1. Opening of the Meeting

The Chairman opened the meeting by asking the Committee Members and observers to introduce themselves.

The chairman noted that Paul Ansfield suggested holding a mid-year meeting but as the number of committee members present was too reduced to emit a vote, the chairman submitted a written request to the chairman of the Offshore Committee and to David Irish.

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

(a) Minutes

The minutes of the Empirical Handicap Sub-Committee Meeting of Sunday 9 November 2008 were noted and approved.

(b) Minutes Matters Arising

3. Status Report

The general feeling was that the amount of empirical handicapping is increasing throughout the world every year

(a) NORLYS – Norway

The chairman updated the Committee on empirical handicapping in Norway where the number of boats registering with the NORLYS is 1728 (endorsed certificates) and growing. NORLYS is recognizing the Swedish lists of 751 boat types, and have developed additional lists of 110 boat types.

(b) LYS – Sweden

The chairman reported that Sweden maintains a fleet of about 3000 boats, of which 550 have certificates. Others sail with rating based on tables for 751 boat types.
(c) United States Performance Handicapping Fleet (USPHRF) & North American Portsmouth System

Paul Ansfield, not present at the meeting, has provided the following update: “7300 boat types are listed and about 25000 boats are participating in USPHRF races. Determination of USPHRF Handicaps is decentralized to local and regional fleets affiliated with US SAILING through the USPHRF Technical Committee that promotes performance handicap racing for monohull and multihull sailing yachts applying the PHRF® rule. The Committee researches, develops, and distributes guidelines for performance handicapping using systematically applied empirical methodology to determine estimates of speed potential. The Committee maintains a database of critical dimensions for production boats and a database of handicaps assigned by local and regional fleets associated with USPHRF. It publishes these data, periodic bulletins, and handicapping guidelines that are mailed to member fleets associated with US SAILING. Three USPHRF sub-committees have special tasks. The Executive Subcommittee deals with management and evaluates application of the rule. The Technical Subcommittee updates the procedures and methodology for performance handicapping. The National Appeal Subcommittee hears appeals of handicaps forwarded from associated local and regional fleets. USPHRF does not organize or manage races in the US; local and regional fleets do.”

The chairman also noted that over 80% of USPHRF organizations exclusively use time on distance scoring. Time on time is also utilized. Studies are underway to develop more than a one number handicapping system, one for inshore course rating and one for offshore course rating.

The North American Portsmouth System is similar to that employed in Great Britain. Within the North American Portsmouth system handicaps are also determined “boats with beds”. Hence, not only dinghies are handicapped, but also cruising/Racing keel boats and multihulls. Particulars about the system and a list of handicaps may be inspected on the USSSAILING.ORG website.

(d) RYA Portsmouth Yardstick

Sebastian Edmonds explained that this system is used primarily for small boats based in annual input from a large number of affiliated sailing clubs. He also noted that data from large cruisers is more difficult to obtain and therefore they are more likely to use other handicap systems. He also explained that currently the list of boats is very static at the moment and that the RYA online returns system, created a few years ago, aims to make it more dynamic as the process of returning raw data is made easier and less time consuming.

(e) PHRF Argentina

Gabriel Alfredo Schroeder explained that the PHRF system has been used in Argentina for more than 20 years issuing certificates also for Uruguay. He explained how the rating system used is unique in the way that ratings are based on a standard boat rather than adapting individual certificates and unlike other rating systems the number of sails on board is not counted in the calculation of the rating.

(f) HN France

Daniel Pillons, not present at the meeting has provided the following update: HN system is driven by Federation Francaise de voile. Rule give standard handicaps for 1480 mono hull production boats, sport boats, cruisers and racers, with their main characteristics written in database. Can be used in ToT or ToD.
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HN Rule gives now a way to accept single boats with ORC certificates, in harmony with standard boats. Local sailors use it but an international connection is operational by this way. Another bridge exists with keel boats and YCC (yacht classic rule).

4183 certificates are valid at the end of 2009, for a sailing fleet of 5500 different boats. Beside 2 national championships, 504 races enter in database this year with a 26 boats average participation.

HN France is a performance system where ratings are computed by results on a statistic way that throws away human influence. (4493 new individual performances in a total of 72800)

Competitors come from 234 different clubs that are ranked with their performances.

4. Empirical Handicapping Worldwide

The chairman gave an overview of empirical handicapping systems worldwide.

5. Standard Parameters and Notations for Description of Boats

The chairman noted that the working party established in 2006 has been working since in its development in a document with an increasing number of abbreviations some of which are not included in the ERS.

Sebastian Edmonds showed his concern about the fact the ORC may not end up using this document and the original aim of the working party may be missed. He noted that an agreement between IRC and ORC was needed and that the working party has not received any input from them.

The chairman commented that although ORC and IRC are important in this connection the constituency for this document is much wider, and includes all rating and handicapping systems, class associations, designers, producers and sailors.

6. Empirical Handicap Sub-Committee Terms of Reference

Submission 007-09 was received from the Norwegian Sailing Federation proposing the incorporation of rating systems into the Sub-Committee Terms of Reference.

The chairman noted the importance of bringing empirical handicap and rating systems together on the same table based in the fact that the distinction between rating systems and empirical handicap systems was arbitrary and that having both parties under the same roof is something sailors would consider useful.

Sebastian Edmonds agreed that bringing both parts together was a positive aim but as rating system representatives are always present during these meetings it was not necessary to change the Terms of Reference. He also noted to the Committee that the new proposed Terms of Reference are in conflict with the Offshore Committee Terms of Reference.

Bruno Finzi (observer) recommended a friendly amendment to the new proposed Terms of Reference by deleting (b) and suggested the Empirical Handicap Sub-Committee to come back with a revised submission for exchange of information between IRC and ORC rating systems.

The new suggested name of the Committee was also under discussion but the general consensus was that it should change according to the submission.

James Dadd (observer) noted to the Committee that approval of this submission would imply a change in the Committee Members which can not be done until 2012 and therefore the submission should be rejected.
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David Irish recommended the submission to be rejected based on the fact that although the principle is good the time is not.

In an e-mail correspondence on this subject before the meeting Paul Ansfield and Sebastian Edmonds were against the submission while it was supported by Gabriel Schröder, Nils Nordenstrøm and partly by Daniel Pillons.

Recommendation to the Oceanic and Offshore Committee:

**Approve.** Subject to the following amendment: Delete section (b)

Two votes in favour, one against.

7. Strategic Plan and Future Work

The presence of Empirical Handicap related issues in the ISAF website was discussed and it was agreed that further development will be done.

8. Presentation of Special Topics

No Special Topics were presented.

9. Listed Empirical Handicap Systems

The chairman noted that no further applications for listing have been received.

10. Any Other Business

There being no further business the meeting was closed.