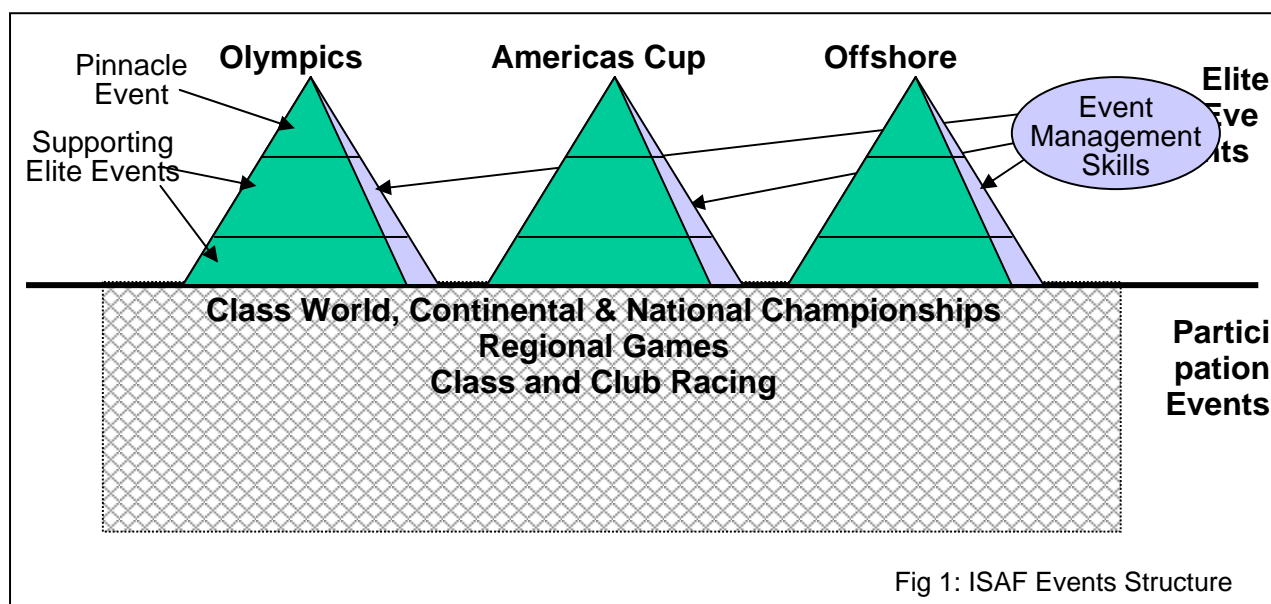
- Group A: define the **elite** pyramid strategy and events;
- Group B: ensure that ISAF has a strategy and events that feed **youth** from all parts of the world into the elite pyramid;
- Group C: clarify ISAF’s role and responsibility for **participation** events, and ensure there is world-wide enablement;
- Group D: ensure ISAF is **managing** the sport optimally, exercising appropriate control over elite events and properly supporting MNAs in their areas of jurisdiction.

A. Group A: Elite Events

The purpose of the Elite Events section of the ISAF Strategic Plan is to provide:

- a clear events structure and hierarchy for sailors wishing to succeed at the sport's highest competitive level;
- a structure and hierarchy that is complementary to, and under-pinned by:
 - the spectrum of non-elite participation events;
 - youth and junior competitions and squads;
- marketing and other promotional support that attracts sponsorship and enables the most successful sailors at elite events to become sporting heroes.

Currently the Project Group believes there are three “pinnacles” for elite events in the sport of sailing: the Olympic Games; the Americas Cup; and Offshore racing (although today there is no clear single pinnacle in offshore racing).



