BEFORE A PANEL APPOINTED UNDER REGULATION 18 and Policy L4

IN THE MATTER OF AN INVESTIGATION BASED ON A REPORT UNDER REGULATION 18 CONCERNING ANNIKA EKMAN'S BEHAVIOUR AND ATTITUDE, TEAM RACE SPECIFIC KNOWLEDGE AND COMPETENCE AS A RACE OFFICER AT THE WORLD SAILING TEAM RACING WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP 2026

INTERNATIONAL RACE OFFICIAL(S) INVOLVED

Annika Ekman (AE), International Race Officer, Sweden

INITIAL ALLEGATION

1. The allegations received state inadequate performance or competence related to rude and disrespectful behaviour to other race officials, improper discipline specific knowledge and race officer competence.

ACCEPTING THE ALLEGATION OR REQUIRING AN INVESTIGATION

2. AE acknowledged receipt of the allegation and the report submitted by Greg Eaton IU and required an investigation.

3. Since AE required an investigation, formal action by World Sailing was taken and a Panel of three members was appointed as required by Policy L4 2.3.

MEMBERS OF THE PANEL

Lynne Beal, Canada, Chairperson
Chris Lindsay, Ireland, Panel Member
Elena Papazoglou, Cyprus, Panel Member

INVESTIGATION CONDUCTED BY THE PANEL

4. After reviewing the documents initially provided, the Panel decided that further information was needed and contacted Megan Griggs at World Sailing, GE (GE) the Chief Umpire, Steven Wolff Technical Delegate (TD) and Kirstie Eaton (KE) race committee member for the Finish Vessel for the World Sailing Team Race World Championship (the event), to answer questions and give statements on the case. Magnus Myrenberg (MM) Event Chair provided comments at AE's request. The World Sailing Race Management Manual (RMM) sections C Qualities of an International Race Officer and U Race Management of Team Racing provide examples of the standards for behaviour of race officers and competence in running team racing events.

5. The Panel considered the answers and documents received. The information provided and considered by the Panel included:
   - Regulation 18 Report Annika Ekman_WSTRW 2026 CRO Performance.pdf
   - World Sailing – Regulation 18 Letter – Annika Ekman.pdf
   - World Saling – Regulation 18 Allegation Letter Addition – Annika Ekman.pdf
   - Response from Megan Griggs.pdf
   - Response from A Ekman 2026 10 06.pdf
   - WSTRW CRO Follow-Up Greg Eaton.pdf
   - Technical Delegate questions and responses rev4.pdf
   - ITD Report – 2026 Team Race Worlds Sept 8 final.pdf

- ITD Narrative SAW final.pdf
- A Ekman reply 14th of October 2026.pef
- 20261013 A_Ekman_Response_to_World_Sailing RO Investigation panel.pdf
- AE 1 MM 260808 WC2026 Event Org.xlsx
- AE2a Stockholm City approval Swedish Beslut om bifall(2676-2026-12).pdf
- AE2b MCourse and approved restricted area.pptx
- AE3 SI approval mail .pptx
- AE4 260809_SI_SWE_2026_TR_WC_Final_v3.pdf
- AE6a How long was the startline.pptx
- AE6b TRWC by the numbers.pptx
- AE7 Supporting Evidence and direct witnesses.slsx
- Kirstie Eaton_AE allergations response.pdf
- WC 2026 Event Chair comments on allegations against Annika Ekman.pdf
- 261027 A Ekman Respons # 2 20261027 to World Sailing Ro Investigation Panel.pdf

6. The Panel, after careful examination of all information provided, and based on the facts found, decided that under Regulation 18.3:

7. AE has demonstrated attitude and behaviour clearly below the level expected of an international race official in her interaction with other race officials at this event.

8. AE has demonstrated discipline specific knowledge for team racing clearly below the level expected of an international race official at a World Championship.

9. AE has demonstrated race officer competence clearly below the level expected of an international race official in her interaction with other race officials at this event.

   The Panel therefore recommends that AE must be subject to supervision by a World Sailing Race Official, as outlined in the Decision below.

10. The Panel considered the answers, documents, information, and statements received. The Panel proceeded to find facts, and these are as follows:

Finding of Facts

Attitude and Behaviour

11. When approached by the Chief Umpire (GE) on-the-water who provided his opinion on the course configuration, AE replied saying “I don’t need your opinion”. AE responded to a radio call from GE with, “what do you want now” delivered in a manner considered to be rude. AE acknowledged that under operational pressure, her communication may on occasion have been too direct. She regrets If her response on the radio was reasonably perceived as rude.

