Race Officials Committee 2020

Report to Council

Race Officials Committee (ROC) is responsible for the administration of the seven disciplines of WS international race officials: international classifier (IC), international expression judge (IEJ), international judge (IJ), international measurer (IM), international race officer (IRO), international technical delegate (ITD) and international umpire (IU).

The ROC area is organized with the main committee supported by four sub-committees, three permanent working parties and a number of other working parties. The goal for the ROC area as a whole is to support WS international race officials in providing fair, consistent and high quality sailing competitions.

The ROC area administers a total of 794 race official appointments (781 in 2019), with 13 international classifiers (13 in 2019), 337 international judges (336 in 2019), 114 international measurers (114 in 2019), 212 international race officers (209 in 2019), 8 international technical delegates (7 in 2019) and 100 international umpires (102 in 2019). These numbers are before decisions on the 2020 applications. There are currently no international expression judges. Some race officials have more than one appointment, thus the total number of race officials is 660 (666 in 2019). This includes 84 female and 576 male race officials. Over the last ten to eight years, there has been an overall decrease of about 5%, but the last three to five years have been very stable and with a small increase since last year. Unfortunately, the covid-19 crisis with cancellation of many events is likely to decrease the numbers for this year.

The four sub-committees and three permanent working parties undertake administration of the international race officials in each of the seven disciplines. In addition, they are working on support to existing race officials in enhancing their skills, development of policies for conduct within each discipline, development of evaluation instruments, such as tests and performance assessments, improving and renewing training activities and materials, training and developing their seminar/clinic instructors and providing national race officials programmes for MNAs to implement. The seminars and clinics that consume a substantial part of the ROC budget are a very important element both in the development of the next generation of race officials and in support to developing areas. The budget situation was considerably improved for 2020 due to extra funding for training and education, but the covid-19 crisis has stopped all requests for seminars and clinics.

A significant part of ROC’s work is carried out by the following working parties: Conflict of Interest WP (CoI), Match Racing Organization and Race Management WP (MR-ORM), Use of Footage from On-Board Cameras WP, Race Official Application Document WP, Rule 42 WP, and RO Manuals WP (MAN) and. After last year’s conference, a Race Official Website WP was added. In addition, there is considerable focus on development in areas with few race officials; one step in this direction has been the introduction of travel grants with a formalized application procedure, administered by the Travel Grant WP (TG). Other key priorities are improving race official conduct, producing guidance on Conflict of Interest and consistent and correct processing of complaints about international race officials.

There is a strong focus on development of IT-systems for race officials, including a system that integrate event reporting, race official reporting and application for appointment as race official into one system. A first step in this direction is that an online application system was implemented for all race officials two years ago. Unfortunately, there were many problems with this intermediate
system, both in terms of usability and functionality. It has been improved the last two years, but it will never be a robust, integrated solution. The aim is to replace it with a more permanent solution as soon as possible.

The ROC and sub-committees are contributing with recommendations to the Event Appointment WP. This has high priority and has involved development and selection of the race official teams for Aarhus 2018, Tokyo 2020 and many other WS events over the last four years. This cooperation is also important for identifying and supporting promising candidates, including those from underserved areas. A grouping system to support the appointment of international judges to Olympic classes events was established and implemented four years ago, and the international race officers and international measurers followed two years ago.

A related priority is continuous development of existing race officials, in particular to help current senior officials maintain their competence and train the young race officials that are entering the disciplines. Some race official disciplines are changing in nature which makes these activities even more imperative. This effort also includes development of the next generation of senior officials in each discipline.

Race official clothing has been an important issue for several years. Finally, there was some progress in this area, as WS provided clothing to race officials at major World Sailing events. However, the current situation is unclear. During the previous years, there has also been a lack of a possibility for other race officials to buy similar logoed clothing at a reduced price, which has caused significant grief.

Within the WS committee structure, the ROC area has over the last four years established collaboration with RRC, MRC and TRSC as well as EQ, EQSC, COC, IC and OCSC. The aim of this is to enhance the service race officials are providing to competitors, classes, event organizers and MNAs and to get feedback about race official conduct and performance. The collaboration between ROC and RRC includes a joint working party denoted as the Q&A Panel. The Q&A Panel has the purpose of assisting race officials in improving their understanding of the racing rules. There is also a joint working party on rule 69 and judicial matters.