The Project Group recommends the following **principles for pinnacle and elite events**:

1. Pinnacle events are held less frequently than annually.
2. Each pinnacle event is supported by a hierarchy of ISAF-graded elite events which allows the sport, and its finest competitors, to promote themselves between pinnacle events.
3. Entry to pinnacle events, and the elite events which support them, is not open to all, but is based on the ISAF ranking system (with appropriate wild-cards).
4. The format, location, equipment and race management of elite events should be consistent with the participation sport of sailing, but optimised for visual impact, excitement and media appeal. Umpiring should be used where appropriate.
5. Given the wide range of events in sailing, for any event included in the Olympic regatta, the Olympic regatta must truly be the pinnacle for that event (unlike, for instance, tennis).
6. Normal class world championships are considered “participation events”, with entry criteria determined by the class. However Olympic class world and continental championships should be integrated into the hierarchy of elite events, and their results reflected in the ranking systems.

The Project Group recommends that separate strategies, each consistent with the above principles, are developed for the three pinnacles, as outlined below:

A-1. ISAF Elite Events: Olympic Events *(responsibility: Events Committee)*

- a) Define the purpose of Olympic participation for the sport of sailing, and recommend the Olympic Events strategy which best delivers that purpose (note: this strategy should also consider Equipment and format where these are material to delivering the purpose).
- b) Recommend a supporting elite circuit to promote the Olympic events and the sport's heroes, and retain and build media appeal, between Olympic Games. These could include:
 - the four-yearly Combined Olympic Classes World Championships
 - the annual World Championships of Olympic Classes
 - an annual "World Cup for Olympic Classes / Events"

The format of any elite circuit event should, as far as practicable, be consistent with that event at the Olympic regatta.

- c) Within (b) above, recommend:
 - which year in the 4-year cycle the Combined Olympic Classes World Championships should take place;
 - how the winners of the World Cup events should be decided;
 - what titles the winners of elite events should receive – titles should be clear and simple, and differentiated from class world champions;
 - whether prize money should be awarded.
- d) Define a structure and process for elite events, class world championships and other ISAF graded events to feed the world rankings system. Recommend how, and on what basis, Regional Games become part of this structure.
- e) Recommend a qualification system, based on the ISAF rankings system with local and emerging nations "wild-cards", for entry to elite events and the Olympic regatta.

A-2. ISAF Elite Events: Match Racing Strategy *(responsibility: Match Racing Committee)*

- a) Define the ISAF Match Racing Strategy from entry level events to Americas Cup, addressing male, female and (if appropriate) youth competitions.
- b) Recommend an annual elite "Match Racing World Tour" to promote Match Racing, and the sport's heroes, within the ISAF events structure.
- c) Recommend a global event structure (e.g. the Nations Cup) to promote the discipline globally, to attract new sailors, MNAs and sponsorship, and to feed the world rankings system.

A-3. ISAF Elite Events: Offshore Events *(responsibility: Offshore Committee)*

- a) Define the ISAF Offshore Events Strategy and recommend the roles of ISAF and other organisations in the delivery of the strategy

Referred to:
Events Committee
Executive Committee Feedback:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support proposals. • Project Group Chairman and Events Committee Member, Chris Atkins, to be charged to continue to progress paper in agreement with Events Committee Chairmen. • A clear brief be prepared for each Committee who is identified as needing to provide feedback on the Events Strategy proposal. The brief to be prepared by the end of August 2006, in order that it can be included as a supporting paper on the relevant Committee Agendas for November 2006. • To consider whether input on the World Sailing Games should be provided by the Events Committee, rather than the Youth and Development Committee. • A draft paper to be presented to the 2007 Mid-Year Meeting, with the final proposal in November 2007.

B. Group B Youth and Junior Events

The sport of sailing should continue to play a pivotal and highly beneficial role in the development of young people.

The current annual ISAF Youth World Championships is an extremely successful event, attracting over 60 countries and 250 sailors aged between 15 and 18. It is well supported by a hierarchy of MNA squad activities and youth and junior class world, continental and national championships.

