



Para World Sailing Committee Minutes

The PWSC met virtually at 1300 UTC on 18th August 2026

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| 1. Opening of the Meeting | 7. WSIC 2026 |
| 2. World Sailing Updates | 8. Promotion and Communications
Working Group |
| 3. IPC Bid Update | 9. AOM |
| 4. Classification Sub Committee | 10. Thank you and Next meeting |
| 5. Draft Classification Rules | |
| 6. Para Class Recognition and
Regulations | |

Members Present:

Kay Rawbone (Chair)	Henriette Smith	Yuki Hagiwara
Alfred Pelinka	Jazz Turner	Emma Hallén
Betsy Alison	Sarah Ogilvie	Helen McKenzie

Invited Presenters:

Helen McKenzie	Adrian Stoggall	
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Staff Present:

Hannah Stodel	Leo af Rosenborg	Daniel Nash
Scott Dougal	Fiona Kidd	Jaime Navarro

Board Present:

Cory Sertl		
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Agenda Items

1. Opening of the Meeting

a. Housekeeping (HS):

- b. Hannah welcomed participation and asked everyone to keep the meeting and chat respectful, including where views differed. Questions not reached during the meeting could be sent to Hannah or to the general Para and classification email addresses. Attendees were asked not to record the meeting; World Sailing was recording it for processing, with minutes and notes to be published on the World Sailing website.

Chair's Opening Remarks (KR):

Kay welcomed Welcomed members, World Sailing staff, Board representatives and external attendees. She emphasised the value of open committee meetings in involving the wider community. Kay noted that the previous minutes were lengthy but found the new action-point section particularly useful for maintaining momentum and accountability.

Emma Welcomed the opportunity to return after missing the previous two meetings and looked forward to the discussion.

c. Apologies for Absence:

None received.

d. Minutes of July Meeting:

Confirmed as read and accepted.

e. Matters Arising:

No Matters were arising

2. World Sailing Updates

a. Office updates (HS):

Hannah reported an exceptionally busy month across classification, events, development and working groups.



Classification remained the largest workstream as World Sailing implemented the IPC 2025 Classification Code.

The first consultation on the draft Classification Rules had concluded. All feedback, including detailed IPC feedback, was being worked through. World Sailing was one of only eight sports with draft rules already in place for Code implementation.

The Committee would later be asked to endorse the current rules and process for submission to Council. This was not final adoption; live testing and a second consultation would continue before planned adoption in January 2027.

Initial live testing had taken place at the RS Games in Germany with Leo, Jürgen and Bernard. The next test would take place at the Eurasian Inclusive Cup in India, including the classification system and sailing-specific functional tests.

Hannah, Leo and Dan were travelling to India to deliver the IDP alongside classification research and testing. Hannah thanked the Yachting Association of India and the Royal Mysore team for their work. WSIC 2026 was six weeks away. Forty-two nations were registered, with standard entry closing on 31 August. Teams facing barriers were asked to contact the Office before late-entry fees became applicable at the host's discretion.

Planning had begun for Gdynia 2027, including classes, event structure, quotas and the forthcoming Notice of Race.

The Promotion and Communications WG was active under Yuki.

Emma's WSIC WG was about to begin a final entry and barrier-removal push.

b. **Board updates (CS):**

Cory confirmed that Cory, Sophia and Daniel were kept informed by Kay, Emma and Hannah and were updating the full Board. The most recent Board meeting contained no Para-specific decision, but the Board remained supportive. Cory expected the World Sailing President

at the WSIC opening ceremony and CEO David Graham at the closing ceremony, demonstrating senior support.

She recommended that members read the Events Committee paper on Olympic events for its relevance to future Para event discussions. Kay asked for the link to be placed in the chat. The supporting paper will also be circulated, and is available for download on the World Sailing website.

3. IPC Bid update (SD)

a. To update the PWSC on the status of the IPC bid

Hannah provided the update in Scott's absence. The IPC Board was understood to be meeting monthly and reviewing sports criterion by criterion, with classification and anti-doping among the upcoming areas. World Sailing remained fully focused on the application.

Draft Classification Rules had been submitted to the IPC for initial review and the extensive line-by-line feedback had been incorporated into Draft 2.

