



# IRC Rule Changes for 2024

## IRC Technical Committee

A word used as defined by ERS is printed in **bold**.

A word used as defined by IRC Definitions is printed underlined.

Proposed additions are printed in blue.

Proposed deletions are printed in ~~struckthrough-red~~.

Effective Date: IRC Rule changes apply from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2024, except in countries with June-May validity, where changes apply from 1<sup>st</sup> June 2024. See Rule 8.12

This Version: DRAFT – 15 August 2023



## 1. RATING DEADLINE AND SECONDARY CERTIFICATES

**Reason for change:** To clarify that certificates shall be declared before the rating deadline in accordance with the NoR.

Amend IRC Rule 8.2 as follows:

8.2 A **boat** shall hold a current IRC certificate valid in the country in which it is *racing*. A **boat** shall declare a valid certificate to the race organiser before the rating deadline in accordance with the Notice of Race. A **boat** shall not hold more than one valid IRC rating certificate at any time except as permitted by Rules 8.2.1 and 8.2.2.

Amend IRC Rule 8.2.1(c)

(c) A **boat** Owners shall declare use of the ~~primary or~~ secondary certificate in accordance with Rule 8.2. ~~to the race organiser before the rating deadline.~~

Effect: To make it clear that a valid certificate is required before the rating deadline. To help race organisers and owners understand that the secondary certificate has to be declared to be used.



## 2. ONBOARD SYSTEMS AND EQUIPMENT

**Reason for change:** To clarify that accommodation, equipment and systems onboard shall be fully operational.

Amend IRC Rule 17 as follows:

17.2 All systems relating to living, eating, sleeping, and stowage shall operate so as to provide the service function normally associated with the system. Items shall be presented as they are intended to be used.

**Effect:** To ensure systems that are accounted for in the rating are fully operational as intended for use.



### 3. BALLAST

**Reason for change:** To clarify that moving sails and equipment in accordance with RRS 51 is prohibited unless specified by the NoR. Other than that permitted by IRC Rule 22.3 (moveable and variable ballast)

Amend IRC Rule 22.3.1 as follows:

#### 22.3 **Moveable Ballast** and **Variable Ballast**

22.3.1 Moving **sails** or equipment while *racing* with the intention of improving performance is prohibited in accordance with RRS 51, although this may be changed by the Notice of Race. RRS 51, Moving Ballast, and RRS 52, Manual Power, are modified to the extent required by this class rule such that a **boat** may use **moveable ballast** and/or **variable ballast** and any such system shall be permanently installed and shall be declared to the [Rating Authority](#). ~~RRS 51, Moving Ballast, and RRS 52, Manual Power, are modified in respect of **moveable ballast** and/or **variable ballast** systems to the extent required by this class Rule.~~

Effect: To remind boats of RRS 51 and allow race organisers to permit moving sails or equipment, for example if a Class 40 group is racing under IRC where their class rules permit this.

## 4. SETTING OF SAILS

**Reason for change:** To clarify how a headsail (staysail) shall be set inside a genoa or spinnaker.

Also to clarify that ERS B.1.4 does not apply as IRC does not take into account the bowsprit outer limit as it measures STL to the end of the bowsprit.

Amend IRC Rule 21.3 as follows:

- 21.3 Sheeting of **Sails, ~~Sail Definitions, Bowsprits, Spinnaker Poles~~ and Whisker Poles**
- 21.3.1 No headsail, flying headsail or spinnaker may be sheeted from more than one point on the **sail**.
- 21.3.2 The tack of a headsail set between the **forestay** (included) and **mast** may be off the **boat** centreplane and shall be inboard the **sheerline**. The **tack** of a headsail set in front of the **forestay** shall be approximately on the **boat** centreplane, except when it is tacked on a **bowsprit** that is rated as articulating in accordance with IRC Rule 21.3.5. This amends RRS 54.
- 21.3.~~2~~3 All **sails** shall be set and sheeted in accordance with RRS 55, Setting and Sheeting Sails, with the following additions:
- 21.3.~~3~~4 RRS 55.3 is amended to the extent that a spinnaker, headsail or flying headsail may be tacked to a **bowsprit**. **ERS B.1.4 does not apply.**
- ~~21.3.4 Spare:~~

Effect: No substantial change to current practise, but clarification.

## 5. NUMBER OF HEADSAILS

**Reason for change:** IRC at present does not rate the number of headsails onboard a yacht. IRC simply rates the largest sail area (HSA) and largest headsail luff length (HLUmax). Multiple headsails can give a distinct advantage in two cases:

- Flexibility in sail wardrobe for varying conditions.
- The ability to increase headsail area by multiple headsails set flying, particularly for larger boats and in a reaching configuration.