For race officials, the reduction of events because of the covid-19 crisis is causing difficulties with appointment of new and existing race officials. For all disciplines, there are requirements to their officiating at events. The WS Regulations include an option to waive the requirements for events under special circumstances. In order to ensure that this is done consistently within and across disciplines, a policy on the use of this regulation has been agreed and published. ROC has also made a submission to facilitate a similar option for first time appointments from 2021.

The following pages contains summary reports from the ROC subcommittees and working parties.

The 2019-2022 strategy for ROC is the following:

1. **Electronic Officiating**
   - Develop and adopt innovative electronic officiating technology at the 2024 Olympic Games that can be tried and tested across the 2021–2024 competition quadrennial

2. **Rules Compliance/Cheating**
   - Increase rules compliance and reduce cheating.
   - Raise awareness and improve implementation/education of measurement controls to ensure fair competition (to officials and athletes and coaches and classes)
   - Disincentivise start line infringements.
• Increase the presence of the World Sailing technical team at events to raise awareness and correct implementation of measurement controls to ensure fair competition.

3. Gender Equality
• Target and promote gender equity and diversity in every element of our sport
• Build a campaign to promote gender equity across the sport that delivers a systemic change in attitude that drives women’s participation in all sectors of the sport, including officiating and sport governance.

4. Event Appointments
• Review Event appointments processes to ensure that they are fair, well-defined and transparent.

5. New Talent
• Work in partnership with our stakeholders to enable the identification and support the promotion of a new wave of talented and diverse volunteers into World Sailing Committees and the Race Officials community.

6. Race Official Education
• Review race official education provision and develop and improve CPD for existing WS race officials.

7. New Disciplines
• Improve governance, administration and education of the new race official disciplines and develop existing disciplines with respect to new Olympic events.

8. Communications
• Improve communications with WS race official community.

The last couple of years, the efforts in the ROC area has been centered around these strategic areas.

About two years ago, we had an increase of staff resources to the ROC area from one to two. This was very welcome and has improved the services offered considerably. Therefore, we hope that this level of staff resources can be maintained over the following years.

Finally, I want to give my sincere thanks to the 42 committee and sub-committee members, the working party members, the current two staff members and our assigned vice-president for all their hard work and support to our activities.

Jan Stage
Chairman of Race Officials Committee
Reports from Sub-Committees and Working Parties

1. International Judges Sub-committee (IJSC)
2. International Measurers Sub-committee (IMSC)
3. International Umpires Sub-committee (IUSC) – not included
4. Race Management Sub-committee (RMSC) – not included
5. International Classifier WP (IC)
6. International Technical Delegate WP (ITD) – not included
7. Conflict of Interest WP (Col) – not included
8. Match Racing Organization and Race Management WP (MR-ORM)
9. Race Officials’ Use of Footage from On-Board Cameras WP – not included
10. Race Official Application Document WP
11. Rule 42 WP
12. RO Manuals WP (MAN) – not included
13. Travel Grant WP (TG)
14. Race Official Website WP
15. Q&A Panel
IJSC Report to ROC 2020

IJ Seminars and education:

During 2020, 2IJ seminars were going to be approved by IJSC: Belgium and USA. Due to the health global crisis, only the Belgium on was run at the beginning of March. More applications were received but due to the lack of budget they could not be approved. A NJ seminar is going to be held in Thailand end of the year, at cost cero for WS as it for free.

IJ Renewal Exam:

Till October 2020, 48 IJs took the renewal test, 3 of them failed. New questions have been added to the database. Now the test takers get a certificate and the exact mark they got, till now it was only a failed/passed.

Judges Manual:

Judges Manual is being updated to be ready for the new rule book.

IJ Report System:

The IJ report site system is hosted in a server that is not linked to WS web site. It is important that in the future the system is integrated and controlled by WS, and linked with the renewal system in order to make it much simpler of those that have to renew.

Recommendations:

Link between the IJ report system and the renewal applications.

Communications to event organizers to provide air tickets or immediate reimbursements for ROs travelling to events.

October 2020
The period November 2019 - October 2020 has been characterised by the Covid-19 pandemic leading to a cancellation of a large number of events and the IMSC’s training & development programme.

Together with the other disciplines the IMSC defined the approach for IM applications in periods affected by the pandemic.