12. During a management meeting, when KE was speaking, AE held her palm up to KE’s face and told her to “shut up”. KE found this disrespectful and inappropriate. AE recalled the exchange, although she could not be certain of her exact wording. She acknowledged that if she used the words ‘shut up’, they were inappropriate and she apologized. She accepted responsibility for her communication in this individual incident.

13. On either Day 3 or Day 4, as KE was briefing volunteers on their roles, it is alleged that AE intervened by putting her hand on KE’s back and pushed her towards a nearby table. AE did not recall touching KE on either day. She acknowledged that she may have interrupted or redirected

a discussion that was interfering with Race Management activities. She is sorry that KE experienced her interaction as unwelcome or inappropriate.

14. The TD reported that he witnessed AE's brusque behaviour toward other officials, consistent with the pattern described. AE acknowledged that some of her communication could have been less direct.

15. In many instances, feedback through the Chief Umpire on boundary issues, course configuration or length, and breakdown was either not responded to by AE or was only acted on after multiple requests or the TD's insistence. AE confirmed that GE provided useful information on several occasions in assessing the available distance between the course, the boundary and the space required by sailors and umpires. She appreciated that assistance.

16. Likewise, AE received advice from KE, the Finish boat RC member. The TD commented that "AE did not always accept KE's advice. Everything from document version control to race timing during discussion at daily meetings became a tussle of wills, with AE frequently choosing to discount the offered counsel" so that the TD ultimately inserted himself to deliver messages between the two. The TD personally reverted to WhatsApp and phone call communication to reduce the number of parties involved. In her first response to the Panel, AE questioned the respective authority of Race Management and KE who was responsible for kSail/results administration. In her second response, AE recognized that KE's contribution to the finish function, results, kSail administration and event documentation was valuable and involved considerable work.

Discipline Specific Knowledge and Expertise

17. The appointment of PRO to this event is made by World Sailing on the recommendation of the host organisers. The host organizers of the World Sailing Team Race World Championship 2026 (the event) proposed AE to be the CRO, identifying her prior experience at team racing events. The Panel did not have access to this recommendation or list of AE's prior experience with team racing events.

18. World Sailing appointed AE as CRO for the event as she had the World Sailing event experience in both race management as a TD, with the information given by the host organisers of prior experience and her previous experience within the World Sailing community. World Sailing did not have a list of IROs with the required expertise in Team Racing.

19. AE's lack of extensive team race experience created challenges during event planning, with the development race documents, and difficulty changing course dimensions for different wind strengths, limitations in race productivity, and significant on the water delays. AE acknowledged this and stated that she had less specific Team Racing experience than some other members of the Event project team. She accepted the appointment, nonetheless.

20. On August 14 AE made her own decisions about terminating racing for the day without reference to the TD as had been agreed. After racing, the TD and AE met and reaffirmed that this was to be a "joint decision", and AE apologized. On August 15, AE again terminated racing without consulting the TD. AE accepted her procedural error, confirming that on one occasion she terminated racing because of insufficient wind without first obtaining the TD's agreement.

21. The TD addressed AE's use of match racing terminology with her in the 23 June planning meeting. AE persisted in using match racing terminology throughout planning the event. They agreed to display "race numbers" rather than "flights" on the race committee vessel and in posted race schedules as this is team racing practice. AE accepted that Team Racing has discipline-specific

terminology and referred to occasional use of terminology familiar from another sailing discipline.

22. AE asked the Chief Umpire GE, "when was the Semi-Finals of the Silver Fleet?" although it had never been planned and organising a silver semi-final would be a highly unusual practice at a team racing event. Her question therefore suggested a lack of familiarity with the team racing discipline. AE acknowledged that she may have asked this question.

23. Maximizing the number of races to achieve the full 66-race round robin was a focus of extensive pre-event discussions, and daily throughout. The pace of racing was a persistent concern to the TD. Extended delays between starts independent of any apparent need for racecourse realignment were typical. In her response to the Panel, AE understood that completing a full 66-race round robin every day was not regarded by the Event Manager and TD as a realistic normal expectation under the Stockholm conditions.