It is proposed to rate the number of headsails onboard for 2024. This is the number of headsails carried onboard and does not relate to the number flown at one time. Proposals include:

- The heavy weather jib in accordance with ORS 4.26.2(a) and a storm jib in accordance with OSR 4.26.2(b) will NOT be included in the headsail number count.
- The furling headsail allowance and heavy weather jib will be incorporated into the framework as much as possible in an effort to simplify this element of IRC as the current rule 21.8 is confusing for sailors.
- In 2024 the number of headsails will be requested upon application.
- The number of headsails will be printed on the certificate.

---

Amend IRC Rule 8.2.1 as follows:

8.2.1 A **boat** may additionally hold a separate secondary valid certificate:

- (a) The secondary certificate will be clearly identified and shall only vary from the primary certificate in respect of, **mainsail widths**, **E**, **P**, **headsail dimensions**, **flying headsail dimensions**, single furling headsail allowance, the use of stored power, SPA, STL, SPL, **spinnaker pole/bowsprit**, **whisker pole**, **number of headsails**, number of **spinnakers**, number of **flying headsails**, **aft rigging**, use of **moveable ballast**, use of **variable ballast**, **internal ballast**;

---

Amend IRC Rule 11.1 and 11.2 as follows:

11.1 A Rule Authority Prescription or Notice of Race may vary the requirements of IRC Rules 8.6, 9.6, 14.1, 15.1, 15.2 (d) 21.1.5 (d) (e) and (f), ~~21.8.4~~, and 22.4. Any Rule Authority prescriptions shall have been approved by the national IRC Owners' Association when such exists. No other IRC Rules may be amended.

11.2 A Rule Authority may prescribe that for races under its jurisdiction requiring compliance with OSR Category 3 or above, **Rule 21.7.1** and 21.6.1 is varied to the extent that a **boat** may carry one more **headsail** and/or one more **spinnaker** than shown on her current IRC certificate ~~of area not greater than HSA, HLUmax and SPA~~ without an increase in rating.

---

Amend IRC Rule 21.1.5 as follows:

21.1.5 There is no limitation on the number or type of **sails** on board while *racing* under IRC except:

- (a) the limitation on **headsail numbers** (See **Rule 21.7.1** and **21.8**), **spinnaker numbers** (see Rule 21.6.1) and **flying headsail numbers** (see Rule 21.7.5).
- (b) the limitation on **sails** containing exotic materials (see Rule 21.2.2).
- ~~(c) the limitation on headsail numbers for boats rated with a single furling headsail. Except in the cases of significant damage or storm and heavy weather sails, boats claiming a rating allowance for using a single roller~~

~~furling headsail shall use the same headsail for all races in any series of races. (see Rule 21.8.1)~~

- (d) during a regatta run on consecutive days, including any lay days, the **sails** on board shall remain the same and be on board for all races. This Rule may be amended by Notice of Race.
- (e) a spare **mainsail**, may be on board but ~~shall~~ **may** not be used as a *racing* replacement, either during a race or during a regatta run on consecutive days, including any lay days. This Rule may be amended by Notice of Race.
- (f) exceptionally, in the case of significant damage or loss, **sails** may be replaced with similar **sails**. A Notice of Race may require that **boats** obtain permission from the Race Committee before replacing a **sail**. This Rule may be amended by Notice of Race.

Amend IRC Rule 21.7 as follows:

#### 21.7 Headsails and Flying Headsails

21.7.1 Boats shall not carry on board more than the number of headsails on their IRC certificate while *racing*, excluded from the number of headsails are one storm jib and/or one heavy weather jib as defined by the Offshore Special Regulations. Headsails may be set simultaneously.

21.7.2 Headsail area (HSA and FSA) shall be calculated from:

$$\text{HSA} = 0.0625 * \text{HLU} * (4 * \text{HLP} + 6 * \text{HHW} + 3 * \text{HTW} + 2 * \text{HUW} + 0.09)$$

$$\text{FSA} = 0.0625 * \text{FLU} * (4 * \text{FLP} + 6 * \text{FHW} + 3 * \text{FTW} + 2 * \text{FUW} + 0.09)$$

If foot offset of any headsail or flying headsail is greater than 7.5% of HLP or FLP, then foot offset shall be declared and foot offset shall be added to HLU or FLU in the calculation of HSA or FSA.

21.7.3 The following shall apply to a headsail, which may be used while *racing*:

21.7.2.1 HLU, HLP, HHW, HTW and HUW of the largest area headsail and HLU<sub>max</sub> of any headsail shall be declared and will be shown on the **boat's** certificate, together with HSA. HSA and HLU<sub>max</sub> are the maximum permitted values.

~~21.7.3 Any number of headsails may be set simultaneously when racing under IRC provided that headsail data is measured and declared as defined in Appendix A.~~

21.7.4 The following shall apply to a flying headsail, which may be used while *racing*:

21.7.4.1 FLU, FLP, FHW, FTW, FUW, FSFL, and FSHW of the largest area flying headsail shall be declared and will be shown on the **boat's** certificate, together with FSA which is the maximum permitted value.

