



# ISA

## Strategic Plan 2015-2020



**Irish Sailing Association**

An organisation focussed on facilitating access to Sailing,  
developing participation and sailing skills and promoting safety awareness



# Introduction

This Plan represents the culmination of a process that commenced at the 2013 ISA AGM when concerns were raised about the Association's direction. The Board commissioned a review of the ISA and its relationship with its members and stakeholders. The Review Group consulted widely and its report listed various weaknesses and deficits. After considering it, the ISA Board commissioned a Strategic Plan to take the Association through to 2020.

The Planning Group members were Neil Murphy (Chairman), Brian Craig, Ruth Ennis, Peter Redden, Sean Craig, Harry Hermon and myself as President, with administrative support provided by Ciara Dowling. The Board received a draft Plan in December 2014 and decided it should be presented to meetings in Dublin, Cork and Galway and to other interested parties to canvass the views and suggestions of the membership and stakeholders.

There was a large attendance at the briefing meetings, including representatives of Clubs, Training Centres and Associated Organisations, and each lasted approximately two and a half hours. They commenced with a presentation about the Plan before moving on to a discussion about the contents, during which the Plan was generally well received, clarifications were provided, weaknesses pointed out and suggested amendments put forward. In addition to the ISA member meetings, the Irish Sports Council was briefed on the Plan contents and also welcomed the initiative. This document contains the revisions that have been distilled from the various discussions and from other submissions received.

The Plan proposes that the 'Mission for the years 2015 – 2020' is to **'Develop Sailing in union with Clubs, Training Centres and Associated Organisations'**. The core philosophy is that the success and future growth of Sailing is dependent on strong Clubs managing their own affairs well. It envisages the ISA representing the interests of Sailing and focussing on increasing the participation levels of those already involved and facilitating the access of newcomers.

The strategies are allocated to 'Pillars' – namely Clubs, Access and Participation, Training, Representation, Competition and High Performance – and the ISA's internal functioning is dealt with in the final section. The metrics by which success will be gauged and the current position are listed with each 'Pillar'. No implementation measures or timescales are included – the Directors will decide in the light of evolving circumstances on the timing, appropriate measures and their management.

Sailing is an activity that, whatever sector sailors choose to participate in, provides a lifetime of opportunities to enjoy the challenges, self reliance, freedom and proximity to nature that are its hallmarks. The Plan sets out achievable strategies to grow the numbers participating in all sailing activities but it will only succeed if the ISA, Clubs, Training Centres, Associated Organisations and individual sailors commit to its implementation and if appropriate Government support and recognition continues to be provided.

I am confident that our shared love of Sailing will deliver the outcome we aspire to between now and 2020 and I look forward to an increasing numbers of sailors – both from Ireland and further afield - being able to enjoy the sailing waters that we are so fortunate to have around us.

**David Lovegrove**  
ISA President

# Mission

## 2015 to 2020

**Develop Sailing in union with  
Clubs, Training Centres, Classes  
and Associated Organisations**

## Purpose

**Support and promote Sailing in Ireland**

## Values

### Provide

**Responsible leadership and stewardship of resources**

### Strive to

**Attain high standards of governance and support Sailing in a transparent manner**

### Foster

**The trust of the sailing community and stakeholders**

**Inclusivity and access for all**

**Respect for the traditions of Sailing and for the marine environment**

# Overview

**Clubs**

**Access & Participation**

**Training**

**Representation**

**Competition**

**High Performance**

ISA  
supporting and  
promoting Sailing  
in Ireland by...

