



Fair Play

The Rating Office often gets questions about rule compliance, or hears rumours that boats are (generally inadvertently) infringing IRC rules. Here we try to clarify some of the more common issues:

1. Furling Headsails (Rule 21.8)

First to note is that if the rated LP measurement is less than $1.3 \times J$ the sail is not eligible for furling headsail allowance and the boat will be rated for multiple headsails.

Your certificate will say clearly what you are allowed to use: **Multiple headsails permitted; Multiple headsails permitted (Furler $LP < 1.3 \times J$); Single furling headsail only; or Single furling headsail plus OSR H/W jib***.

If it says multiple headsails are permitted, you may carry and use any number of headsails within the rated LLMAX and HSA.

If it says Single furling headsail or Single furling headsail plus H/W jib:

- A complete headsail furling system must be fitted, on which the sail must be set.
- You can carry but not use additional sails.
- A #3 headsail is **NOT** a heavy weather jib (it will normally be too big).
- A storm jib as defined by IRC may be used by all boats at any time.
- If you are competing in a series you must use the same headsail for all races in the series.
- You cannot use an alternative furling headsail less than 95% of the rated HSA (rule 21.8.1(c))

**Offshore Special Regulations Heavy Weather Jib*

2. Changes to Boats (Rule 8.8)

Physical changes which might affect the performance of the boat shall be declared. If you are not sure whether you need to declare a change please ask your IRC Rule Authority, and we recommend you apply for a trial certificate to see the rating effect before making substantial changes.

New sails that will be the largest used when racing must be declared even if they are designed to be the same size as the last valid IRC certificate. If your certificate is Endorsed then those new sails must be officially measured.

If the certificate says the Boat Weight includes cushions and batteries then they must be carried, in their normal positions, unless the Notice of Race permits removal of the bunk cushions (Rule 22.1.2).

3. Short-handed certificates (Rule 8.2.1)

If you regularly race in short-handed classes or races in a different configuration from when fully crewed you can hold an additional, short-handed certificate for those races. Crew number itself makes NO difference to the rating, it will only differ from your 'primary' rating if you sail with, for instance, smaller sails.

Rule 8.2.1 explains the limitations of use and the data that may be changed. If you hold a short-handed certificate you cannot then opt to use your primary certificate in a short-handed class or race.

4. Non-Spinnaker TCC (Rule 8.6)

Certificates include a non-spinnaker rating for all boats rated with a spinnaker. This is only valid for races for which the Notice of Race includes a specific non spinnaker (white sails) class. What you can **NOT** do is call the race committee 10 minutes before the start of a windy race asking to use the non spinnaker TCC!

5. Crew Number and Crew Classification (Rule 22.4)

Unless a Notice of Race states differently, a default crew weight limitation of IRC crew number x 85kg applies. A Race Committee may also impose crew classification restrictions. For these issues therefore, refer to the Notice of Race. **Note: IRC Crew Number is not variable by a boat and has no effect on TCC.**

6. Sail Inventory (Rule 21.1.5)

Paragraph (d) of this Rule covers racing in a regatta: the sails you carry for the first race are those you must carry for the whole regatta. No leaving heavy sails ashore on light days, swapping spinnakers or changing to an offshore mainsail.

The exception is in the case of *significant damage*. There is no requirement to seek approval for a change of inventory after damage unless stated in a Notice of Race, but it is recommended that you do so.

There is no rating allowance for carrying fewer than 3 spinnakers.

7. Accuracy of Rated Data (Rule 9)

Rule 9, Rating Review, does not apply to equipment inspection (ie check measurement) at an event, and the figures given in 9.8 are **not** general accuracy tolerances.

7. Change of Ownership (Rule 8.8)

If you buy a boat with a current IRC certificate it is automatically invalidated and you must apply for re-registration. Please double check that the certificate data is correct. For instance, it is not unknown for internal ballast to 'disappear'! Or the previous owner opted for a different sail configuration.

9. Mast and Boom measurement bands (Definitions)

If there are no measurement bands on the mast and boom, P is measured to the bearing surface of the halyard shackle and E to the aft end of the boom so that will not help your rating! Hoist the mainsail fully, pull the clew out as far as it will go, and using paint or permanent marker (NOT tape!) mark the bands at these maximum points on the mast and boom. The mainsail must not be set beyond those bands. Note that P and E are measured on the rig, NOT the sail, so we cannot use the luff and foot measurements from your mainsail.

10. Code Zero sails

There is no definition of a 'code zero' sail. For IRC a sail set forward of the mast rates either as a spinnaker or a headsail, depending on whether the SHW is at least 75% of SF (when measured as a spinnaker). Since IRC only requires declaration of the largest spinnaker for the rating, care must be taken to ensure that ALL spinnakers carried comply with the spinnaker definition. Any 'code zero' that does not meet the spinnaker definition must be measured and declared as a headsail. Check with your Rule Authority if you have any concerns about compliance.

11. Notice of Race

Read the Notice of Race for an event carefully, not doing so can cause stress and extra cost! Look out for Rating Deadlines and Endorsement requirements.

Check for any deadline for rating changes, and comply with it. The Rating Authority may refuse to amend a certificate if it suspects the boat is taking advantage of a particular weather forecast. At busy periods ratings can take up to a week to issue even with the Expedited fee.

The Notice of Race will say if an Endorsed IRC Certificate is required. Missing or ignoring this can result in a last minute panic to get the boat weighed or measured! Check the NOR straight away, and if you need to get an Endorsed certificate contact your IRC Rule Authority as soon as possible.

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