



RORC Rating Office

GBR IRC Committee – Rating Office Report 2024

17th September 2024

Introduction

For IRC in the UK this year we have seen a good flow of IRC certificates. 2024 has shown a slight decrease in certificates compared to 2023 but remains an increase on 2022 and 2021. The UK represents around 25% of the worldwide fleet. Encouragingly we continue to see old revalidations. Events have seen particularly good entries in offshore and day coastal racing and the strength of interest in two-handed racing continues.

There has been an abundance of offshore races through the RORC and JOG Calendar, and the many regional IRC championships including the IRC National Championship.

GBR IRC Statistics

To avoid confusion numbers listed are to the end of August each year. This generally increases by around 40 boats between 31 Aug and 31 Dec. In 2024 we see stability in racing participation in most areas; overall the number of UK rated boats has reduced slightly by 5% from 2023. Details are shown in the table below.

Full certificates only - no. of boats									2024 - 2023 change	
Area	Code	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Number	%
Central S. Coast	101	603	609	437	536	532	545	504	-41	-7.5%
Dorset	102	66	70	37	52	56	56	52	-4	-7.1%
Sussex	103	60	50	40	40	42	56	62	6	10.7%
East Coast: Kent, Essex, Ipswich & Norfolk	104	117	117	68	79	78	73	84	11	15.1%
South West	105	214	216	122	157	166	171	158	-13	-7.6%
Midlands (sailing area unknown)	106	0	0	1	1					
South/Mid Wales	107	44	40	24	29	37	37	39	2	5.4%
North Wales	108	36	38	28	38	36	32	32	0	0.0%
Liverpool/ Blackpool & Fleetwood	109	17	17	18	13	12	16	15	-1	-6.3%
Yorkshire/ Lincolnshire	110	40	32	16	16	16	19	15	-4	-21.1%
Northern Eng: Lake District/ Newcastle	111	5	9	6	3	4	4	4	0	0.0%
Isle of Man	112	7	10	4	7	11	9	6	-3	-33.3%
Scotland	113 & 114	39	34	23	19	24	23	29	6	26.1%
Channel Islands	115	57	58	47	46	47	50	43	-7	-14.0%
Northern Ireland	117	60	57	27	47	51	51	43	-8	-15.7%
TOTALS:		1365	1357	898	1083	1112	1142	1086	-56	-4.9%

The secondary certificate continues to prove popular with 95 secondary certificates issued this year; this includes changes for offshore racing and short-handed racing. In the majority of cases differences between primary and secondary certificates are number of sails, choice of largest sails and use of water ballast.

The following table shows the total number of boats with full IRC certificates, including those issued under the Advocate Scheme, to 31 Dec 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023; 2024 figures are to the end of August; these also show number of Secondary certificates in each area and Single Event Ratings.

See below for more about the Advocate Scheme and SER. Please note that boats may change racing areas between 31 Aug and the end of the year.

Area	Area code	Total full 2019	Total full 2020		Total full 2021		Total full 2022		Total full 2023		31-Aug-24			
			Full	inc Adv.	Full	inc Adv.	Full	inc Adv.	Full	inc Adv.	Full	inc Adv.	SEC	SER (by race area)
Central S. Coast	101	623	472		559		540		554		504		61	34
Dorset	102	72	41	22	55	37	62	37	58	52	52	38	1	
Sussex	103	50	42	8	40	11	45	10	57	20	62	24		
East Coast: Kent, Essex, Ipswich & Norfolk	104	118	72	19	83	11	83	4	78	1	84	0	5	
South West	105	220	128	23	161	24	174	30	172	27	158	26	8	
Midlands (sailing area unknown)	106	0	1		1									
South/Mid Wales	107	41	31		29	6	39	5	37	10	39	13		
North Wales	108	40	30		39		34		33		32		6	
Liverpool/ Blackpool & Fleetwood	109	18	18		14		15		18		15			
Yorkshire/ Lincolnshire	110	32	16	8	16	11	17	11	19	11	15	9		
Northern Eng: Lake District/ Newcastle	111	21	6		15	9	17	10	15	10	4			
Isle of Man	112	10	4		7		11		9		6			
Scotland	113 & 114	35	23		20		23		24		29		4	
Channel Islands	115	61	52	7	45	5	49	3	50	6	43	5	3	
Northern Ireland	117	58	29		49		54		57		43		7	
TOTALS:		1399	965	87	1133	114	1163	110	1181	137	1086	115	95	34
TOTAL SER		38	0		45		50		38		34			
TOTAL IRC RATED BOATS		1437	965		1178		1213		1219		1120			

IRC Advocate Scheme

The Advocate scheme continues to deliver good results and at 31 August 2024 represents about 11% of the total GBR boats rated. The success of the Advocate Scheme is primarily down to the excellent relationships we have with the Clubs and the passion they share for IRC. We never underestimate the efforts the individuals in the clubs put in and appreciate their drive and commitment.