The Championships take every opportunity, within the constraints of top level international competition and with the support of the World Youth Sailing Trust, to encourage participation and development of sailors, and to pass back to emerging sailing nations best practices for developing sailors and sailing.

It is appropriate that the ISAF Youth World Championships be held annually. However rather than having a stand-alone strategy, it should be the pinnacle of an ISAF Junior and Youth Events Strategy

B-1. ISAF Junior and Youth Events Strategy *(responsibility: Youth Championships Sub-committee)*

- a) Define the ISAF Youth World Championships objectives and strategy within the context of an ISAF Junior and Youth Events strategy, including:
 - the event and equipment strategy for the Championships
 - the strategy for raising the quality of youth sailing in emerging sailing nations.
- b) Review the scope and value of other initiatives in international junior and youth competition including:
 - pathway from junior to youth events
 - pathway from youth to senior events
 - youth events being co-located with senior events (as in tennis)
 - mixed boy / girl junior and youth events
 - additional skills and roles (e.g. mentoring) for ROs at youth and junior events

C. Group C Participation Events

Sailing is primarily a participation sport. The richness and diversity of sailing events, driven by local clubs and classes, is something to be encouraged. Any control over these events is for MNAs within their jurisdiction, within the framework of ISAF's Racing Rules of Sailing and other relevant ISAF regulations.

World and continental championships for classes should be encouraged to promote participation and enhance the participation experience, subject to the class meeting ISAF criteria for being an International Class, and any requirements of the ISAF Calendar. Any entry criteria for such championships should normally be a matter for the Organising Authority.

Where a participation event also forms part of the ISAF Elite Events Strategy and feeds the Elite Ranking System (e.g. the World Championship of an Olympic Class), then ISAF shall specify additional criteria for such an event, as defined below in **D-1. ISAF Calendar of Major Events**.

C-1. Regional Games Sailing *(responsibility: Regional Games Committee)*

The Regional Games also provide an opportunity to raise regional participation, and feed regional sailors into the global elite events. This should be the primary purpose of such events, driven by the local expertise of the region's MNAs. However when sailing at any specific Regional Games grows in stature and standing, and attracts greater coverage, this Regional Games regatta may become an elite event with its own separate ranking lists, qualification criteria and feeder regattas.

- a) Define ISAF's Regional Games objectives and strategy, including recommendations for Events, Equipment and qualification criteria that best drive regional participation.

C-2. ISAF Team Racing Championships *(responsibility: Team Racing Sub-committee)*

Team Racing as it is practised today is a participation event. While popular with all age groups, it is of particular value and suitability to school and university aged sailors.

- a) Define the ISAF Team Racing Championships objectives and strategy, including recommendation for frequency of event and encouragement of participation of school and university-aged sailors
- b) Define a strategy for raising the level of global team racing participation, including the inclusion of team racing in other global sailing events such as Regional Games.

C-3. ISAF World Sailing Games *(responsibility: Youth & Development Sub-committee)*

The World Sailing Games provides ISAF with an opportunity to increase the participation and popularity of the sport of sailing in emerging and non-Olympic nations. However ISAF currently has no clear objectives and strategy behind this event.

- a) Define the ISAF World Sailing Games objectives and strategy, including recommendation for frequency, location and structure of the event to maximise participation.

D. Global Management and Co-ordination of the Sport of Sailing by ISAF

ISAF has responsibility to ensure proper management and co-ordination of the sport of sailing. For events within the jurisdiction of MNAs, this responsibility should be delivered through MNAs. However for Elite events, ISAF should take a leading and pro-active role. Included in this is responsibility for:

- the International Calendar of Sailing Events, and the grading of events within it;
- the allocation of "World" titles;
- the ranking system, and its use in qualification for ISAF graded events;
- the quality of all aspects of event management at ISAF graded events.

D-1. ISAF Calendar of Events *(responsibility: Events Committee)*

ISAF should manage and publish a single global calendar for the sport. It should include all ISAF graded events, and all world, continental and regional class championships for all sailing events including offshore.