In terms of IM grouping, the existing system has been finetuned and following approval by the ROC, IMs will be invited to apply for confirmation/review of their grouping. This will help the IMSC and the EAWP together with the classes in the coming years to appoint officials to major events.

The impact of the postponement of reference events in 2020 and 2021 on the appointment processes for the 2021-2024 period will be looked at by the next IMSC on a case-by-case basis.

The Sub-Committee has seen an evolution of the annual class reports and will discuss the need to make IM event reports mandatory in order to obtain the necessary event information for the IM renewal process.

In terms of interaction with the Executive Office, despite furlough due to Covid-19 we can speak about a step forward in terms of communication with the Events Department.

On the other hand, due to a misjudgement by the CEO, President and Board the entire Technical & Offshore department was put on furlough. This has led to a loss of a number of opportunities to deal with certain topics in times where classes and officials were (aside more challenging professional conditions) more available for dealing with the administrative and technical topics.

The IMSC strongly recommends for the strategic plan 2021 – 2024 that the CEO, President and Board make sure that if furlough is to be implemented that not only in the Events Department but also in the Technical & Offshore Department a minimum number of staff members remain on duty at all times to provide services to the Classes and to the IM community.

Interaction with the World Sailing classes remains a point of attention and some of the topics to work in the 2021-2024 period will among others be:

- the representation of IM appointments to classes (groups) on the World Sailing website;
- ensuring each World Sailing Class has at least 1 IM appointed to their class / classes group.
Report to ROC from International Classifiers working party

1. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic there is no IC activity in 2020 except that there was IC Panel at Hamburg in October for the Inclusive Sailing Championship. There were 34 sailors and 17 boats competing (2-person boat).

2. There are 5 IC applications for a 4-year renewal this year. The IC working party is going to propose to ROC to approve all of them since they all meet the requirements.

Rut Subniran
IC working party
Match Racing Organization and Race Management WP

Members:
Tatiana Ermakova (RUS) – Chair
Michael Röllich (FIN)
Flavio Naveira (ARG)
Russell Green (NZL)

The working party has reached its goal and World Sailing Match Race Organization and Race Management Manual 2020 has been written and presented to the Chairs of Race Officials Committee and Match Racing Subcommittee.

It consists of 6 sections and 7 appendices including one xls file containing match race pairing program. The Manual describes the process of organizing of a match racing event of any level (excluding WMRT or America’s Cup) and running races on the water. It contains parts of the World Sailing Race Management Manual where appropriate especially while describing on-the-water part of an event. Appendices include the formats and different race management forms.

This Manual is a reference guide for Race Officers, with the aim of contributing to consistency in Match race management all over the world and the importance of Race Officer participation in pre event organization.

As the Manual contains the links to different on-line resources an eye should be kept on keeping them up-to-date.

We had a pleasure of contributing into the development of match racing and hope that this Manual will help the potential and existing organizers and race officers to succeed in running match race events all over the world.

14/10/2020
Tatiana Ermakova
I think that this year we managed to have the document on time and without the usual problems of the past. And from now on this work should be very simple and easy to manage, as we have the document template ready and probably not much to change in the contents in the near future. Only possible trouble may come from the Covid-19 side effects with missing events etc, and the next ROC may decide to introduce further adjustments to the system.
To: Race Officials Committee  
International Judges Sub-Committee  
From: Chair - RSS 42 Working Party  
Subject: Annual Report - October 2020

Introduction
The current RSS 42 Working Party was formed in May 2017. The members are Doug Elder (NZL) - Chair, Giorgio Davanzo (ITA), Michal Jodlowski (POL), Kai Masuda (JPN), Eric Mehlbaum (NED), Bill O’Hara (IRL), Sofia Truchanowicz (POL), Iskra Yovkova (BUL).

Objectives
The objectives of the working party are:
- Work to improve the on-the-water judging of RSS 42 by providing educative materials and other information.
- Review RSS 42 (and appendix P) and if thought necessary propose changes.
- Review RSS 42 official interpretations and if thought necessary propose changes.
- Monitor event practices in the use of Appendix P and if thought necessary raise any issues.

