# Report from the Chair of the Safety Commission

## Safety Commission Members

Eurico Teodoro (ET) – Chair
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## 1. Safety Commission Update

Approved The role of the Commission remains to support a safety culture, raise safety awareness and analyse the incidents reported. During 2026 it focused on practical tools: the risk assessment template initiated in 2025 has been developed into an **Event Safety Management System (ESMS)**, a single framework that may be applicable from club events to the Olympic and Paralympic Games, proportionate to the level of each event.

Following the valuable feedback received from Commission members, the core principles of the system are being drafted as a **Sailing Safety Management Code**, based on the structure of the IMO International Safety Management (ISM) Code, for possible integration into the World Sailing Safety Policy. These documents remain under consultation within the Commission and do not yet represent World Sailing policy. Once approved, the ESMS may be adopted or adapted by MNAs, Class Associations and clubs, in accordance with their own rules and national requirements.

## 2. Incident reporting trends

The number of incidents reported to World Sailing has decreased over recent years. While this trend is welcome, the Commission considers that it should be interpreted with caution, as it may reflect changes in reporting rather than a reduction in risk.

A significant proportion of incidents still comes to the attention of World Sailing through public and media sources, or with some delay. Awareness of the reporting requirements, and of their purpose, is not yet consistent across the sport, and strengthening it is a shared priority.

Recurring themes include head injuries, collisions involving foiling craft, rudder and keel failures offshore, support boats and youth training, and the recovery of persons from the water. Many occur outside World Sailing events and classes, but they influence the perception of the sport as a whole.

## 3. Positive developments

The Commission notes with satisfaction the safety progress made by other bodies during this period. The Racing Rules of Sailing 2025–2028 now allow class rules to require personal flotation devices, prohibit switching off required AIS or tracking devices, and require harnesses that can be released easily. The Offshore Special Regulations 2026–2027 strengthened requirements on structural integrity and keel and rudder inspection, stability, communications, search and rescue visibility, EPIRBs and lifejackets.

The Marine Megafauna in Sailing guidelines, published with the Marine Mammal Advisory Group, give events and sailors practical tools to reduce the risk of collisions. In foiling classes, the use of helmets

and impact vests continues to be reinforced, and work is under way, with the Equipment Rules Sub-Committee, on high-visibility helmets. These developments show that safety awareness is growing across the sport.

## 4. A proportionate approach for all levels of the sport

Following an initial presentation of the ESMS, the Board indicated that the Commission may continue its work on the development of a safety management system structured in levels. The system will start at club level, with the essential safety elements that any club event should have in place, and each higher level of event will add a further layer of requirements to the previous one, in proportion to its scale and risk.

In this way the same safety principles apply across the sport, simple and achievable for clubs and progressively more complete for national, continental, world and Olympic events.

Committees and Commissions will be kept informed as the work progresses, and their input will be welcomed in their own areas of responsibility.

## 5. Safety awareness at all levels

A safety procedure alone does not create a safety culture; leadership and commitment are essential. Continued attention should be given to basic measures, such as personal flotation devices, kill cords, adequate rescue resources and clear evacuation arrangements, and to the value of reporting incidents and near misses.

Awareness should reach all those involved in the sport, including club volunteers, race officials, coaches, Organising Authorities and sailors, with particular attention to young sailors. Incident reporting is intended to support learning and prevention, not to attribute blame, and transparent reporting should be recognised as good practice.

The Commission looks forward to continuing its cooperation with MNAs and with all Committees and Commissions, whose expertise is essential to the progress of safety in the sport. Safety is a shared responsibility.

Eurico Teodoro
Safety Commission Chair