...working in union with Member Clubs

...supporting access routes  
and participation initiatives

...developing a range of schemes  
and a network of Training Centres

...influencing decision making, elevating  
the profile of Sailing and working productively  
with the Irish Sports Council

...supporting a range of competition  
structures and activities

...identifying, supporting and coaching  
sailors who can succeed in Olympic  
and Paralympic competition

**Underpinning  
the ISA Mission**

**Efficient  
Management**

**Communication  
and Sponsorship**

# Clubs

**Mission: Build trust & partnership with Clubs and facilitate them in growing membership**

## Strategies

- Provide effective support to Clubs through a network of Regional Development Officers (RDO's)
- Agree individual activity programmes with Clubs annually, establish contact at Board/CEO/RDO levels and agree communication channels
- Develop communication between Clubs and the relevant Policy Groups
- Foster local partnerships between Clubs & ISA Training Centres and facilitate co-operation between Clubs
- Improve membership retention by encouraging integration of training schemes with Club activities
- Facilitate the promotion of Clubs to schools, and develop relationships with community schools and other watersports enthusiasts local to them
- Facilitate development of co-ordinated responses to issues shared by Clubs in local areas
- Organise regional Club meetings to discuss common issues, such as co-operation and event co-ordination, instructors and dinghy class selection
- Encourage sailors to be members of a Club
- Encourage Clubs to get youths and juniors afloat regularly for fun outside of training courses and organised racing
- Highlight the opportunities to contribute to club activities and events for members not themselves interested in competition.

## Measuring Delivery

- No. of Clubs and Training Centres engaged with by RDO's
- No. of Clubs working with ISA to further their annual activity programme
- Results of Annual Satisfaction Survey
- Category 1 Club membership trends
- Trend for those participating in Club training schemes continuing as members and increasing involvement in Club activities
- No. of Clubs with formal links to schools /local organisations
- No. of Clubs represented on Policy Groups

## Current Position - 2014

- 17,077** Category 1 Club members
- 649** ISA direct members
- 60** Category 1 Affiliated Clubs
- 41** ISA Training Clubs
- 24** Clubs with links to primary/secondary schools
- 23** Clubs represented on Policy Groups

# Access & Participation

## Strategies

- Promote the services of ISA Training Centres as a 'try sailing' route and provide introductory programmes to appeal to newcomers
- Encourage Clubs to offer introductory memberships for newcomers and to provide boat rental for members to increase participation
- Identify access deficits regionally and help develop opportunities to improve access for new participants and encourage inclusivity
- Brief all Clubs and ISA Training Centres on range of programmes for disabled groups and provide guidance on their delivery
- Develop participation initiatives with Clubs and ISA Training Centres at high visibility locations to facilitate public attendance
- Develop initiatives to attract and retain sailors, particularly younger ones
- Develop crewing in keelboats and volunteer activities as attractive options for participation
- Encourage pathways for ISA Training Centre graduates to transition to Clubs and Classes in their local areas
- Provide information and services to support cruising sailors
- Support initiatives from Clubs and leisure cruising groups to increase participation outside the competition arena
- Promote use of ISA Sailfleet boats to allow newcomers experience Sailing
- Grow awareness of Sailing with the general public

**Mission:** To promote Sailing as a 'Sport for All' recreation and facilitate access for newcomers

## Measuring Delivery

- No. of newcomers joining Clubs
- No. of ISA Training Centre participants
- No. of Clubs offering boat rental schemes - the extent and success of same
- No. of ISA Training Clubs and ISA Training Centres offering the 'Sailability Programme'
- No. of Clubs with membership incentive schemes aimed at ISA Training Centre graduates
- Level of news media exposure/coverage and benefit to Clubs and ISA Training Centres
- No. of new participants graduating to Club membership from ISA Training Centres
- No. of cruising initiatives supported by ISA
- No. of charter days for ISA Sailfleet dinghies

## Current Position - 2014

- 73** ISA Training Centres
- 1,509** Women participating in 18 WOW events
- 13** ISA Organisations offering disabled sailing
- 2,331** Boat charter days for ISA Sailfleet dinghies



