

ISAF Classes World Championship – Data Observations Report

Following an Equipment Committee review of Class compliance with regulations concerning their World Championship participation the committee asked the ISAF staff to write to the classes to warn them and gather further information. In February 2014 letters were sent to all these classes listed as apparently failing to comply with ISAF Regulations regarding World Championships (WC) participation. Letters were also sent to these classes that were likely to fail if their participation did not increase. Finally letters were sent to classes that had in some cases low activity i.e. no World Championships over the last few years, or had a lack of Class structure in which cases the class was questioned about their continuation as an ISAF Class.

In these letters the classes were asked on their plans on how to deal with the problem. So far all the classes that were contacted responded except for the Micro and Splash.

Individual classes' responses are available at request but they can be summarized as follows:

1. Classes holding Sub-Worlds (Regulation 25.2.6):

- (a) Some classes admit that they failed to comply with Reg 25.2.6 by ignorance or mistake and will make sure it does not happen again.
- (b) Some classes dispute our observations and deny having sub-worlds. The main explanation is that the class does not award WC titles for some disciplines but award other "prizes" or "awards".
- (c) Other classes are keen to have only one WC fleet and have WC awarded from this fleet contrary to Regulation 25.2.6. They cite that having them racing separately is not practical from an organization and economical point of view.
- (d) One class noted that Reg 25.2.5 does not appear to take into account Corinthian divisions and they feel that this should be considered.

2. Classes holding too many World Championships (Regulation 25.2.5):

- (a) The windsurfing and kiteboarding classes acknowledge the problem and are working to solve the problem i.e. by organizing separate class associations within their disciplines and then apply for ISAF Status.
- (b) Some classes dispute our observation. In most cases classes say they do not award WC titles but "prizes" or "awards" to the first Women, U19 etc. One class for instance holds a WC every year but denies awarding WC titles even though most press releases name them as World Champions. That allows the class too much "flexibility" in the number of allegedly WC titles that they can award.

3. Classes with low participation in their WC's (Regulation 10.4(b)):

- (a) Divisions such as Women's and Youth's get less support financially with less sponsor's interest.

Some classes argue that having no Women's or Youth's WC titles can be quite detrimental for a class and in general for the sport. A suggestion was made to use different parameters of participation for categories with historically low participation.

- (b) Some classes blame the economic situation or remote locations for their WC on past low figures and in some cases the classes look positively optimistic and are confident that the participation levels will go up.
- (c) Some classes are prepared to change the name of the event in the SI in case the entry figures are low; however classes have to wait until very late in order to know the participation figures and then competitors may be unhappy if the event is "downgraded".
- (d) One class which has got alternate WC (Modern and Classic) and low figures in the Modern discipline explained that organizers are not keen in having both fleets racing together for safety issues specially in the starting line as these boats in particular have limited manoeuvrability.

4. Classes that have not hold WC over the last few years and/or have a lack of Class Structure.

- (a) Two classes have decided to withdraw its ISAF Status as a result of the letters sent by The Secretariat: 29erXX, Laser Vago.
- (b) The rest of the classes consulted are keen in keeping the ISAF status quo and in some cases are planning WC's in the future.

5. Conclusion

In general it is fair to say that this correspondence with these class has been positive in the way that they have been educated on the ISAF Regulations and know that their activities will now be monitored more thorough from now on and some of them will need to put things right.

Some classes will continue to fail to comply with these Regulations, deliberately or in good faith and this need to be addressed by reviewing of their ISAF Status or addressing the ISAF Regulations. A big part of the problems could be resolved by defining more clearly in the Regulations what a World Championship title is and when a "prize" or an "award" in a World Championship event can be considered a World Championship title. Guidance would be welcome on the name of a "prize" or "award" when it is awarded at a World Championship as part of the main fleet, for example "First Women Crew" etc. When ISAF approves World Championships for the ISAF Calendar more diligence should be undertaken in particular in helping classes understand their responsibilities for sub-worlds.

The working party have been working on the understanding that there is no ISAF requirement or policy to reduce the number of World Championships but just to simply follow the ISAF Regulations. The ISAF Regulations concerning this area have been changed in 2010 and any further changes should be minor if possible.

Through the analysis and subsequent Class responses the Working Party believes that the World Championship titles could and should be used to clarify our sport by highlighting the highest level within it. Some classes want World titles in order to attract more participants which may be considered secondary and there may be other ways to do this than to call all races a World Championships.