

National Standards – Race Officials

Background

See ISAF MNA Manual Unit 30 – Race Officials:

Sailing events do not run themselves. Any country with a competition programme will need race officials to conduct regattas properly and ensure that athletes have every chance of achieving their best performance in fair competition. As the amount and standard of competition rises more and more highly trained race officials will be needed. As it is with coaches, the responsibility of the MNA is to make sure that race officials are recruited, developed and given the necessary structure and support to do their essential work. Moreover, the work of race officials must be well co-ordinated to ensure that competitions on all levels are conducted, as far as possible, with the proper number and level of officials. Therefore, there is a need in every country for a national race official's programme which integrates these activities under the leadership and control of the MNA.

1. Organization

Race officials normally work on a day to day basis, alone or in small groups and therefore organizational adjustments and individual arrangements are possible. Competitions take place at specific times and a large group of race officials, each with a specific role, must work together to make it a success. Moreover, for race officials, the necessary knowledge and qualifications are more objective and the performance of their duties is in the public eye which means control of standards is vital for the image of the sport.

2. Race Officials Programme

The activities and responsibilities of a race official programme normally include:

- maintaining an up-to-date list of qualified race officials
- operating a system for training and developing race officials, including syllabus development, exams, organization of courses
- operating a system for grading race officials and controlling assignments of race officials to major competitions, including the administration of expenses
- assisting clubs and other relevant bodies with the development and operation of an appropriate system for assignments of race officials to grass roots competitions
- operating a system for recruiting, recognizing and rewarding race officials for their service to the sport and athletes

3. Grading and Event Appointments

It is important to have a fair and transparent system for assessing the performance of officials and for making appointments to officiate at events in a fair manner based on merit. If a closed or secret system is used, then race officials may become disillusioned and unhappy with the system and stop volunteering.

It is also important to have an honest and fair system for reporting on officials' performance after an event. This is not only important for future event appointment decisions, but also to help officials improve their performance.

4. Development and Training

A regular system of development and training should be in place to ensure that officials keep their knowledge and performance up to date and aware of the latest developments in their disciplines. ISAF

regularly sends rules updates, Q&A's and guidance to MNAs and these should be disseminated down to race officials within the country.

5. Retention

As noted above, sailing events cannot run without suitably qualified race officials and their status as volunteers must be remembered. Retention of officials should be considered a high priority and efforts made to recognize the service given by officials (e.g. through newsletters, awards, clothing etc). Expenses should be reimbursed promptly and those who supervise the race official's programme should try to have an open and welcoming atmosphere so officials feel comfortable raising any concerns with them. It is also important to involve race officials to an appropriate extent in decisions and planning made about areas where they have expertise and involvement.

Race Management Standards

The BSA Race Management Scheme for race officers is a structured programme of qualification leading to National Race Officer status.

The BSA provides race officer training up to the level of National Race Officer (NRO). It is anticipated that most race officers will wish to progress through the levels of Club Race Officer to NRO.

All race officials must be members of the BSA (through a Club, Class, or Association).

Club Race Officer

The Club Race Officer qualification is not a BSA qualification but one belonging to the clubs themselves. The clubs will be encouraged to have their race officials participate in BSA provided race management seminars and other training; and to have their officials' progress to National Race Officer level.

National Race Officer

For the NRO qualification candidates are recommended to have been a very active Race Officer normally for at least two years. In exceptional circumstances a very experienced but non-qualified race officer can proceed directly to NRO status. Attendance at a National Race Management Seminar is required together with a pass at the NRO examination.

Applications for NRO require experience as the race officer in charge of racing of at least 4 Major Events. In addition the candidate's experience should include working with various senior race officers, and various course configurations. Other requirements for NRO are as detailed in the Matrix.

Applications for re-appointment as NRO are required four years after the initial appointment and then at intervals of four years thereafter (for applicants aged 75 years or over re-appointment is required after two years rather than four). Candidates for re-appointment need to demonstrate that they have run events of appropriate level and attended a Race Management Conference (or another seminar) as outlined in the Matrix notes.

Matrix

All BSA qualifications (NRO) are held for four years (two years for those over 75 years of age) after which time an application for renewal must be made. Applicants must be:

- members of the BSA (through a Club, Class, or Association);
- an experienced racing sailor ;
- age 21 or over; and
- resident in Bermuda.

Requirement	Club (recommended)	National Initial	National Renewal
Seminar	Club	National	National
Examination	Not required	NRO	Not required
Minimum experience	2 years as R/C member plus 4 events*	4 major events*	4 major events*
References	Not required	2 (Club and/or Class)	2 (Club and/or Class)
VHF Certificate	Yes	Yes	Yes
Manuals	Seminar	ISAF Race Management	ISAF Race Management

* As Race Officer In Charge.

Race Management Training

Training to be provided at 2 levels:

Join the Race Management Team

This training can be provided by using a combination of instructor (US Sailing, RYA, Sail Canada), and local expertise. It should be used to market for new race officials. BSA should seek funding for instruction, and the Clubs should provide students.

Training should be supplemented by a log book, to record race management experience.

Periodic seminars should be scheduled, mainly using local race officials, to provide a sense of progress.

National Race Officer (preparation for examination)

Annually a seminar should be held for candidates or current NROs. This should ideally be run under one of the National schemes of UK, USA, or Canada to promote continuity. BSA should seek funding support for this Race Official Training.

The timing for seminar should coincide with a major event, to provide on-the-water observation.

Officials Register

BSA shall maintain a register of Race Officials and make it available to Clubs, Classes, and Associations.

BSA shall seek corporate sponsor(s) of the Race Officials, and provide logo'd clothing – this is to promote and recognize the Race Officials.

Grandfather

Experienced Race Officials, on application, shall be grandfathered in as NROs, and provided they take part in an NRO seminar within two years of the scheme's launch.