

Future vision for the ISAF Sailing World Cup

1. Background

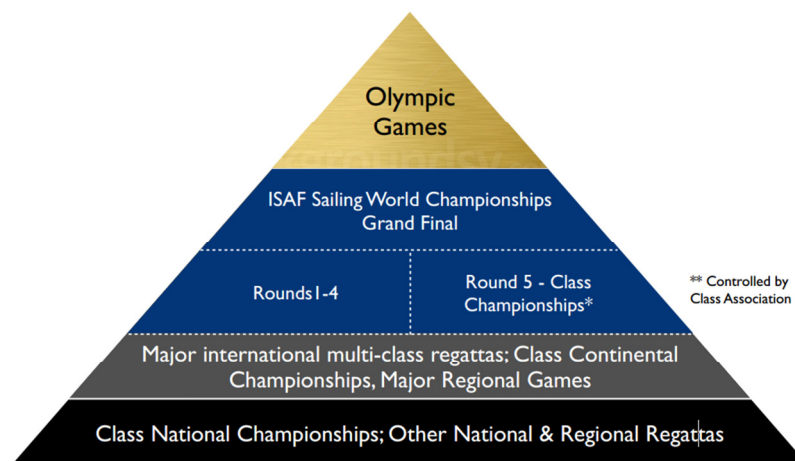
At the May 2013 ISAF Mid-Year in meeting Copenhagen the ISAF President announced that the existing ISAF Sailing World Cup is not a success, and its future success is essential for Olympic sailing. At the Mid-Year meeting the ISAF Events Committee expressed strong support for an ISAF Sailing World Cup focused on the elite sailors in Olympic Events. Between May and September a series of Presidential Forums were held to review the existing ISAF event structure. The Presidential Forums were chaired by the ISAF President and included members representing Athletes, the Executive Committee, the Events Committee, the Coaches Commission, the ISAF Secretariat and OC Sports - a global sports marketing and events company specialising in professional sailing.

The Presidential Forums have developed a new mission for ISAF: ***To build a clearly understood and professionally organised Olympic sailing annual calendar that each year crowns one undisputed World Champion in each Olympic Event and enables elite-level athletes, national teams, the Olympic Classes and ISAF to generate significant sporting & commercial value beyond the Olympic Games.*** The desired outcome of the new ISAF event structure is: ***To provide all nations, all sailors and all events with a clearer structure to operate within, clearer goals and a better way of measuring progress resulting in increased alignment and hence value at all levels from beginner to elite***

2. Existing ISAF Event Structure

The Olympic Games is the pinnacle event held every four years. The ISAF Sailing World Championships is the pinnacle ISAF event held every four years. There is an annual ISAF Sailing World Cup, an annual Olympic Class World Championship and an annual ISAF World Ranking list. Below the ISAF Events are a series of non-Olympic Class World Championships, Olympic Class regattas, Class continental championships, Regional Games, national championships and other national regattas. This structure is not delivering commercial value for sailors, MNAs, the Olympic Classes, event organisers or ISAF. A core objective of the new event structure is to deliver increased commercial value to all stake holders.

3. New ISAF Event Structure



4. Sailing and Commercial Benefits

For ISAF the new event structure will be a valuable platform for promoting and developing sailing around the world. The ISAF Sailing World Cup will be replaced with the ISAF Sailing World Championships.

- The new event structure will clearly distinguish Olympic Classes from the non-Olympic Classes.
- The new ISAF Sailing World Championships will deliver an Olympic level of competition increasing the profile of elite sailors and national teams while increasing sponsorship potential.
- There will be a clear pathway for aspiring elite level sailors and developing national teams and with the inclusion of the Class Championship Round a way to showcase the participation and universality of Olympic sailing.
- The new event structure will increase the importance of the major international multi-class regattas; Class Continental Championships and major Regional Games. These events will drive participation and universality and provide opportunities for nations to develop the next generation of elite sailors.