24. 55 races were realized on some days. The TD stated that it did seem possible that more races could have been accomplished with more efficiency and urgency. AE indicated on multiple occasions that exceeding 55 races in a day would be "hard on the volunteers" on the race management team. AE denied providing a lunch break but noted that on-water volunteers and course personnel nevertheless required an opportunity to eat during a long operating day.

25. For several races, AE placed mark 3 too close to the race committee vessel. The TD confirmed that the placement of mark 3 was repeatedly drawn to AE's attention by the umpire team. AE acknowledged that GE provided useful assistance on several occasions.

26. When the bosun made a radio call to the RC to request that the start be held while he made a quick fix to Boat 10, the RC continued the starting sequence even though boat 10 did not engage in pre-start manoeuvres. Upon request of GE, the RC postponed the race. AE confirmed this incident and accepted that the start should have been postponed as soon as it was clear that Boat 10 would not be ready to race on equal terms.

Race Officer Competence

27. On finals day, AE moved the RC vessel and pin end buoy in response to a wind shift, placing the pin buoy in the 'Exclusion Zone", thus resulting in delays. Space constraints and anchoring limitations contributed to delays. However, as the boundaries were clear (and somewhat flexible), setting marks in the "exclusion zone" could have been avoided with better familiarity with course geometry and with the relationship between wind speed and sailing distances. On finals day the TD had to insist that the course be lengthened as wind speeds increased and race time grew short. More than once, issues related to course configuration caused delays in racing and lost time. AE acknowledged her awareness of the time limits and the exclusion zone, that the process consumed valuable time and that a more efficient final solution would have been preferable. She noted that racing on August 15 was materially slower than on the other days and that earlier course adjustment may have been beneficial on some occasions.

28. AE directed the Mark-Bot operator to link all marks into a single group. This meant that course changes could not be made while boats were still racing, leading to regular and significant delays. AE acknowledged that more individual mark control could have provided greater flexibility in some conditions.

29. AE did not account for the effect of changes in wind strength as related to leg length. The TD had to insist that the course be lengthened on the windier final day. AE acknowledged that there may

have been individual occasions on which a course adjustment could have been made earlier.

30. Wind shifts often impacted the position of RC start vessel, resulting in delays and a start line that was too short. AE provided data showing the median length to be 56.1 m, with a range of 35.1 m to 79.7 m for J/80 boats of 8 metre length. RMM U.9.3 advises the line should be relatively short about 6 boat lengths long (48 metres for J/80s). AE acknowledged that on at least one occasion the starting line became shorter than intended, and that the shorter line was not ideal.

31. AE confirmed making a deliberate decision to not initiate the 'delta process' (to allow launching) on Saturday when the wind was very light and developing over 60 minutes, despite the 30-minute interval between removal of delta flag and first warning signal. AE chose to wait until she considered that there was a sufficient prospect of stable raceable wind. She recognizes that this resulted in additional waiting time when the wind did establish.

32. On multiple occasions when reconfiguring the course, the RC placed marks close to or outside the boundary. This created a situation where, as the wind increased, umpires were giving penalties to boats that had not been expected, or a delay was needed to reset the course. Once advised, AE did request GE's assistance in directing the security team where to place the limit marks. AE acknowledged GE's help in providing information and feedback on the available space. She questions what alternative positioning was in fact available under the permit, wind direction and traffic conditions. She acknowledged that individual course and exclusion zone marks could still involve operational positioning decisions within the significant constraints of the outer operating environment.

33. AE was appointed as CRO to this event prior to January 2026. The TD noted that AE was very busy with other events while the team was trying to finalize documents. The Sailing Instructions did not start with documentation from the previous year's event. The initial draft appeared to include match racing terminology and protocols, and it required numerous revisions (15 in total) to arrive at the final draft. Version management was also complicated so that the TD took over consolidation of feedback for AE. The team missed the planning deadline by several weeks. AE acknowledged that she was very busy with commitments at other sailing events during the period before the championship, but that she remained available for comments and email communication.

Analysis and Conclusions

Attitude and Behaviour

34. Rude and disrespectful behaviour: RMM U.1.3 puts partnership working between Race Committee, Umpires and Competitors in the top things to get right at team racing events. That is, it is the accepted practice at team racing events for the Race Officials to work far more collaboratively than might be the case in other disciplines. However, in many instances, AE did not respond to advice from the TD, the Chief Umpire or the RC member for the finish vessel. In some cases, when she did it so, it was only acted on after multiple requests or the TD's insistence. The allegations describing AE's rude and disrespectful attitude and behaviour to other race officials are found to be true.

