Our first tasks of the year were the publication of Case Book and Call Book supplements. This was achieved in a timely manner. After the publication of new Cases and Calls early in the year, Racing Rules Committee has focussed its attention to the Racing Rules of Sailing for 2021-24. Many submissions have been developed by our own working parties and we have worked with other committees to help develop others. As a result, at our meeting this year we have 124 submissions with over 200 proposals for decision by RRC. We will also be working closely with Equipment Committee on a number of submissions proposing changes to the ERS. Most notable of these submissions as we prepare the final changes to the 2021-24 Racing Rules are:

- Ensuring that Organising Authorities and Officials are governed by the appropriate World Sailing Regulations.
- Updating the many appendices to reflect the wide diversity of our sport.
- Considering what should be printed in the Racing Rules of Sailing and consequently fixed for the 4-year cycle and what should be more flexible by publication in separate Appendices that may be updated more regularly.
- Updating a number of rules as a consequence of deciding the use the hull only, and not the crew and equipment, for starting and finishing.
- Moving all ways a boat may be exonerated from 3 rules in different sections of the book, to one rule.
- Permitting the use of local language for the few hails that are required by the rules, although English will always be acceptable.
- Bringing a number of common sailing instructions into the rules.
- Bringing a number of Q&A and Rapid Response Calls into clarifying the RRS or creating permanent Calls.

To give Council a feeling for the breadth of our work, here is a list of our working parties that have been most active during 2019.

Racing Rules Committee WP, Case Book WP, Team Racing WP, Windsurfing and Kiteboarding WP, Appendix J K L S LE WP, RRS 862. Panel, Appendix SY (Super Yachts) WP, High Speed Rules WP, Appendix CBS (Blind Match Racing) WP, Radio Sailing Rules WP, Fleet Umpiring WP, Virtual RRS WP, Definition Finish and RRS 28 WP, Part S WP, Waypoint Appendix WP, Q&A Panel, RRS Judicial Matters WP, RRS/ERS WP. We have also contributed to Appendix TS WP.

This list is important in the context of the Governance Proposals. RRC reviewed the proposals and had three significant comments:

- RRC process around 400 submissions aimed at improving the rules and associated documents in each 4-year cycle. Whatever system for managing proposals in the future is adopted, RRC needs to be able to adapt the system to be able to properly manage this number of ideas.
- To be able to manage the issues that arise from the rules, RRC needs to be able to appoint small groups of specialists to make recommendations. We currently call these groups ‘working parties’ and we have 23 of them. Some have a long life (The Case Book Working Party), while others have a short life (Definition Finish and RRS 28). RRC needs total flexibility to appoint appropriate groups to address these issues.
- Three years ago we changed the decision making process with regard to the Racing Rules, bringing the decision making to the technically competent committee. We note that Equipment Committee is following this lead with submissions to achieve the same
outcome from 2020 onwards. Any new structure should not reverse this progress. Our experience is that at least 6 rules experts are needed to avoid making poor decisions. While we are one sport, our sport ranges from kiteboards to ocean going boats, from foiling to heavy displacement and we need the expertise from all of these disciplines to make good decisions.

Since our feedback in mid-year we would add:

• The current system gives a clear pathway for any race official, support person or coach to make proposals to change the rules – this is an important aspect of rules development.
• Limiting the term of those deciding to adopt or reject new rules would be detrimental. We currently have a balance between long and short service members. Having members with a long history of the rules is invaluable and we would suggest that there should be no arbitrary limit for technical decision-making.

More detailed reports from our working parties will be tabled during our meeting at Conference and will be available as supporting papers.

All in all, a busy year for the Racing Rules Committee, well supported by World Sailing staff. We trust that this support will continue despite recent changes in World Sailing personnel.

John Doerr - Chairman Racing Rules Committee
October 2019