Amend IRC Rule 21.8 as follows:

#### 21.8 Single Furling Headsails

21.8.1 In addition to compliance with Rule 21.7, **boats** rated for 1 headsail may apply to be rated for a single furling headsail. To be eligible:  
~~**Boats** may apply for a rating credit for using a single roller furling headsail. To be eligible:~~

- (a) **The boat** shall be fitted with a complete operational headsail furler on a fixed forestay, including a furling drum and the required head swivels.  
~~**A boat** shall be fitted with a complete headsail furling system including at least a drum, furling headfoil, and top swivel.~~
- (b) Rated HLP shall be greater than 1.3\*J. Exceptionally, this rule shall not apply to **boats** of LH greater than 30.5m and with IRC DLR greater than 60.

- ~~(c) Only a single headsail shall be used while *racing*, whose HSA shall not be less than 95% of rated HSA except that alternatively a storm jib (see Appendix A) may be used.~~
- (c) Only headsails with area not less than 95% of rated HSA shall be used while *racing* (including any additional headsail permitted by Rule 11.2) except that alternatively a heavy weather jib or storm jib may be used .
- ~~21.8.2 A **boat** may declare that she may alternatively use a heavy weather jib (see Appendix A). Provided that she complies with Rule 21.8.1(a) and (b), she will remain eligible for the rating credit but at a reduced rate.~~
- ~~21.8.3 Except in the cases of significant damage or a storm jib or heavy weather jib as appropriate, the same headsail shall be used for all races in any series of races.~~
- 21.8.2 The same single furling headsail shall be used for all races in any series of races except where permitted by Rule 21.1.5f.
- 21.8.3 A spare ~~any other~~ headsail may be on board but shall not be used as a *racing* replacement. ~~This Rule may be amended by Notice of Race.~~



## 6. ENDORSED SAIL MEASUREMENT STAMPS

**Reason for change:** From 2024 rule authority validity date (January or June) it is proposed to require sail measurement stamps on sails that have been measured for an IRC Endorsed Certificate. This is to help competitors identify the correct maximum sails for events and aid equipment inspection at events when checking sails.

This rule is effective notice to sailmakers and competitors ready for the 2024 season. In reality, many sails already have IMS, ORC or other rating system stamps.

Add IRC Rule 21.4 as follows:

- 21.4 All sails certified after 2023 and used onboard a boat with an ENDORSED IRC Certificate shall have a measurement sticker or stamp which includes the required IRC dimensions and sail area if applicable. The stamp shall be placed at the head of the sail, except for sails where the head may not easily be inspected (e.g. furling sails) in which case, the stamp shall be placed at the clew. The measurement shall be carried out by a sail measurer approved for IRC measurement by their Rule Authority, MNA or an In-House Official measurer and shall date and sign the stamp with the identification mark issued to that measurer. This Rule may be amended by Notice of Race or a Rule Authority.



## 7. SAILS - GENERAL DEFINITIONS

**Reason for change:** To reflect the use of the text “heavy weather jib” in the IRC Rule.  
Amend IRC Definition A5 as follows:

### A5 - SAILS - GENERAL

~~HWJ~~ ~~Heavy Weather Jib. See OSR paragraph 4.26.~~

Heavy Weather Jib      See OSR paragraph 4.26.



## 8. MAINSAIL DEFINITIONS

**Reason for change:** To reflect the text in IRC Rule 21.5.2 and the potential that a boat may use different mainsails with different ratios of widths but below the maximum permitted. Amend IRC Definition A7 as follows:

### A7 - SAILS - MAINSAIL

MHW	<del>The half width of the mainsail.</del> The maximum permitted mainsail half width.
MTW	<del>The three-quarter width of the mainsail.</del> The maximum permitted mainsail three-quarter width.
MUW	<del>The seven-eighths width of the mainsail.</del> The maximum permitted mainsail seven-eighths width.



## 9. FLYING HEADSAIL DEFINITIONS

**Reason for change:** To open up the range of design for a flying headsail as the rule is not being abused and a wider range is more flexible for sailors and designers:

### A5 - SAILS – GENERAL

Flying Headsail      ERS G.1.3(d) shall not apply. A **sail set flying** tacked down forward of the forestay that does not meet the definition of spinnaker and without battens and with a **half width** (measured as a spinnaker) equal to or greater than **60% 62.5%** of **foot length**. A flying headsail shall be tacked down no greater than STL<sub>FHmax</sub> and approximately on the **boat's** centreline, except when it is tacked on a declared articulating **bowsprit**. A flying headsail may be entirely furled but shall not be set reefed while *racing*.