Offshore Special Regulations – 4.26.4

Storm Sails

A submission from the IRC Rating System

Proposal:

By E-Mail vote earlier in 2009, Special Regulations SC and Oceanic and Offshore Committee agreed that the November 2008 decision to reduce Storm Sail sizes should be reviewed by a working party, who would look at the whole issue of storm and heavy weather sails and to report with recommendation which potentially should include length and weight of a boat. It is proposed that the current, larger maximum sizes in 2008-2009 OSR be retained until such time as the working party have had sufficient time to make their report and give any recommendations.

Current Position:

Sails made after 1 January 2010 will be required to meet the smaller sizes and sails made before 1 January 2010 will be permitted to meet the existing larger maximum sizes in 2008-2009 OSR.

Reason:

1. The reason for the formation of the working party is to review the maximum sizes and the whole issue of storm and heavy weather sails following considerable concerns that the revised smaller sizes recommended in November 2008 may be too small, unsuitable and unsafe for some boat types.

2. It is acknowledged in the brief for the working party that the length and weight of a boat should probably also be included when determining the size of storm sails. The revised smaller sizes do not include these parameters, and as such it demonstrated that the committee is concerned about how appropriate such smaller sizes may be.

3. As the conclusions of the working party are unknown, the current position may result in inappropriately sizes storm sails being built (causing owners additional expenditure), which would then need to be replaced for safety reasons once the working party has drawn their conclusions and given their report and recommendations.

4. The working party should also be tasked with assessing the grandfathering issues of changing the storm sail size requirements, and as such, making any changes prior to review of the report would not be fully considered.