The Code Compliance Action Plan had been updated. Additional work remained, particularly research and the sport-class structure intended for Paralympic competition.

A meeting between Scott, Hannah and Jürgen Padberg, IPC Sports Programme Manager, had been positive. The message was to continue the current work and prepare further supporting materials.

The final communications push was essential. Classification, anti-doping, country participation, events and wider programme activity all needed to be visible. Committee members were asked to support through contacts, newsletters, social media and other communications.

Kay reinforced that relevant opportunities and material should be directed to Daniel Nash for communications support re the newsletter.



4. Classification Sub Committee (HM)

- a. Helen reported rapid progress. Testing of the provisional rules had started at the RS Venture Connect Games and refinements were continuing. Feedback from athletes and anyone involved in the assessment process was expressly invited through Helen, Hannah or Leo because it would inform evaluation design.

Further testing was scheduled for the Eurasian Cup, followed by Barcelona and comprehensive testing at WSIC, including intellectual-impairment research.

The working assumption was to reduce seven physical-impairment sport classes to four. The proposed classes would relate to sailing function and impairment impact rather than a particular boat, but the number and boundaries remained under development.

The Underlying Health Condition (UHC) panel was active and receiving increasing numbers of cases. Earlier medical review should provide athletes with more certainty before travelling and should reduce disappointment at events.

Classification wording in Notices of Race and competitor communications was being reviewed. Helen invited feedback where information was ambiguous or assumed too much prior knowledge.

Helen thanked the International Classifiers and volunteers who had supported the testing programme.

The Committee heard that testing had identified several minor improvements which would now be incorporated into the rules and associated guidance before further consultation.

Helen also highlighted the importance of ensuring the system remained sufficiently flexible to appropriately consider athletes with rare health conditions and uncommon presentations, noting that this would continue to be monitored carefully throughout implementation.

Members welcomed the progress being made and recognised the considerable work undertaken by the Classification Sub Committee.



c. Globocol Database

Leo thanked MNAs for responding to the classification requirements in Notices of Race and submitting Medical Diagnostic Forms and supporting evidence early. Early information allowed the UHC panel and classifiers to plan with greater confidence and gave athletes more certainty.

The Classification Hub and new sailing-specific functional tests would be tested in India. Cyclops Marine was supplying equipment to support sport-class allocation research.

The live test would cover athlete sign-up and scheduling, the UHC process and the Stage 3 classifier tool used during evaluation sessions.

WSIC would serve as the functional prototype. Feedback would then be incorporated and the database finalised after the event.

After WSIC, all MNAs would be formally notified of Code changes and invited to establish Hub accounts. The Office intended to publish which MNAs had accounts and the associated contact email addresses.

Leo anticipated continuing work for both the Office and Committee to help MNAs establish secure and appropriately staffed classification contacts.

5. Draft Classification Rules

Hannah explained that the current request concerned endorsement of the direction and process, not approval of a final rule set. Consultation 1 had closed after the RS Games testing. India would provide the next live test with Jürgen and Barbara, supported by Leo, using Cyclops Marine sensors. Council consideration was scheduled for 9 September, followed by further WSIC piloting and Consultation 2 through 9 December. Final adoption remained planned for January 2027.

Helen managed expectations around the sailing-specific functional tests. The work was at an early stage; Jürgen would train Barbara, who had not been involved in drafting the rules. India would begin rather than complete the test-development process.



Underlying Health Condition process

Hannah described the UHC review as the most significant process change. Athletes submit an MDF through their MNA contact to the Classification Hub. A panel of three UHC assessors reviews whether the athlete has a health condition capable of leading to an eligible impairment. Athletes without a qualifying UHC remain welcome in Inclusive competition. The gateway is intended to protect the integrity of Para classification and improve the athlete experience before travel.

Helen requested that the guidance specify that the medical professional must date and sign the MDF and provide a registration number. She also observed that MNA contacts with classification or relevant medical knowledge tended to submit more accurate information and reduced repeated correspondence.

Kay asked that the UHC process material and diagrams be shared.

Hannah confirmed that they could be distributed and included with the notes.

Questions and discussion on medical evidence

Heni raised access and cost concerns. Some athletes could not readily obtain appointments, specialist evidence or imaging. She questioned the value of requiring recently dated evidence for lifelong and unchanged diagnoses and asked for a clear athlete guide explaining the process and documentation requirements, including transition from the old system.