35. Telling KE the CRO to 'shut up'. Touching KE to interrupt her: AE recalled the verbal exchange, but she did not confirm using these words to cause KE to stop talking. She acknowledged that she should have handled the situation differently, and accepted responsibility for her communication in this individual incident. AE "does not **recall** using force or physically handling another person in an inappropriate manner" (emphasis added). She recognized that she may have interrupted or redirected a discussion that was interfering with race management activities. The Panel

considers that AE's submissions ought to be taken as stated, that she does not recall such an incident, and that it follows that the incident may have occurred, but that AE simply does not remember it. Therefore, considering the evidence of KE, The Panel also accepts that AE interrupted KE in her duties. These allegations of AE's brusque behaviour are found to be true in part.

36. The Code of Behaviour in RRM C1 requires race officers to behave with the highest degree of competence, propriety and integrity. In the overall consideration of these incidents, the Panel considers that AE's behaviour toward other race officials at this event fell short of this requirement and was therefore below the level expected of an International Race Official.

Discipline Specific Knowledge

37. Lack of Experience with Team Racing: The Panel accepts that AE's lack of experience with team racing was evident and created problems for this event. Despite knowing she lacked team racing experience, AE accepted the appointment. However, it does not appear that she took adequate steps to prepare for the event despite having many months to do so. AE on multiple occasions did not take the advice of other race officials including the TD. The intervention of the TD to take over edits to the Sailing Instructions, to change the communication systems and to insist on certain procedures show that her competence for running team racing was below the level expected of a World Sailing Race Official.

38. Pace of Races: RMM U.1.2 advises, "many team racing competitions will plan on 100 or more races in a day. This drives many of the differences in race management". The Panel finds that AE's understanding that 66 races is a normal expectation demonstrates her lack of understanding of team racing.

39. Low target number of races due to breaks for volunteers: RMM U.4.2 advises, "In general, team racing will operate continuously during a day, with no formal rest breaks. Food needs to be provided on the go for all officials and competitors….In many events they will be involved in continuous racing all day throughout the competition". The Panel finds that AE set too low an expectation of number of races per day. While it is certainly true that the needs of volunteers need to be attended to, the Panel considers that this should have been weighed against the need to achieve as much racing as possible. There is no indication that AE sought to balance these factors. Her understanding of the needs of volunteers was below the level expected for a CRO for team racing.

40. Placement of Mark 3: RMM U.9.1 advises to take care when positioning mark 3, and how to position it relative to the start vessel. The Panel finds that by repeatedly placing mark 3 too close to the race committee vessel AE showed a level of understanding of the racecourse below the level expected for a CRO for team racing.

41. Not postponing for breakdown: AE confirmed her error, noting that the start should have been postponed as soon as it was clear that Boat 10 would not be ready to race on equal terms. Her performance in this incident was below the level expected for a CRO for team racing.

42. In the overall consideration of these incidents, the Panel considers that AE's discipline specific competence and performance as a CRO for team racing were below the level expected of an International Race Officer.

Race Officer Competence

43. Placement of the pin in Exclusion Zone and course length resulting in loss of time: RMM U.1.3 lists the ability to adjust the course, and move the lines, without delay to the racing, as one of the top things to get right in team racing. AE acknowledged that she was aware of the time limits and the exclusion zone, that the process consumed valuable time and that a more efficient final solution would have been preferable. The allegation of errors by AE in setting the pin and the course length, resulting in delays in racing are found to be true.

44. Management of the Mark-Bots led to delays in racing: AE's decision to link all Mark-Bots into a single group reduced the flexibility to make the constant small course adjustments required in team racing while racing continues, as advised by RMM U.5.1 and U.5.3. AE acknowledged that more individual mark control could have provided greater flexibility in some conditions. The Panel finds this allegation to be true.

45. Course length and wind shifts: The Panel accepts that the TD's intervention was needed to get a longer racecourse on the windier final day. RMM U.3.2 sets the aim for continuous racing, with minor mark adjustments on an on-gong basis as necessary to keep the course optimal without delaying racing. AE acknowledged that there may have been individual occasions on which a course adjustment could have been made earlier that on at least one occasion the starting line too short. The Panel finds this allegation to be true.