Supporting  
access routes  
and participation  
initiatives

# Training

## Strategies

- Provide a range of training courses to acquire and develop the skills level of those involved in recreational and competitive Sailing activity
- Change emphasis from certificate acquisition to recording of trainee's time afloat and skills development including adoption of the Sailing Passport system
- Provide delivery mechanisms tailored to meet differing needs of ISA Training Clubs and ISA Training Centres
- Develop racing instructors to upskill, motivate and retain sailors not involved in the High Performance programme
- Introduce a trainer-led process to develop training schemes, improve consistency of instructor training and provide mentoring of instructors
- Promote and facilitate the progression of instructors to advanced levels
- ISA Training Clubs to provide a progression route for novice sailors from initial training through to Club activities
- Improve data capture for training schemes to monitor trends in participation and retention levels
- Maintain the awareness of all participants of the need to 'sail safely' and take responsibility for personal safety
- Promote safety awareness amongst event organisers
- Communicate effectively the range of ISA Courses in dinghy, windsurfing, keelboat, cruising, powerboating and motor boating
- Encourage knowledge transfer between sailors

**Mission: Facilitate the acquisition and development of skills needed for multiple competencies and safety afloat**

## Measuring Delivery

- No. of accredited ISA Training Centres in each region
- No. of training centres not accredited by ISA in each region
- Trends in numbers taking part in ISA training schemes
- No. of instructors, sorted by qualification held, and trends in same
- ISA Training Clubs & ISA Training Centres feedback on instructor availability and instructor standards
- Results of Annual Satisfaction Survey of ISA Training Clubs and ISA Training Centres

## Current Position - 2014

- 114** ISA Accredited Centres (73 Training Centres/41 Training Clubs)
- 1,551** ISA Instructors
- 21** ISA Instructor Trainers
- 6,717** Small Boat Sailing Scheme certificates
- 1,629** Powerboat certificates
- 590** Cara Na Mara certificates

Developing  
a range of  
schemes and  
a network  
of Training  
Centres

# Representation

## Strategies

- Effect change in the way Government and State agencies view Sailing and lobby central and local government as the voice of Sailing
- Work with affiliated groups to represent specialist areas of interest within Sailing
- Grow appreciation of the marine environment
- Monitor and advise stakeholders and make appropriate representations on regulatory issues that affect the sailing community
- Develop relationships with tourism promotion agencies at central and local level to increase awareness of marine tourism potential
- Emphasise benefit of marine sector to national economy, major events to local areas and the importance of developing the marine leisure infrastructure
- Develop joint strategies with the Irish Sports Council and Olympic Council of Ireland to promote and develop Sailing
- Represent Irish Sailing effectively with ISAF and other international sailing federations, associations and national governing bodies
- Develop relationships at Presidential, Board and CEO levels with relevant Government Departments
- Develop relationship at RDO level with local agencies in their respective regions

Influencing decision making, elevating the profile of Sailing, and working productively with the Irish Sports Council

**Mission: Represent the interests and lobby on behalf of Sailing and Irish sailors with Government, regulatory authorities and international sailing organisations**

## Measuring Delivery

- Ability to access decision makers on matters of concern
- Results of Annual Satisfaction Survey
- Number of submissions made
- Number of representations made
- Outcomes where ISA made submissions and representations
- Annual debrief with the Irish Sports Council





# Competition

## Strategies

- Increase participation in Club racing by promoting racing formats that appeal to the full spectrum of Club and Class interests
- Co-ordinate national event calendar to establish hierarchy of events, increase turnouts and avoid event conflicts
- Number of volunteers with the expertise needed to support competition at all levels to be increased
- Promote Classes through identification of pathway of one design Classes illustrating possible progression routes for Irish sailors
- Encourage participation of younger sailors in two-person boats
- Support and promote delivery of race coaching for all sailors within Clubs and Classes
- High Performance coaches to supplement existing duties (when their HP commitments permit) by delivering sessions to Clubs and Classes
- ISA events to be developed and promoted to provide a focus and enhance the image of the Sport
- Hosting of multi-class regional and national championships to be encouraged
- Facilitate the hosting of high level international competition in Ireland
- Influence Classes with High Performance sailors involved to create an acceptable balance between enjoyment and emphasis on success
- Encourage Clubs to choose and promote specific Classes they deem appropriate to create critical mass locally, with the assistance of an ISA database of Class distribution and characteristics
- Encourage third level college racing
- Encourage and facilitate Clubs and Classes to undertake post event evaluation surveys and debriefs

