



## WS/IMHA Position Paper

# Medical Support for Offshore Yacht Races Telemedical Advice (TMAS)

London, UK, 1-2 December 2018

The safety and health of sailors offshore is of major concern. Medical teams involved in planning and managing offshore yacht racing will benefit from an internationally recognised reference document which addresses all aspects of medical support for such events. This WS/IMHA Workgroup Position Paper sets out the requirements for telemedical support services (TMAS) for offshore yacht racing events considering the current state of technical applications in use on board. These requirements should be regarded as a minimum standard, and not a substitute for national regulations or race organizer's rules, if these are more comprehensive.

### **General requirements for TMAS in off shore yacht racing**

The Workgroup recommends that Race Organisers provide an arrangement for contact with a TMAS. The telemedical support service should be fully cognisant of the typical conditions on board a racing yacht and the general geographical location of such yachts, with the potential inherent delay in evacuation of a casualty. The Race organisers should make arrangements that any contracted telemedical support service provider can interact and coordinate with Rescue Coordination Centres (such as MRCCs, JRCCs, etc.) or the SOLAS regional responsible TMAS service.

Such a telemedical support service should be capable of receiving voice communication, email, images, text and live video transmission from offshore (appropriate for the World Sailing category of race as described below).

- The Workgroup recommends for WS Category 0 and 1 races (Vendee Globe, Volvo Ocean Race, Sydney Hobart etc), where yachts have sufficient connectivity capability, transmission of real-time video for the purposes of telemedical support.
- The Workgroup recommends for World Sailing Category 2 races (Fastnet, etc) the requirement for satellite communication equipment (such Iridium, Inmarsat etc) for the purposes of telemedical support. This recommendation is for instances where races are beyond the range of VHF or mobile telephone coverage.

The Workgroup recommends that all yachts participating in a race have a single point of contact for advice on medical matters. This could be with the Communication Centre of the Race Organisers, or

ideally directly with the telemedical support service. Either entity would have the responsibility of relaying information to the Race Organisers, RCCs, relatives etc.

The telemedical support service used by yachts should reflect and be integrated with, both the content of the medical kit on board, the medical manual used by the crew, and the also the medical training received by the crew. Medical training needs to include the use of these communication systems to consult with TMAS.

All shortcomings in the management of medical incidents should be identified, collected, reported and reviewed to enable future tuning and improvement of the medical support in off shore yacht racing.

### **WS/IMHA Workgroup consensus on medical training an medical kit on board in the context of TMAS in off shore yacht racing**

WS/IMHA Workgroup on Medical Support for Offshore Yacht Races, previously reached consensus on common competences / learning outcomes in medical training for off shore racing and set out the requirements for medical kit inventory on yachts participating in the various categories of off shore yacht races. *WS/IMHA Position Paper on Medical Training* and *WS/IMHA Position Paper on Medical Kit Inventory* were bought approved by WS Medical Commission and the IMHA Board

*Medical training:* WS/IMHA Position Paper on Medical Training was evaluated in the context of use of telemedical advice on board. Each learning outcome/competence graded by Likert scale based on “Miller’s triangle” was rated on the extent to which it should have been achieved by training and/or the need for telemedical advice in the context of offshore yacht racing and graded as presented in **Appendix 1.**

The grading of the need to contact TMAS is for guidance only. For any given medical problem that occurs onboard, the requirement for calling TMAS depends on the knowledge, training and skills of the designated/medical provider on board, and ultimately it is their decision on whether they call TMAS or not.

*Medical kit on board:* The Group reached consensus on use of medical kit inventory in the context of TMAS, appropriate to the various categories of events of offshore yacht racing by marking medicines and equipment that should be used with TMAS only as presented in **Appendix 2.**

Regarding the use of medicines on board Workgroup reach consensus on items in medical kit on board for which use TMAS should be contacted before a procedure or administering a drug but also acknowledged the fact that in an emergency, if TMAS cannot be reached within reasonable time, the decision to use it will have to be taken on board.

### **Conclusion**

This Position paper on recommended standards for telemedical advice in off shore yacht racing is the guiding document in organizing the comprehensive system of medical help in off shore yacht races. It is also the guideline for the developers of the training courses and manuals for medical help on board yachts in offshore races that should enable them to develop consistent medical courses, textbooks and medical manuals for use on board.