

IRC Rating System - 2019 Annual Report to IRC Congress

1. IRC OVERVIEW

The IRC Rating System is managed by the IRC Rating Authority (RORC Rating Office & UNCL Centre de Calcul) and further administered by 42 additional rule authorities worldwide, on seven Continents, making it the most widely used Rating System available, with **IRC certificates issued in 44 countries**.

► IRC Numbers

Joint figures from RORC and UNCL show that at the end of August the overall total boats rated is 4497 which is a small reduction of 1.5% (67 boats) from the end of August 2018.

The RORC Rating Office has rated 2861 boats (new applications, revalidations, single event ratings (SERs)) to the end of August, a reduction of 3.2% (94 boats) from the end of August 2018. UNCL rated 1636 boats, 1.8% (29 boats) more than end of August 2018.

Numbers remain stable for IRC with a good strong fleet worldwide. Of particular note was an increase in certificates in South America (notably Brazil) and Australia. Worldwide fleet statistics are shown in Section 5.

2. EVENTS AND CLASSES

IRC remains the principal International Rating System for a long list of events around the world, with the offshore classics, including among others the RORC Transatlantic Race, Rolex Fastnet Race, Rolex Middle Sea Race, RORC Caribbean 600, Rolex Giraglia Race, Spi Ouest France, SNIM and the Voiles de Saint-Tropez using IRC as the rating system for the principal trophies.

National IRC Championships are held in many countries and in 2019 there were Continental Championships approved by Congress.

As well as the offshore classics and high level national racing, there are of course thousands of boats racing in IRC every week in local inshore and club races around the world. The local racers are very important to IRC and are our core stakeholders and we should continue to promote and support this area.

► IRC European Championship

More than 40 crews from all over the European continent attended the 2019 IRC European Championships at the end of June 2019 in Sanremo, Italy. The championship was hosted and organized by the Yacht Club Sanremo and UNCL.

The beginning of the championship started with two days of equipment inspection, where boats and sails were checked for safety equipment and to ensure compliance with the IRC certificate. The Event Technical Committee team was supervised by Ludovic Abollivier and composed with Jason Smithwick and five excellent



UVAI measurers. It showed the efficiency of Centre de Calcul/RORC Rating Office operational team. The event then started with 7 races in total and the Gulf of Sanremo offered perfect conditions – generally 8 knots up 20 knots in the afternoon, that offered varied and interesting race courses.

The French crew of the Farr 36 Absolutely II, skippered by Yves Ginoux, under the flag of the Nautical and Touristic Circle of Lacydon (CNTL) Marseille, was the overall winner of the Championship IRC 2019 in Sanremo. Absolutuley II also won the Corinthian trophy for IRC class 3, impressive for a family crew. The second overall podium finish was awarded to another French team, the GP42 Confluence Sopra skippered by Jean-Pierre Joly, while an Italian team of Sarchiapone Fuoriserie, the IY 998 held by Gialuigi Dubbini jumped on the third step of the podium. Overall results can be seen here: www.yachtclubsanremo.it/en/regata/irc-european-championship/

The next IRC European Championship will be held in Cork, Ireland during Cork Week and as part of the Royal Cork Yacht Club’s tri-centennial celebrations in July 2020.

► **The Fastnet Race**

Alongside the many prestigious offshore events run using the IRC Rating System was the biennial Rolex Fastnet Race. With over 330 boats competing in 6 IRC Classes including 63 Entries in the IRC Two handed class. The overall winner and winner of IRC Zero Class was David and Peter Askew from the VO70 aboard their VO70 Wizard.



► **The Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup**

The annual Maxi Yacht Rolex Cup, incorporating the Rolex Maxi 72 World Championships, is a prestigious IRC event held in Porto Cervo, Sardinia, on the first weekend of September. The event is organised by the Yacht Club Costa Smeralda in collaboration with the IMA (International Maxi Association). At the 2019 event, out of an entry of 47 boats, 44 competed in IRC Classes: Maxi (9 in two divisions), Wally (5), Mini Maxi (30 across 4 divisions).

For the slower Mini Maxi Division, a trial was run in co-operation with the RORC Rating Office allowing boats the option to sail with 70% crew number and gain a rating benefit.

► **2019/2020 Championships**

In late September 2020 there will be the ORC/IRC World Championships in Newport, Rhode Island, USA. This is the second time that IRC and ORC will come together for a World Championships with the previous edition in The Hague, Netherlands in 2018.

The next IRC European Championship will be held in Cork, Ireland during Cork Week and including “Cork 300”- the Royal Cork Yacht Club’s tri-centennial celebrations in July 2020. The proposed itinerary for the IRC European Championship provides for a short offshore race (circa 24hrs) around the iconic Fastnet Rock, followed by a demanding schedule of shorter inshore races.

From 3 to 5 January 2020 there will be the Australian Yachting Championships immediately following the conclusion of the 75th Rolex Sydney Hobart Race in Hobart. The championships will be solely IRC as the rating system across 3 divisions. It will also recognise the world-class fleet of blue-water racing yachts expected in Hobart through the inclusion of Australia's premier offshore race.