- The new event structure will provide a much clearer story for the media and the ISAF Sailing World Championships will deliver a predictable and professionally run platform delivering better return on investment for sponsors.

5. ISAF Sailing World Championships

Following the Santander 2014 ISAF Sailing World Championships the ISAF Sailing World Cup will be replaced by a new annual ISAF Sailing World Championships for the Olympic Classes. The ISAF Sailing World Championships will be comprised of a Grand Final, 4 ISAF Sailing World Championships Rounds and a 5th Class Championship Round. The Paralympic Classes should also be integrated into the ISAF Sailing World Championships subject to discussions with the IFDS.

6. ISAF Sailing World Championships: Rounds 1- 4

Rounds 1-4 will include all Olympic Events with fleet sizes of 25 representing the best sailors in the world and the option for some wild cards places. Leading competitors will be offered a tour card for competing at the ISAF Sailing World Championships. To enable aspiring elite level sailors to compete in the ISAF Sailing World Championships Rounds there will be a system of annual promotion and relegation of tour card holders. The racing format will be that of the Olympic Sailing Competition. The venues will be spread globally, selected to offer excellent competitive sailing conditions in today's key sailing and commercial markets.

7. Class Championships: Round 5

The Olympic Class Championships will be an integral part of the ISAF Sailing World Championships. The fleet sizes, regatta formats & qualification systems will be managed by the Olympic Class (subject to ISAF approval). The Olympic Class Championships will be an opportunity for the best Olympic Class sailors from all nations to compete with the elite tour card holders with the aim of becoming a tour card holder the following year. The regattas will be known as the 'ISAF Sailing World Championships, <Class Name> Championships Round'.

8. ISAF Sailing World Championships Grand Final

The Grand Final will be optimised to raise the media interest and the value for elite Olympic sailors. Qualification to the Grand Final will be based on performance at all of the ISAF Sailing World Championships Rounds. Only the top 10 competitors in each Class will qualify. The winner of the Grand Final in each Class will be crowned the undisputed 'ISAF Sailing World Champion <Class Name>'.

9. Transition

- There are existing contracts in place with ISAF Sailing World Cup event organisers, the Olympic Classes and the Santander 2014 ISAF Sailing World Championship event organisers so a period of transition is necessary. ISAF and OC Sports will engage with the key stakeholders to ensure the new event structure delivers increased values for sailors, MNAs, the Olympic Classes and event organisers.
- The Olympic Classes currently have the right to hold a World Championship. Under the new structure, the annual 'World' Champion is the winner of the ISAF Sailing World Championships, and therefore the current Class World Championships are re-titled 'ISAF Sailing World Championships, Class Championships Round'. The Class Championship Round will then become an essential part of the ISAF Sailing World Championships allowing the Olympic Classes to continue to drive participation and universality in an improved event structure offering better commercial opportunities.
- The only new event in 2014 will be the introduction of a 'proof of concept' Grand Final. It is anticipated that this event will be held in October or November. The existing bid process and guidelines for the 2018 ISAF Sailing World Championships will be modified to reflect the new event structure.
- 2015 will be the first year of the ISAF Sailing World Championships with some new venues introduced whilst existing ISAF Sailing World Cup contracts are honoured. The concept of the Tour Card will be introduced to enable qualification of the top 10 in each Class to the Grand Final at which the ISAF Sailing World Champions for 2015 will be crowned.
- 2016 will see the continued development of the ISAF Sailing World Championships with ownership and commercial rights increasing over time. As this is an Olympic year the Grand Final is run mainly as a sponsor activation event and an opportunity to showcase the Olympic medallists. The latest that ISAF will have full control and commercial ownership of the ISAF Sailing World Championships will be 2017.

10. Recommendation

The Executive Committee and the ISAF Secretariat should work with OC Sports, and the relevant ISAF stakeholders and Committees, to finalise the details and implement the new ISAF Sailing World Championships following the transition plan.