2020 Activities & Current Position
- RRS 42 and Appendix P is well understood by sailors at the top level and that issues regarding the judging RRS 42 are now rarely raised as issues at coach/team leader meetings.
- The common breaches documents produced for the Europe and 29er classes in 2018 have still not been published on the world sailing website. Publishing new documents and upgrading existing documents on the World Sailing website has proved to be impossible which is not satisfactory. Further common breaches documents have been developed and published on class websites.
- At multi-class events the practice of assigning 50% of the judges to classes and rotating the other 50% is now well established. This practice maintains levels of consistency for the competitors and at the same time helps in the development of judges. This practice has been added to the draft next version judges manual.
- Minor improvements to the judge’s manual have been proposed for inclusion in the next version. This work was done within the context of the review of the manual by the IJ Instructor group.
- The Moodle based e-learning environment continues to be used at various events. The feedback from experienced judges has been very useful. At lower level events less experienced judges working together while answering the questions has proved very successful. (This system can be trialed at https://rrs42.moodlecloud.com/ Username “42judge” password “2019”).
- Responding to email questions on interpretations of RSS 42.

2020/2021 Plans
Tasks planned for the 2020/2021 year are;
- Ongoing consolidation of the implementation of a web e-learning question and answer educational material on RRS 42 and Appendix P.
- Ongoing assistance to classes to publish RRS 42 judging resources on their class websites.
- Publishing Q & A’s to clarify interpretations where inconsistent judging has become evident.
- Ongoing reviews the RRS 42 sections of commonly used event management software (e.g. Manage2Sail, JuryBoard etc.) and suggesting improvements where appropriate.
- Responding to ad-hoc emails on interpretations of RRS 42.

Doug Elder NZL,  
Chair, RSS 42 Working Party
2020 Annual Conference Travel Grant Report

No travel grants were provided in 2020 with a major disruption caused by COVID-19 to events.

The low numbers of Travel Grants allocated reflects work undertaken to engage in the development and inclusion, where appropriate and subject to contract, of promising National Officials at the point of recommendation.

Work has taken place in advance with event organisers; classes and the relevant discipline sub committees to incorporate inclusion of promising officials in the first instance.

The ROC recommends further discussion takes place on the use of the Travel Grant and its criteria. This could be with the aim to encourage the use of funds to improve standards and development (needs/specific subject areas) of officiating alongside the view of National and International official appointments subject to the Principal Event Guidelines.

Developments in this area could be seen as an existing responsibility of each discipline in their education budget for clinics and seminars, however the now implemented grouping procedures could warrant extra personnel for assessing, mentoring and feedback purposes within the National and International community.

This could have a considerable impact upon overall aims and objectives outlined in the RQC documentation. This needs to be explored in more detail alongside how the budget is allocated as well as in collaboration with World Sailing Classes and event organisers.

Maddie Dunn
Race Officials Manager

October 2020
Following last years’ Race Official Committee conference meeting, the working party have completed the following tasks:

- The document library for each discipline has been tidied up on the website
- All documents correctly titled and dated ensuring latest version is present
  - Duplicated documents removed
- Appendix LE Expanded SI Guide added to the IRO library

The working party began working on outlining necessary requirements for the new website, including the following key points:

- Main ‘homepage’ for officials section, including news features, quick links to upcoming educational seminars and access to event appointments

- Focus on providing knowledge and educating people on the roles available in officiating

- Sub sections to include type of officiating, education, applying for International Status, Event Appointment, Duties and Procedures, Code of Conduct, Find an Official.

Megan Griggs
Race Official Executive
World Sailing Question & Answer Service Report
Racing Rules Committee – Race Officials Committee
October 2020

As the four-years committee and rules cycle is approaching to an end, this is a report reflecting our work since we were appointed in early 2017. I was trusted to chair this team with the safety of Marianne Middlethon’s support. Her loss in February 2018 was a huge blow but together with vice chair Tatiana Ermakova and the rest of team, we hope that we have made her proud.

Our work in numbers (2020 in parenthesis)

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<td>Q&amp;As leading to a rule change</td>
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The 19 Q&As missing, have not been published for various reasons

Q&As per RRS section

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Other deliverables

Since the previous World Sailing conference, additionally to the day-to-day work of the team, we have been working on leaving a legacy to help the next group taking over the work continue instead of spending time finding how the process works. The Q&A panel is a reactive group: our work depends on the questions coming in, and they come throughout the year. There is a rather large team of people involved, thousands of message exchanges and considerable volume of information. Ending our term at the end of 2020, we are proud to deliver:

