Racing Rules of Sailing

Rule F4

A submission from the Royal Yachting Association

Proposal

F4 COMMENTS

The *parties* and protest committee may make comments on the appeal or request or on any of the documents listed in rule F2.2 by sending them in writing to the national authority. *The national authority may additionally request comments from boats and other organisations that are not parties to the hearing.* Comments on any document shall be made no later than 15 days after receiving it from the national authority. The national authority shall send copies of the comments to the *parties* and protest committee as appropriate.

Current Position

As above.

Reason

There are many occasions when comments from a boat or organisation that may not have been a party to the hearing can be useful. Examples from RYA recent appeal hearings include

1. A race committee protested a boat that interfered with a commercial ferry. The opinion of the ferry company or its skipper would have been valuable.

2. In a protest concerning a boat's rating, the comments from the rating authority were obtained and were vital in resolving the appeal.

3. It appeared possible that another boat that was not a party to the hearing may have caused the incident. It would not be good practice for the appeal decision to blame this boat when she never had an opportunity to state her view of the incident. Obviously this would not enable the boat to be penalised under the RRS but her insurers may have become liable for the damage to others.