

ICRA Report for Ireland - IRC Congress 2021

Irish IRC and ECHO cert and market analysis

There are currently 253 IRC registered boats in Ireland, with a further 160 registered for an ECHO cert only. This is a significant jump on 2020 numbers despite Covid 19 still having an impact on the early part of the season, but means there are still less boats with IRC certs than seen in 2018/2019.

| Racing | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 |
|---------------------|------|------|------|------|
| ECHO certs issued | 465 | 488 | 344 | 413 |
| IRC Revalidation | 295 | 270 | 193 | 240 |
| IRC New | 11 | 20 | 9 | 13 |
| IRC Amendment | 39 | 61 | 15 | 35 |
| IRC Trial | 42 | 34 | 28 | 12 |
| IRC Short Handed | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| IRC Copy | 36 | 24 | 10 | 9 |
| IRC Re-Registration | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

The season started with restrictions still in place, and club “training” events were held to get around the requirement for non-competitive sport being restricted. Restrictions then held many events back due to onshore, rather than offshore issues. The largest event planned for this year was to be the Dun Laoghaire Regatta, but this was cancelled early mainly due to difficulties in managing the number of competitors onshore.

However other events did go ahead as the season picked up, with Sovereigns Regatta in Kinsale a restricted affair, the DL to Dingle Race taking place and some ISORA offshore events. Dublin bay sailing club ran regular racing every Thursday and Saturday very successfully throughout the season.

The largest cruiser racing event of the year than became the ICRA National Championships held in National Yacht Club in Dun Laoghaire in early September, with 80+ boats taking part in 5-6 classes. A great weekends racing took place in good breeze, and titles were won across all cruiser racing classes.

Autumn Leagues are also taking place in Howth Yacht Club and RCYC as we speak with regular racing

IRC Ratings

1. As in any fleets some feedback has been raised about certain yacht ratings in a number of classes, where some boats appear to perform ahead of the certification, while others struggle to perform to cert. In class 2 the modified half tonners race strongly against each other, but other boat types struggle to compete against them. While the popular J80 class has great racing against each other in one design but appears to struggle to sail to cert despite very strong crews. The drop in rating for the strong J109 fleet in Ireland means they drop into other yachts that struggle to match their rating.
2. Given the increasing desire for boats to compete in offshore and inshore events, there remains a strong demand for a 2 cert approach, where boats can have 2 certs at the same time and be allowed to use one or the other, depending on the event. It is very expensive to continuously change between certs and any accusations of late changes are overcome by events having a cut off time to have certs agreed.

3. There is a strong call for checks on IRC certs at major events in Ireland, as for too long the honour system has been used. It would be good to see RORC as the cert providers to provide a people to conduct random test on cert measurements at major events such as the National Championships.