**Mission: Give leadership, develop structures and encourage Clubs and Classes to provide racing that retains and grows the numbers competing**

## Measuring Delivery

- Participation trends in Club racing
- No. of entries at national and regional championships
- No. of multi – class national and regional events organised in Ireland
- No. of qualified race officials active in the sport
- No. of international events hosted annually and participation levels
- No. of qualified Class / Club racing instructors
- No. of days Class coaching delivered by High Performance coaches for non-HP sailors
- No. of juniors and youths sailing two person and single handed dinghies at Club level

## Current Position - 2014

- 918** Participating at 2014 National Championships
  - 5** National and regional events with multiple class attendance
  - 2** International events, and 52 nations, 306 competitors
- 314** Judges, umpires and race officers ISA registered in 2014

Supporting  
a range of  
competition  
structures  
and activities

# High Performance

## Strategies

- Provide suitably resourced infrastructure to support the preparation of the Irish sailing team and their participation at Rio 2016 and Tokyo 2020
- Identify developing sailors with the potential to succeed on the world stage and support their transition
- Develop High Performance coaches and their skillsets to support the sailors
- Maintain and enhance relationships with the Irish Sports Council, the Olympic Council of Ireland, Irish Institute of Sport and Sports Institute Northern Ireland
- Ensure that existing commercial sponsors see value in their involvement with Irish sailing and pursue further funding opportunities from the commercial sector
- ISA High Performance sailors to be role models in developing the public image and awareness of Irish sailing
- Encourage the sharing of High Performance sailors' skills and experience for the benefit of the sport in Ireland
- High Performance system to be structured to develop those sailors with the required potential
- Review and update the management of the High Performance programmes as and when necessary

**Mission: Support the system and culture to secure top 10 results for Irish sailors in the Olympic Classes at Worlds, Europeans, Olympics and Paralympics**

## Measuring Delivery

- Success in international competition with reference to annual pre-set targets
- Success in achieving annual pre-set targets for system objectives
- Achievement of annual preset targets for various programme objectives
- Annual investment in ISA High Performance by Irish Sports Council relative to other sports
- No. of sponsors and support from them for High Performance programme

## Current Position - 2014

- 4 Full time Olympic campaigns
- 3 Classes qualified for Rio 2016
- 1 Paralympic campaign
- Third Best supported sport by Irish Sports Council
- Sponsorship programme in place & philanthropic fund-raising being developed

Identifying, supporting and coaching sailors who can succeed in Olympic, and Paralympic competition



# ISA Mission underpinned by Management, Communication and Sponsorship for the benefit of Sailing

## Efficient Management

*Maximise the benefit achieved from the resources available to the ISA*

### Strategies

- Provide strong corporate and financial governance and comply with ISC Guidelines
- Develop an organisation structure that harnesses the expertise and knowledge of volunteers through Working and Policy Groups
- Identify key expertise and experience required in relevant Policy Group
- Define staff roles to maximise efficiency and ensure knowledge transfer and co-ordination across ISA activities
- Maintain good HR practices with regard to job descriptions, performance objectives and appraisals
- Build a relationship of mutual trust with external stakeholders
- Provide effective data capture systems to monitor performance and activity
- Provide value for ISA membership

## Communication and Sponsorship

*Provide relevant information, promote Sailing, raise awareness of the role of the ISA and develop the brand*

### Strategies

- Identify ISA communication policy – what and to whom
- Use appropriate channels to communicate with member Clubs, Associated Organisations and Stakeholders
- Maintain an overall balance in supporting the implementation of all areas of the Strategic Plan
- Establish the ISA website and other IT platforms as a valued resource for Members, Stakeholders and the public
- Build mutually beneficial relationships with sponsors
- Provide advice and guidance material to member organisations on sponsor acquisition
- Encourage and assist host organisations to complete Economic Impact Studies at conclusion of major events

# Glossary of Terms

**Associated Organisations** – these include ISA Training Centres and Class Associations.

**Annual Satisfaction Survey** – a survey conducted annually amongst ISA Member Clubs (including Classes) and ISA Training Centres to determine their perception of trends in their area of involvement, the ISA's effectiveness in delivering its services and the Association's compliance with its Strategic Plan. The responses will be aggregated to protect the confidentiality of responses and the results will be circulated to Members.