Helen confirmed that Leo had prepared athlete guidance and that further feedback could be incorporated. New athletes required current confirmation of diagnosis, which could often be updated by a GP for straightforward conditions. Athletes should submit the evidence already available; World Sailing was not asking everyone to obtain expensive new imaging. Additional evidence would be requested only where the UHC could not be verified.

Leo explained that all Para athletes would move to Review status when the new rules came into force, as required by the IPC Code, but the form of



review would vary. Existing athlete data and evaluation records would migrate. Recent classifications and recent MDFs should require less work than cases classified many years earlier. The transition process still needed to be defined athlete by athlete.

Helen stressed that repeat or unnecessary evidence would not be sought. The same three-person UHC panel was being retained during testing to ensure consistent decisions. Where an athlete genuinely could not obtain the correct evidence before an event, the established approach of classification with Review status and later follow-up could remain available where assessors were sufficiently confident.

Betsy asked whether a scatter visual-field test should be removed for confirmed B1 athletes with no vision, given the cost and lack of purpose. She also raised imaging supplied on CDs that athletes and federations could not open or upload.

Helen confirmed that a scatter test was not necessary where adequate evidence established complete blindness or equivalent B1 acuity. For scans, a report from the hospital or medical specialist explaining the imaging result would usually be sufficient; the underlying images were not essential where the report verified the condition.

Betsy confirmed her understanding that previously confirmed B1 athletes would not need new scatter-test information. Helen agreed in principle, subject to checking that the previous B1 classification had been properly established.

Leo encouraged MNAs to contact the classification team before submission. Early discussion was preferable to receiving unnecessary or inadequate documentation at the end of the process. World Sailing's role was to guide and support MNAs and athletes.

Proposed sport classes and functional testing

Helen outlined the working model of four physical-impairment sport classes, based on functions such as sheeting, transferring and changing hands on the helm rather than particular equipment. The four-class model was not



final and five classes had also been discussed. VI classes would remain substantially unchanged, with refinement to measurement. For intellectual impairment, onset by age 21 would align with Virtus requirements, with further wording needed on adaptive behaviour.

Heni expressed concern that the draft graphic appeared not to accommodate neurological impairments and asked whether it was only a starting basis.

Helen confirmed that neurological and congenital conditions were included. A diagnosis would not automatically map to a class; functional impact could place athletes with the same condition in different classes. She agreed that a clearer graphic was needed to explain this.

Alfred asked that boat-specific requirements be considered, noting that the functional impact of an impairment could differ between a Hansa and a 2.4mR.

Helen explained that the classification system was deliberately being made equipment-neutral so that it would remain usable as equipment changed. Equipment would be selected separately rather than allowing the classification system to be defined by current boats.

Hannah invited all members and stakeholders to review the published draft and continue providing questions and evidence. The system could only be adapted in response to feedback received.

5c. Committee recommendation to Council

Kay summarised the development since publication in June, recognised the work of the Classification Sub-Committee, international classifiers and Office, and reiterated that testing and consultation would continue through India, WSIC and Consultation 2. She asked for final observations; none were raised.

Kay asked the Committee to support submission of the current draft to Council on 9 September for provisional ratification, accompanied by the timeline and ongoing research, testing and consultation programme.



Hannah asked any member not supporting the recommendation to raise a hand. No objections were recorded.

DECISION / AGREEMENT The Committee unanimously endorsed presenting the current draft 2027 Classification Rules to World Sailing Council on 9 September 2026 for provisional ratification. The endorsement covered the direction and process, not final adoption. Final rules remain subject to testing, research, Consultation 2 and planned adoption in January 2027.

6. Para Class Recognition and Regulations - JN

Jaime explained that World Sailing Regulations currently make no distinction between a World Sailing Class and a Para class. All classes are therefore subject to the same recognition requirements and rights, including worldwide distribution, class-rule and governance standards. Some classes that did not meet every general requirement nevertheless continued to make an important contribution to Para sailing.

He suggested that Para classes might require different criteria or a separate status, reflecting their purpose in delivering Para World Championships rather than open World Championships. A regulatory proposal had to come from an affected class or a committee; the Office could not initiate the regulation change. The PWSC was invited to lead and define suitable requirements.