- All of our operation on Trello since mid 2018. This allows us to have a group chat style discussion, which is easily available to all members of the panel to follow and review, on a computer or through a mobile app, without overflowing inboxes with emails.
- Stored on Trello is information on all Q&As which have gone through the panel, dating back to 2014, for reference.
- Restructured Q&A booklet, to reflect the sections in the Racing Rules of Sailing in a bookmarked pdf, for ease of navigation.
- When the 2021-2024 version of the rules come in effect, all Q&As will be removed from the WS website. An entry 2021-2024 Q&A booklet will be uploaded, which at that point will include the Q&As from the previous cycle that the panel considers important, updated to the latest edition of the Racing Rules of Sailing.
- Q&A working manual, attached to this report. This document describes the work of the Q&A panel and we consider it to be our legacy to the next team undertaking the task. This is a live document, meant to be a tool for the people involved in the process. These same people are in charge of keeping it up-to-date. A list of deliverables is included in the manual, and one of them is to update it and deliver a new version at the end of each term.
Suggestions going forward

1. Approval process
   This has been the most challenging area of our work in the past term. A race official somewhere in the world is waiting for the Q&A panel’s non authoritative expert opinion, and we have put considerable time and effort into it. There shouldn’t be additional, out of proportion waiting time. The Q&A panel generates output all year long, therefore we believe that it is best practice to appoint a delegate in each of our reporting committees to be the contact person to the Q&A panel, should the chair be not available. Additionally, a set period of one week should be given to the chairs/responsible persons to raise any objection. If nothing is heard the Q&A should be published.

2. Next term appointment
   When the 2021-2024 Q&A panel is appointed, special attention should be made to form a diverse team. Several parameters should be considered:
   - Collective understanding of as many race formats a possible.
   - Representation of all race officials’ disciplines
   - What happens in the next cycle? Chair, vice chair and members appointment with an at least 8-year plan.
   - Inclusion of young, promising race officials. The Q&A panel is a platform where they will gain knowledge, will learn how to look into matters from different perspectives, accept other people’s opinions and gain confidence, making them better race officials for the sport.
   - Commitment of the members. A call for interest might be a reasonable way to create the team

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank each of the members of the Q&A panel for their contribution, ideas and lively discussions during the last years. I hope that everyone has enjoyed the process.

Mats Bjorklund (FIN)       Bence Böröcz (HUN)       Lance Burger (RSA)
Natalia Chubenko (RUS)     Rosemary Collins (AUS)    Giorgio Davanzo (ITA)
Russell Green (NZL)        Rick Hatch (CAN)          Timo Haß (GER)
Sungchul Jeong (KOR)       Ewa Jodlowska (POL)       Michal Jodlowski (POL)
Trevor Lewis (GBR)         Flavio Naveria (ARG)       Andrus Poksi (EST)
Manuel Santos e Silva (POR) David de Vries (AHO)    Bruno de Wannemaeker (BEL)

Thanks to Richard Slater and Sofia Truchanowicz for their assistance in certain Q&As and special thanks to Dick Rose, who has always been available at very short notice, reliably answering questions, usually in the spirit of ‘why is rule XX written like that’.

Last but not least, thanks to our vice chair Tatiana Ermakova (RUS) for the continuous support and cooperation.

On behalf of the Q&A panel,
Marina Psychogyiou (GRE)
October 2020
The World Sailing Question & Answer Service is designed to facilitate the consistent application of the Racing Rules of Sailing. Questions may be submitted by any World Sailing Race Official, Class Association or Member National Authority, preferably through a World Sailing Race Official, via the World Sailing Executive Office at race.Officials@isaf.com.

The questions are answered by a group of experienced race officials referred to as the Q&A panel. The scope of this document is to practically layout the work of the Q&A panel. This manual assumes that the free online application Trello is used.

WS office
- There is one contact person in the WS office in charge of the World Sailing Question & Answer Service. Any changes are made known to the chair and vice chair of the Q&A panel.
- Upon receiving a question regarding the application of the Racing Rules of Sailing, the WS office forwards the question to the Q&A panel's chair and vice chair and acknowledges receipt to the submitter.
- When the Q&A is answered, the WS office publishes it in the dedicated section of the WS website, informs the submitter that their question has been answered and notifies all WS Race Officials, Class Associations and Member National Authorities.
- All the communication with the submitter is made through the WS office.