**Board** – the Board of Directors of the Irish Sailing Association.

**Class/Classes** – Associations affiliated to the ISA, formed to represent and promote the interests of sailors competing in a particular type of boat, either a specific one-design or of a more generic nature encompassing boats of a similar type.

**High Performance (HP)** – The section of the ISA organisation devoted to developing and supporting sailors either currently campaigning to compete in the Olympics and Paralympics or with the identified potential to do so in the future. The term is adopted to co-ordinate with the vernacular of the Irish Sports Council. Its allocation to those with the aspiration for Olympic or Paralympic success is not a judgement of the relative performance and success of Irish sailors competing internationally in other areas of the Sport.

**HP Pathway** – the development route that sailors with the potential to win Olympic or Paralympic medals are encouraged to follow whilst being supported by the ISA High Performance support structure.

**ISAF** – the International Sailing Federation, the international governing body for Sailing, to which the ISA is affiliated.

**ISA Competition Events** – the ISA branded championships, currently including ISA All Ireland Senior and Junior Championships and ISA Pathway Youth Nationals.

**ISA Training Centres** – organisations, other than Category 1 Clubs, that are accredited

by the Association to run ISA training courses.

**ISA Training Clubs** – Category 1 Clubs that are accredited by the Association to run ISA training courses.

**Member Clubs** – Clubs, differentiated into Category 1, 2 and 3. Category 1 are Clubs whose members, through their Club's affiliation to the Association, are themselves entitled to ISA membership benefits. Category 2 Clubs are national organisations formed to promote sailing activities and Category 3 includes Class Associations, organisations affiliated to the ISA and affiliated clubs based in Northern Ireland.

**Policy Group** – a number of people with relevant expertise tasked by the Board with reviewing, monitoring or advising on specific areas of ISA activity in accordance with terms of reference determined by the Board.

**Regional Development Officers (RDO's)** – ISA staff members based in the regions whose primary role is to support Clubs and Training Centres and to represent the Association in their region. The country is split into three regions – East, South and West.

**Sailing** – the term used to refer to the water borne recreational activity centred on harnessing the wind and also to the users of other powered watercraft where either the owners of the craft are members of ISA affiliated Clubs or those craft are fundamental to safe participation in Sailing.

**Sailability** – the Sailability Programme is an international initiative focused on encouraging people with disabilities to experience sailing and other watersports and then empowering them to follow their pathway in the chosen sport.

# Glossary continued

**Sailfleet** – the ISA’s fleet of keelboats, dinghies and windsurfers available for hire by Member Clubs and Associated Organisations to help them introduce newcomers to Sailing, to increase participation and improve accessibility. The fleet in December 2014 comprises 24 Topaz Unos, 3 Topaz Argos and 3 Kona windsurf boards.

**Sailing Passport** – a detailed logbook in electronic format that records on line the step by step acquisition of skills and participation in racing and other activities afloat. The Passport is used by accredited ISA Training Clubs and Centres running the ISA Small Boat Sailing Scheme.

**Stakeholders** – The term ‘stakeholders’ is used in this document as a global one to encompass the range of parties with either an interest in, or a contribution to make, to the success of sailing in Ireland.

**Women on the Water (WOW)** – an initiative run in conjunction with Irish Sports Council to encourage more women actively participate in Sailing.

**Working Group** – a number of people with relevant expertise tasked by the Board with carrying out a specific task, normally either objective or time limited, in accordance with terms of reference determined by the Board.

## Credits

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**Strategic Plan**  
2015-2020