Alfred noted that the website listed Para and Inclusive equipment that did not hold World Sailing Class status. He reported a significant three-year decline in worldwide participation and recognition among recognised classes used for Para and Inclusive sailing. He argued for investigation of the reasons and for a framework open to a broad range of equipment.

Betsy recalled that recognised Para classes had originally acknowledged that inclusive and Para sailing used varied equipment around the world.

Jaime clarified that World Sailing Class status currently had a single set of requirements. However, equipment did not need World Sailing Class status



to be eligible for Olympic selection, and Para equipment selection could be designed flexibly by the PWSC. Existing class status could be a positive indicator of distribution, mature rules and governance, but it was not a prerequisite.

Hannah confirmed that this discussion concerned international class recognition, not Paralympic equipment selection. The Committee needed to consider whether separate recognition requirements should be recommended for Para and Inclusive equipment.

Alfred observed that a class under review normally had a further year to meet criteria, but that visible review of prospective Para equipment during the Paralympic application could be unhelpful. He again called for a framework suited to the different ways Para and Inclusive sailing operated worldwide.

Jaime confirmed that the Board had postponed the relevant class reviews and that no action would take place in 2026 while World Sailing pursued the Paralympic application. The longer-term goal was clear regulation rather than repeated exceptions.

DECISION / AGREEMENT The Committee did not agree final criteria. It agreed that further work and consultation were required on a Para-specific recognition framework. This work is separate from Paralympic equipment selection, and no class review or status change will take place during 2026.

7. WSIC 2026 – HS/ AS

Adrian reported that preparations were progressing quickly. Forty-two countries were registered, a highly encouraging figure, but the priority was converting registrations into athletes on site and avoiding late withdrawals. Standard entry would close on 31 August, and further entries were strongly encouraged.

RS21 equipment had been confirmed for the visually impaired event.

Charter fees had been published and the Notice of Race had received several updates.



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Sailing Instructions were expected after the entry period was finalised. Hannah and Adrian would undertake a site visit on 8 September to confirm operational details with the Organising Authority. The team would use its time together in India to address outstanding WSIC questions, while noting the time-zone difference and event workload. Hannah responded to Justen's chat question by confirming that the host had seven personnel hoists available. Sailors using them should bring their own slings. Kay recalled the effective use of hoists, slings and Navy support at the 2023 event. Hannah confirmed that Navy support would return.

8. Promotion and Communications Working Group – YH

Yuki reported that the Working Group had held two meetings with active participation from different regions. Ideas had been divided between short-term deliverables and longer-term work.

Newsletter: create a shared list where members can add regional stories, contacts and possible contributors. World Sailing would support editing and publication.

Survey: develop a short Para and Inclusive sailing survey covering how people receive information, whether opportunities exist at their clubs and what prevents participation. The WG would test the survey internally before wider release.

The next online WG meeting was planned for September, with an in-person meeting hoped for during WSIC in Portugal.

Kay thanked Yuki and the Working Group and anticipated several working-group meetings during WSIC.

9. AOB

IPC language guidelines

Kay asked members to read and absorb the terminology guidance and to promote it through their MNAs. She highlighted capitalising Para when referring to a person or programme and avoiding the term 'able-bodied' in



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favour of 'person without a disability' or context-appropriate language. Kay proposed developing a broader glossary, including consistent terminology for intellectual impairment across countries.

Kay thanked Lucy for the VI presentations and asked that appreciation be passed on. She noted related work with optometry and the Paralympic community in Hong Kong.

Hannah confirmed that questions in the meeting chat would be considered for the notes and reminded attendees of the Para and classification email addresses. Tracy's comment on avoiding 'wheelchair-bound' was specifically acknowledged as an example of the terminology work required.

10. Thank you and next meeting

Hannah: Thanked members, working groups and stakeholders for their contribution to the final Paralympic application push. She confirmed that the next meeting would take place on 24 September at 1900 UTC, using the later European slot to improve access for Asia and Australia. Details would be published through the usual channels and on the World Sailing governance calendar.

Kay: Closed the meeting, wished the India delegation safe travels and looked forward to the post-event report.