Reporting Committees
The World Sailing Question & Answer Service is a joint operation of the WS Racing Rules and the WS Race Officials committees and the chairs of those committees jointly appoint the members of the Q&A panel. The Q&A panel generates output all year long, therefore it is best practice to appoint a delegate in each of those committees, to be the contact person to the Q&A panel, should the chair be not available.

Q&A backstage
- Upon receipt, a card with the Q&A’s name is created in the ‘BACKSTAGE’ Trello board, under the list ‘pending’.
- If the question is not clear, clarifications may be asked to the submitter through the WS office.
- The question is put in the Q&A template, a title is given and, if needed, it is reworded to correspond to the Q&A format.
- The Trello card is color coded, depending on the corresponding section in the Racing Rules of Sailing that the question refers to.
- The question is sent to a three-person panel and a 2-weeks deadline is set for the production of the first draft. The card is moved under the list ‘with small group’.
- If no draft has been received at the set time, a reminder is sent, offer is helped, and possibly additional members are appointed to the panel.
- When the draft is received, it is formatted and edited for spelling and syntax errors.

Q&A panel discussion
- The small group draft is moved to the ‘Q&A panel’ Trello board under the list ‘in progress’. The panel members are notified of the new Q&A added and informed of the discussion leader.
- Panel members give their opinion and suggestions. The discussion leader moderates the exchange of opinions and produces the final draft, preferably with a general consensus or strong majority.
- The final answer is edited for consistency in wording and style and there is a final call for comments before moving the Q&A to the next stage.
**RRC and ROC chairs approval and publishing**
- The Q&A is sent to the chairs of the reporting committees or their appointed delegates and if needed, a short brief is given on the background. The card is moved under the list ‘pending approval’.
- A period of one week is given to the chairs to respond. Any comments are discussed and if necessary incorporated in the Q&A.
- At the end of the comment time, the Q&A is brought in the publishing format, given the publishing name, inserted in the booklet and sent to the WS office for publishing. The card is moved under the list ‘to be published’.
- When the Q&A is published, the card is moved under the list of the completed Q&As of the current year.

**Afterlife**
- Depending on the content, a Q&A may go to the Racing Rule Committee for further consideration, including becoming a Case, a Call or be the grounds for a rule change.
- With the end of the validity of a rules’ version, the Q&As also become invalid. In many cases the rule has changed, a case has been published or even the Q&A itself is not considered to be of great value. During the four years but mainly in the second half of the last year, after the publication of the new version of the rules, each Q&A is assessed. If it is decided that it shall continue, it shall be updated to any rules change. It is recommended not to keep too many Q&As: an out of proportion Q&A booklet is not desirable.
- Whatever happens to the Q&A, it is marked, or color coded as appropriate on its card in the Trello board

**Specials**
- In some cases, and for various reasons, it might be appropriate that a Q&A is answered privately. In those cases, the Q&A is processed as per the system described in this manual, but the answer is sent to the submitter without being posted on the World Sailing website or included in the booklet. The card is moved under the list ‘Specials’
- When the members of the Q&A panel are not able to reach an agreement about a Q&A, the question is referred to the RRC. The card is moved under the list ‘Q&As referred from panel’ on the ‘RRC work’ Trello board.

**General advice**
- Check if a Case or a Q&A on a similar situation exists or existed before.
- During the discussion, make sure that all opinions are heard and considered.
- If there is no agreement between the members of the three-person panel, let the full panel see the options.
- Identify the essence of the question and if the discussion is derailing, re-direct the focus of the panel.
- Often a discussion reaches a dead end. It might be worth to let it rest for a while and revisit it with a fresh mind.
- If there are two strong views, summing up the two views and recording who supports what might help. Often one side manages to convince the other.
- Additional input from a specialist or an authority may be requested if necessary. This can be invited either directly or through the WS office or through the RRC or the ROC.
- If despite all attempts there doesn’t seem to be a consensus, it usually means that there is a flaw in the rule. The Q&A panel’s opinion is not authoritative, the matter should be referred to the RRC.
- Often it is necessary to make a slight change to the question.

**Q&A names**
- Upon reception, each question is given an alphanumeric working name. This name consists of the current year followed two letters, i.e. Q&A 2021 AA. The letters are reset at the beginning of the quad, avoiding double names. The name remains with the Q&A even if the Q&A is subsequently withdrawn or referred to another group within WS.
- When a Q&A is ready to be published or privately answered to the submitter, it is given a name consisting of the year and the Q&As serial number. The numbers are reset every year, i.e. Q&A 2021.001
- A record of the Q&A names and titles is kept in the BACKSTAGE Trello board under the list 'Q&A control'.