46. Delta procedures: AE confirmed that her handling of the delta flag on Saturday resulted in additional waiting time. The Panel finds this allegation to be true.

47. Marks too close to or outside the boundary: The Panel considers that on occasions when reconfiguring the course, the RC placed marks close to or outside the boundary, resulting in penalties to boats or delays to reset the course. RMM U.9.2 recognizes that at most locations, there will be a designated area for the racing. To keep racing going all day with continuous small adjustments, the initial course should be set with space around to allow for the flexibility to move marks should wind shifts occur. The Panel finds this allegation to be true.

48. AE was too busy to prepare documents for the Event: The Panel considers that as CRO with responsibility for the Sailing Instructions, AE did not participate adequately in their preparation, to the extent that the TD was required to intervene. The Panel finds that AE did not adequately prepare for the event and thus her involvement was below the level expected of an International Race Official.

49. In the overall consideration of the incident, the Panel considers that AE's competence and performance as a Race Official as CRO at this event were below the level expected of an International Race Officer.

Consideration of any mitigating factors

50. Attitude and Behaviour: The Panel notes with appreciation, that AE has apologised in her reply to the Panel for her actions in some regards, and in particular as to how she spoke to the other event officials. In many cases, AE's acknowledgements of her behaviour were tentative, and her apologies were conditional on the alleged activity having occurred. She also continued to question the authority of KE. The Panel does not consider that these statements of apology warrant mitigation of any sanction.

51. Discipline Specific Knowledge: World Sailing accepted the Event Organizer's assessment of AE's experience with team racing in making her appointment as CRO to the event. The Panel considers

that when World Sailing makes an appointment to an event, it can be inferred to some extent that World Sailing must therefore consider that the individual is suitably qualified. Therefore, AE was entitled to assume by her appointment that World Sailing believed that she was capable of delivering a successful event. That said, it is clear that AE was aware of the limits of her team racing experience, but she did not make use of the time after her appointment to become adequately familiar with advice such as in RRM Section U to prepare for the event. AE acknowledged some of the errors that were found to be true but reasserted her opinion on others. The Panel considers that as an International Race Officer, AE should have been aware of her need for adequate preparation before the event, and that her failure to do so resulted in many of the errors that she made. The Panel therefore does not consider that AE's appointment by World Sailing provides mitigation of any sanction.

52. Race Officer Competence: AE was appointed an IRO in 1996. As a highly experienced IRO, she would be expected to perform at a high level as a CRO. Once she was aware of commitments at other sailing events during the period before the championship, she did not prepare adequately for this event. The procedures she acknowledged that she could have implemented better were ones that she should have known and implemented during the event. The Panel therefore does not consider that the events preceding this World Championship can provide mitigation.

Observations

53. The Panel observes that AE's submissions were difficult to interpret and at times internally contradictory. This meant it was often difficult to understand whether AE was admitting or disputing many of the allegations. In addition, AE requested that the Panel seek further evidence from witnesses of its own motion, not all of whom were named. The Panel considers that the responsibility for providing such evidence lies with the party intending to rely on it.

Decision

54. The Panel recommends that

- AE must be subject to supervision by a World Sailing Race Official ('a mentor') from a member national authority other than Sweden when officiating at four events where she is the CRO.
- AE must not serve in the role of PRO at these events.
- The four supervision reports shall address whether AE demonstrates adequate performance, competence and behaviour toward other race officials when acting as a member of the race committee.
- AE will be advised that the Race Officials Committee (ROC) will appoint the mentor for each of the four events, to help her improve her application of the race management procedures relevant to RC members in the position she is given. If possible, the mentor shall be the same World Sailing Race Official for all four events. The mentor will be requested to interact with AE on these issues and to be present in person for at least 4 events where AE is acting as a race officer. To facilitate this, AE shall be required to share with World Sailing information of the events she is attending in the next 12 months or until the 4 events have been completed, and a list of the appointed Race Officials at these events if possible. A suitable mentor shall be decided by ROC based on this list to ensure that AE may meet the requirements of this sanction. Once the mentor is satisfied that AE is performing on an acceptable level as a CRO, World Sailing (WS) will issue permission for AE to act as a PRO.

Lynne Beal
Chris Lindsay
Elena Papazoglou
2 November 2026