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ACTION ITEMS – WS Executive

Ref	Action	Lead
O1	Publish the August meeting notes and process substantive questions raised in the meeting chat.	Hannah / Office
O2	Share the Events Committee Olympic-events paper/link referenced by Cory.	Office
O3	Complete classification testing at the Eurasian Inclusive Cup, Barcelona and WSIC; capture athlete, classifier and process feedback and report outcomes.	Helen / Leo / Classification SC
O4	Update and share the UHC process diagram and athlete/MNA guidance, including medical signature/date/registration number, acceptable evidence, transition of existing athletes and support where access is difficult.	Classification SC / Office
O5	Clarify guidance for confirmed B1 athletes, including when scatter testing is unnecessary, and confirm that specialist imaging reports may substitute for inaccessible image files where adequate.	Classification SC
O6	Define the transition/review approach for existing athletes when the 2027 rules commence, avoiding duplicate or unnecessary evidence.	Classification SC / Leo
O7	Continue individual pre-submission support to MNAs and athletes through the classification contact channels.	Hannah / Leo / Helen
O8	Complete India testing of the Hub's UHC workflow and Stage 3 classifier tool; use WSIC as the functional prototype and finalise the database after the event.	Leo / Globocol team



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O09	Notify all MNAs of the new Code responsibilities and invite Hub account creation; publish the list of MNA accounts and associated contact addresses.	Office / Leo
O10	Refine the proposed physical-impairment sport-class model and functional tests, including clearer explanation of neurological impairments and final II/adaptive-behaviour wording.	Classification SC
O11	Refine the proposed physical-impairment sport-class model and functional tests, including clearer explanation of neurological impairments and final II/adaptive-behaviour wording.	Classification SC
O12	Submit the endorsed draft Classification Rules, timeline and evidence programme to Council for provisional ratification.	Kay / Hannah / Office
O13	Run Consultation 2, incorporate evidence from live pilots, and prepare the final Classification Rules for adoption.	Classification SC / Office
O14	Develop options and supporting data for a Para-specific class-recognition framework, separate from Paralympic equipment selection and considering affordability, distribution, governance and global participation.	Hannah / Jaime / PWSC leads
O15	Maintain the postponement of relevant class reviews during 2026 and avoid status changes while the Paralympic application is under consideration.	Technical / Board
O16	Continue WSIC conversion and delivery work: support entries before 31 August, publish SIs, conduct the 8 September site visit, confirm operational arrangements and communicate hoist/slings information.	Hannah / Adrian / OA
O17	Support editing and publication of regional stories gathered by the Promotion and Communications WG and support wider rollout of the tested survey.	Communications / Yuki's WG
O18	Circulate and reinforce IPC terminology guidance; consider developing a broader PWSC glossary, including intellectual-impairment terminology.	Office / PWSC leadership
O19	Publish details of the next PWSC meeting through the usual channels and governance calendar.	Office



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ACTION ITEMS – PWSC

Ref	Action	Lead
P1	Amplify the IPC bid through national contacts, newsletters, social media and relevant networks, showcasing participation, classification, anti-doping and programme delivery.	All PWSC members
P2	Continue reviewing the draft Classification Rules and submit technical or athlete-experience feedback during Consultation 2.	PWSC / wider community
P3	Ensure each MNA nominates an appropriate Classification Hub contact, preferably someone with classification or relevant technical knowledge, and establishes an account when invited.	MNA representatives
P4	Encourage early submission of MDFs and supporting evidence and contact the classification team before submission where requirements are unclear.	MNA representatives
P5	Consider and provide proposals for Para-specific class recognition, including affordability, global access, participation trends and an open equipment pathway.	PWSC / relevant classes
P6	Promote WSIC entries before standard entry closes and support registered teams to convert registrations into attendance.	PWSC / MNAs
P7	Add regional stories, contacts and contributors to the Promotion WG's shared content list; test and refine the participation survey.	Promotion and Communications WG
P8	Apply the IPC language guidance consistently and share it through MNAs and local sailing communities,	All members



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	including avoiding 'able-bodied' and 'wheelchair-bound'.	
P9	Attend the next PWSC meeting and bring post-India, classification, WSIC and working-group updates.	PWSC members / leads
P1	Amplify the IPC bid through national contacts, newsletters, social media and relevant networks, showcasing participation, classification, anti-doping and programme delivery.	All PWSC members