- a) Define which grades of events must have their dates approved by ISAF, and how and when that approval is requested and granted
- b) Define *(in consultation with Race Officials)* the criteria for initial approval of such an event, for continuation of such approval, and for any sanctions or removal of approval.
- c) Propose an outline 4-year calendar for such events (finishing with the Olympic Games), taking into account all pinnacle and other ISAF events.
- d) Propose any restrictions on dates of events.
- e) Define the event data that should be included in the calendar.
- f) Recommend what other events should be included in the calendar, any criteria for inclusion, and by when the event data should be received.
- g) Propose to the Executive options for charging fees for events listed in the calendar.

In making these recommendations, the expert group should research the practices of other international sports governing bodies, and the opinions of major sailing event organisers.

Referred to:
ISAF Secretariat

D-2. Allocation of World Titles *(responsibility: Events Committee)*

Sailing is primarily a diverse participation sport, and the capability to crown a sailor as “World Champion” within his or her particular niche of the sport is an asset that encourages this very participation and diversity.

However:

- the granting of this capability should be used by ISAF as a lever to promote good organisational practices that improve sailors’ and volunteers’ enjoyment of the sport;
- this capability should not have the effect of diluting the achievement of our sailing heroes or the appeal of the elite element of the sport to the media and the public.

Therefore (see **A-1. ISAF Elite Events: Olympic Events**) a separate and superior title will be recommended for winners of elite events in the Olympic pyramid.

- a) Define the minimum criteria that an international class must meet before it can award World Champion status to its champion; these criteria should be achievable by all flourishing and well-managed International Classes.

D-3. Rankings System *(responsibility: Events Committee Rankings WP)*

- a) Review the current ranking system in light of the recommendations above, and in particular the need to use the ranking system as the basis for entry to elite events worldwide.

Referred to:
ISAF Events Committee and Sail Rankings Sub-Committee

D-4. Event Management (*responsibility: various – assumed to be defined elsewhere in Strategic Plan*)

- a) Evaluate the opportunity provided by specialist event organisers, and recommend how ISAF should interface with them.
- b) Review how to make events more innovative and media-friendly. Investigate shore-based components to events (e.g. from fireworks to combined events with other sports).
- c) Recommend event management best practices, including the role of event director at major events, and mentoring and buddying systems at participation events.
- d) Expand the use of on-the-water umpiring.
- e) Recommend how to promote event management as an extension of participation, and recruitment, recognition and reward policies.
- f) Investigate whether changes to the Advertising Code could be beneficial to sponsors and visual appeal of the sport at elite events.
- g) Review investment in Marketing to drive the promotion of elite sailing events.

Referred to:
ISAF Secretariat

4. OTHER SUPPORTING INFORMATION

In view of the nature of the recommendations in this report, much of this supporting information cannot be provided in detail at this stage.

Cost Estimates

As the above sub-projects involve reporting work by specialists from existing ISAF committees, there is no major cost involved at this stage

Budget

The management of the sport, in particular the ISAF calendar of events, will impose extra work and cost on ISAF. However there are also income opportunities through:

- advertising on the ISAF web-site;
- charging for services supplied to ISAF elite events and other ISAF graded events.

Resources

The completion of the sub-projects, and their amalgamation into the ISAF Events Strategy, will require investment of time by those allocated to the various sub-projects. However it is believed that by breaking the overall project down into constituent sub-projects, the demand on any individual's time will not be too onerous.

Risk

The risk is in doing nothing! Unless ISAF determines its objectives and strategy with regard to both elite and participation events, meets the aspirations of elite sailors, embraces specialist event organisers, and supports the MNAs and classes in the fulfilment of their roles, others will impose their own objectives and strategy.

Timescales

Sub-projects should be completed by November 2006 to allow an integrated ISAF Events Strategy to be defined by November 2007.