**Q&A ‘style’**
A template is attached, including fonts, sizing, spaces. Some comments on the content:
- A title is set, a situation is described, and a question is asked.
- Irrelevant information is removed.
- The question shall not refer to a specific case at a specific event. The Q&A panel is not an appeals service!
- Wording is as consistent as possible with the wording of the RRS.

**3-person panel appointment**
Before bringing a question to the full panel, it is faster to have a base draft as a starting point. A three-person group will usually be efficient, with a balance of speed and quality of output. When appointing the members of the three-person group to a Q&A, the nature of the question needs to be considered, in relation to the members of the three-person group, who shall collectively possess the appropriate experience, leadership and fresh/alternative ideas. One of the members is appointed to be the discussion leader and will stay with the Q&A until it is ready to move to the approval stage. The groups are not fixed, members alternate and work with different people. It is desirable that the workload is being shared among all panel members, according to availability. A record of the three-person groups appointments is kept in the BACKSTAGE Trello board under the list ‘Q&A control’.

**Trello boards**
A Trello board is a series of lists, with cards attached. It is possible to add documents, comments, links and images on each card. The cards may be dragged and dropped from one list to another. The Trello boards make it possible to have all the Q&A panel’s work in one place and with the search function is easy to find one’s way through the cards. The Q&A panel Trello board holds information on the panel’s work dating back to 2014. Every stage of the process is represented in lists and each Q&A has its own card. There are two Trello boards dedicated to the Q&A panel work.
- The BACKSTAGE Trello board is accessible to the chair and vice chair of the Q&A panel, the chairs of the ROC and the RRC or their appointed delegates, and the contact person in the WS office.
- The Q&A panel Trello board is accessible to all the members of the Q&A panel, the chairs of the ROC and the RRC or their appointed delegates, and the contact person in the WS office. It is the main working platform of the Q&A panel and it holds the information of the World Sailing Question & Answer Service.

**Booklet structure**
The Q&A booklet simply includes the Q&As which have survived from previous cycles and the ones published in the current cycle. It is updated every time a Q&A is published. Considering that about 20 Q&As are being published every year, a simple structure is needed. New Q&As are added at the end of the book, and a table of contents in the beginning of the book lists the code number and the title of the Q&A. For ease of reference, there is a second index list which lists the Q&As by corresponding section in the Racing Rules of Sailing. The booklet is a PDF file for electronic distribution, which includes bookmark links from both index lists, for ease of navigation through the document.

**Internal feedback**
The Q&A panel is a team of people working closely together, all year long. It is important to get their feedback on the panel’s operation but also to recognize the work. In the recent years a short meeting in person was organized on the side of the WS annual conference with the members of the panel who were present. It is important to continue the tradition when life becomes normal again, but it is probably worth organizing a virtual meeting once a year, which will have the advantage of including all members, in order to collect feedback and to give team members some form of recognition.
End of term deliverables

At the end of the four years term, a new version of the Racing Rules of Sailing applies, and a new Q&A panel is appointed. The legacy of the old Q&A panel should be:

- Copy of the current Trello board with all the information on the work that has been made, to be created and given access to the WS office at the end of the term. This will be the base of the next team.
- Updated Q&A Panel Working Manual (this document) to include the experience that was gathered during the term, to be delivered to the WS office at the end of the term
- Q&A Booklet to include the Q&As that should continue existing, after updating them to the current rules, to be delivered to the WS office on 1 January of the first year of the new quad.
- Clean Q&A section on the WS website, except for the booklet, to be made by the WS on the first working day after 1 January of the first year of the new quad.

Q&A panel members appointment

At the beginning of the four years term, when the Q&A panel is appointed, special attention should be made to form a diverse team. Several parameters should be considered:

- Collective understanding of as many race formats as possible.
- Representation of all race officials’ disciplines
- What happens in the next cycle? Chair, vice chair and members appointment with an at least 8-year plan.
- Inclusion of young, promising race officials. The Q&A panel is a platform where they will gain knowledge, will learn how to look into matters from different perspectives, accept other people’s opinions and gain confidence, making them better race officials for the sport.
- Commitment of the members. A call for interest might be a reasonable way to create the team.