2020 has been a challenging year for all aspects of sailing worldwide, including Para sailing. However, despite the cancellation of many events and planned activities including PDPs, the PWSC continued to meet monthly via teleconferencing to conduct its work outlined in the Para World Sailing Strategic Plan.

The highlights of the work this year include:

- Even though the pandemic limited much physical participation and forced cancellation of many in-person events, we held virtual webinars in lieu of PDPs hosted by Rob Holden and Massimo Dighe to introduce MNAs to Para sailing. These were done in conjunction with the Asian Paralympic Committee; regional sailing federations like the Caribbean Sailing Association and ASAF; and other stakeholders. More will be held in 2021.
- Updating of critical documents has been done. Appendix CBS (autonomous blind match racing) and the Para World Sailing Race Management Manual are in final draft and will be published post AGM. TD Guidelines have been amended to include accessibility of venues.
- Regular communications have been ongoing with the IPC and other regional sailing and Paralympic committees. The WS Media team continues to support Para sailing and promote our Para sailing heroes. A series of web courses for classifiers is in development to increase knowledge and understanding of classification for Para sailors and to attract new classifiers.
- Work continues on the ranking system for sailors in all Para equipment alongside efforts to grow participation, especially in the 2-person discipline by recognizing suitable equipment for use in developing regions of the world in addition to the RS Venture. We are expanding the list of ranking events in 2021 and will have new ranking lists for the one person and two-person keelboat disciplines.
- Though the racing calendar was very sparse in 2020, our efforts for world-wide inclusion and participation have exceeded goals set in our strategic plan with sailors from 37 MNAs participating in 2017; 41 MNAs in 2018, and 42 MNAs in 2019. The continuing problem is that we need our MNAs to have sailors participating regularly in events that are documented whether be they local, national, regional, or international. We currently have classified sailors from all 6 continents.
- We continue to work with other disability organizations and sailors with other disability types not currently recognized in the classification system to increase opportunities to engage new sailors with disabilities. In 2020, a new Inclusive World Championship was held in Hamburg, Germany which was highly successful and well attended despite COVID restrictions. We hope this will be the first of many inclusive events, pairing able bodies sailors with those who have disabilities. After signing an MoU with VIRTUS (Intellectual Disabilities), PWSC is working closely with them to become the first IF to schedule a major international event for athletes with ID.

As we move into 2021, the IPC application for inclusion in the 2028 Paralympic Games in Los Angeles becomes our highest priority. That process will begin in the second half of 2021 and will likely conclude
in the autumn of 2022 with an evaluation of applications and selection of the sport program by the IPC. Though we, as a collection of MNAs within World Sailing, have made significant progress in participation and events being held world-wide, we cannot rest here. We must continue to encourage our national authorities to support their Para sailors at both local and regional events as well as ensuring that MNAs send sailors to the annual World Championships in the Para equipment classes. This will clearly demonstrate to the IPC the full commitment of World Sailing and its member nations to Para sailing. This upcoming application may very well be the best and last chance we have to prove that Para Sailing IS relevant to the sport of sailing and is the most inclusive sport for all people of all abilities, genders, and ethnicities.

I would like to thank the members of the PWSC for their dedication and work on behalf of Para sailors worldwide. I would like to recognize our dedicated staff member, Massimo DiGhe, for his continued support. And, I would like to extend my most sincere appreciation to Vice President Scott Perry for his commitment and belief in Para sailing from the earliest days of the merger negotiations with IFDS as we worked to establish the PWSC within World Sailing to give relevance and recognition to Para sailing within the broader sailing community. It is due to that commitment and guidance that Para sailing has a voice at the table. Your support has been invaluable.

Though I know that committee membership will change with the election of the new WS Board, I hope that we will have continuity moving forward to guide the ongoing work of the PWSC and know that those of us who are committed to Para sailing will continue to support this important part of our sport. I have been blessed to Chair this committee for the last quadrennial and have been able to see progress firsthand through the willingness of this Council and Board to fund and embrace this important aspect of sailing. I sincerely appreciate your warm welcome to the Council table and for your open-mindedness in moving forward with the goals and objectives of the PWSC.