3. TECHNICAL DEVELOPMENTS 2019

The IRC Technical Committee continue their many discussions via formal or digital meetings and email etc. Rule changes were agreed to present to the IRC Congress in November and a good number of rating calculation development were discussed:

▶ Rule Changes

- Rating certificates
- Short-handed certificates
- Inshore racing
- Whisker pole
- Sail Materials
- Moveable and Variable Ballast
- Bulb weight

▶ Rating Changes for 2020

There are rating changes for the following areas:

- Whisker Poles
- Canting Keels and Water Ballast
- Keel Types

▶ Rating Changes Beyond 2019 and for Further Consideration

Technical Committee research continues into the following areas: Code Os/flying headsails, crew number, keels, number of headsails and aerodynamic drag.

4. Measurement and Rule Authorities.

We continue to work with the ORC and World Sailing in endeavouring to expand the use of IHC for sail measurement around the world, and the work on the UMS with the ORC and US Sailing continues and is becoming more important with our cooperation over the IRC/ORC World Championships in 2020.

5. Fleet statistics

So as to provide more suitable statistics for comparative purposes we have included the total number of certificates issued as well as the number of boats rated for each of the last 5 years in a table below. From this we can see that the predicted number of certificates for 2019 is in the region of 7,000 worldwide, to approximately 5,000 boats.

IRC Certificate Distribution at 31/8/18

To 31 August 2019											
Country	Continent	Region	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2018 to 31/8/18	2019 to 31/8/19	boats 2019 - 2018	if over 10 boats % difference
MRI	Africa	North	17	4	13	5	9	8	0	-8	
JPN	Asia	North	311	309	293	296	269	265	264	-1	
KOR	Asia	North				1	3	3	1	-2	
TPE	Asia	North			5	5	5	5	9	4	
RUS	Asia	North			11	10	13	8	8	0	
CHN	Asia	North	96	62	80	72	86	70	76	6	
IRL	Europe	North	335	320	310	326	301	303	289	-14	-4.6
DEN	Europe	North					4	3	1	-2	
FIN	Europe	North	16	13	12	16	19	19	12	-7	
GER	Europe	North	40	53	30	44	47	40	35	-5	
NED	Europe	North	142	147	139	126	118	116	111	-5	
NOR	Europe	North	5	7	2	6	9	9	1	-8	
SWE	Europe	North				5	12	11	3	-8	
ISL	Europe	North	13	12	12	13	13	13	11	-2	
ISR	Europe	North	34	1	2	1	2	2	0	-2	
MLT	Europe	North	68	57	48	42	49	35	28	-7	
BUL	Europe	North	29	26	28	18	20	20	20	0	
CRO	Europe	North	8	13	12	6	12	9	6	-3	
GRE	Europe	North	74	50	39	22	23	16	18	2	
ROU	Europe	North				10	1	1	0	-1	
SLO	Europe	North				1	0	0	0	0	
SUI	Europe	North				5	4	2	9	7	
GBR	Europe	North	1407	1574	1608	1472	1424	1381	1357	-24	-1.7
BEL	Europe	North	72	59	48	48	56	54	42	-12	-22.2
FRA	Europe	North	850	758	761	694	603	550	575	25	4.5
ITA	Europe	North	706	631	526	468	459	383	356	-27	-7.0
ESP	Europe	North	109	93	110	106	96	91	108	17	18.7
TUR	Europe	North	357	338	289	282	281	215	220	5	
CAN	N America	North	38	39	32	24	27	26	22	-4	
USA	N America	North	280	248	180	165	157	153	144	-9	
NCAL	Oceania	North			5	1	0	0	0	0	
BRA	S America	North	56	66	46	49	61	49	82	33	67.3
RSA	Africa	South	52	46	34	6	0	0	0	0	
UAE	Africa	South	58	57	48	39	41	7	6	-1	
HKG	Asia	South	88	92	77	84	84	68	71	3	
PHI	Asia	South	9	5	1	1	6	2	1	-1	
SE Asia	Asia	South	118	104	86	70	92	31	30	-1	
IND	Asia	South			1	11	16	3	3	0	
NZL	Oceania	South	45	27	25	14	13	10	1	-9	
AUS	Oceania	South	452	426	371	388	442	274	298	24	8.8
ARG	S America	South	13	11	2	0	10	0	0	0	
URU	S America	South	24	24	15	14	18	6	5	-1	
CHI	S America	South	32	37	18	13	17	0	2	2	
COL	S America	South	5	9	0	0	6	0	4	4	
Worldwide				54	56	68	57	48	62	14	29.2
Other	N/A	N/A	72	14	11	0	8	0	3	3	
		Totals:	6031	5786	5386	5047	4993	4309	4294	-15	-0.3
		As % of previous year:		95.9	93.1	93.7	98.9	97.6	99.7	2.1	