

## RYA GUIDANCE

### PERMITTING USE OF AN ENGINE

#### (OR ANY OTHER METHOD FOR PROPULSION)

The default situation is that the use of an engine (or any other method) for propulsion while *racing* (therefore, at any time between the preparatory signal and finishing and clearing the finishing marks) breaks rule 42.1, Propulsion: Basic Rule. In the racing rules, there is no alternative to retirement when a boat realises that she has broken rule 42, and no option other than to disqualify a boat that is found by a protest committee to have broken rule 42, unless some other penalty applies.

Rule 42.3(g), Propulsion: Exceptions, allows various sorts of force to get clear after grounding or a collision, but the use of a propulsion engine is explicitly not permitted.

Rule 42.3(h), Propulsion: Exceptions, which was added for 2009 onwards, says:

**Sailing instructions may, in stated circumstances, permit propulsion using an engine or any other method, provided the boat does not gain a significant advantage in the race.**

If a boat uses her engine to get clear when aground she clearly gains an advantage and she must retire from the race. Sailing instructions permitting the use of an engine should confine the 'stated circumstances' to safety issues, for instance to cross a shipping lane, avoid commercial shipping or comply with other legal requirements. A suitable sailing instruction might be:

**[When a boat needs to avoid commercial shipping, or needs to comply with the IRPCAS or government rules to cross or depart from [a shipping channel, zone or lane ] [*the.....*], she may use her engine or manual propulsion to do so. When she initially gains a significant advantage from this propulsion, she may continue to use that propulsion to remove that advantage.**

**The boat shall then, within the time limit for [protests] [declarations] report this in writing to the [race] [protest] committee, stating the time when the engine or other propulsion was employed, the course and speed made good under power or manual propulsion and the time the propulsion ceased. [A copy will be posted on the official notice board.]. When a protest committee decides that the only infringement by boat that is protested for breaking this sailing instruction was the gaining of a significant advantage, the penalty will be at its discretion.**

Except as permitted by rule 42.3(h), it is not possible for sailing instructions to change rule 42 – see rule 86.1(a) and (b). However, it is possible to change the penalty, as in the example above. If it is desired to allow a boat to gain an advantage by using her engine after her preparatory signal to get to the starting area (perhaps best suited to less formal evening racing), the sailing instruction below is suggested.

**A boat may use her engine after her preparatory signal in order to get to the starting area, provided that before she starts she stops using her engine for propulsion and then takes a penalty by [making a complete 3600 turn] [*some other provision*].**

#### **Guidance for Race Committees**

When the sailing instruction requires a report to the race committee, it should send the report to any protest committee that is in being, unless it has already decided to protest the boat.

#### **Guidance for Protest Committees**

When a protest committee receives a report or declaration of the use of propulsion, it should protest the boat if there is a possibility that the sailing instruction was broken, or if significant advantage may have resulted.

When a protest committee has to decide if a boat gained a significant advantage by use propulsion permitted by the sailing instruction, it should take into account any gain of place or time saved compared with boats that did not need to use an engine.

If there was good reason to use the propulsion, but the gaining of a significant advantage was unavoidable and was not corrected, it would be appropriate for the penalty to be added time or a worse score to negate that advantage when the sailing instruction allows for a discretionary penalty. However, when there is use of propulsion not permitted by rule 42.1 or by the sailing instruction, or in circumstances that are not stated in a sailing instruction, the appropriate penalty will be disqualification.