The total number of boats issued certificates under this scheme is 88 in 2020, 114 in 2021, 111 in 2022, 137 in 2023 and 115 in 2024 so far. Note that Windermere apply for their certificates later in the year for autumn/winter racing. The distribution is shown below:

First Year	Cert code	Club	Contact name	31-Aug 2020	end 2020	31-Aug 2021	end 2021	31-Aug 2022	end 2022	31-Aug 2023	end 2023	31-Aug 2024	end 2024
2014	500	Flushing	David Mitchell	7	7	3	3	1	1				
2015	502	Scarborough YC	Steve Winrussell	8	8	8	6	11	11	11	11	9	
2015	503	Weymouth	Mike Street	22	23	36	37	41	42	45	46	38	
2016	505	Royal Dartmouth	Mike Moody	23	23	23	24	25	25	27	27	26	
2016	506	Windermere	Stephen McGibbon				9		10	1	10		
2016	507	Sussex YC	Chris Hawks	8	8	11	11	10	10	20	20	24	
2016	508	St Helier YC	James Keet	7	7	5	5	3	3	6	6	5	
2018	513	New Quay YC	Chris Seal			5	6	5	5	10	10	13	
2018	514	Royal Yorkshire YC	Faye Jordan			5	5						
2019	515	West Mersea YC	Paul Jackson	12	12	8	8	4	4	1	1		
2023	516	Parkstone YC	Ian Braham							6	6		
				87	88	104	114	100	111	127	137	115	

Some feedback from the scheme:

Chris Hawkes is the new Advocate for Sussex, taking over from Antony Tomkins. Sadly Mike Moody from Royal Dartmouth passed away in June; Mike worked very hard helping boats at his club and he will be missed by all of us at the Rating Office. We are hopeful the club will be able to find someone to take on his role.

General feedback is that the Advocate Scheme really helps. Advocates mentioned liking having direct access to the Rating Office for queries, and the discount which is a benefit especially when other costs such as moorings are increasing (significantly in New Quay). It is felt 'nothing comes close' to IRC and that IRC provides competitive racing. To quote one of our Advocates 'I appreciate we are not high end racing from a monetary point of view, but we are very competitive and love the sport'. Weymouth have been using the Advocate Scheme for around 9 years and have recently introduced a short handed series at the weekend to boost numbers. They are also considering the feasibility of starting a low cost sportsboat class to try and encourage cadets into yacht racing.

Single Event Ratings

The Single Event Rating scheme is limited to six specific events and the majority are issued for the Round the Island Race, which is the event for which SER was originally conceived. The number of SERs issued each year is stable and 34 boats have held Single Event Ratings in 2024.

The number of SERs issued for each event in recent years is as follows:

SINGLE EVENT RATINGS	Ref.	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Round the Island Race (June)	1	27	0	29	33	24	23
Cowes Week (Aug)	2	4	0	6	6	4	4
Panerai British Classic Week (July)	3	5	0	5	4	5	7
Three Peaks Yacht Race (June)	4	2	0	5	3	3	0
Little Britain Challenge Cup (Sept)	5	1	0	0	1	1	0
Hamble Classics (trial for 2022)	6				3	1	0
		39	0	45	50	38	34

IRC Classes

The RORC Rating Office continues to support the GBR IRC Classes and their events including Cape 31, HP30, RC35, Performance 40, RC1000 and RC900 classes. These classes have their own class rules with rating bands

and often other limits such as DLR and construction etc. The Rating Office assist the classes with their rules and offer information and advice whenever possible.

The Rating Office continue the technical consultancy contract with Nautor Swan Classes and several Swan events have been attended. The office also maintains a close working relationship with the International Maxi Association (IMA) offering technical support to the IMA and the owners, and continues to work with the IMA on the rating of reduced crew and other initiatives.

GBR IRC Championships

It is encouraging to see that the GBR regional championships went well this year with a full national programme of events culminating in the IRC Nationals in Poole in May which proved a very successful event with 51 entries. The RORC Rating Office and Race Team were heavily involved with the organisers with Andrew Pearce, the International Paints Poole Regatta president, mentioning he “was very pleased with the interaction between our Committee and the Rating Office which was so helpful in delivering the regatta.” The Rating Office team attended the event to observe the racing. Mike Richards (RORC measurer) attended the event as an equipment inspector checking boats for IRC compliance before and after racing. The RORC and Rating Office would like to thank Andrew Pearce for his vision and hard work, the Nationals success is largely due to his determination to make the event a success. It will be requested to consider an IRC Nationals outside the Solent again for the 2026 event and planning should start on that very soon.

In 2025 the IRC Nationals is proposed as part of the multiple centenary celebrations of the RORC and Royal Thames.

Offers to Owners

IRC Members, ie. current certificate holders, continue to benefit from a number of offers:

- Free access to Seahorse Digital editions - <http://www.seahorse.co.uk/digital/irc/>
- Subscription offer for Seahorse print editions - <http://www.seahorse.co.uk/shop/subs>
- 15% off Tuff Luff products - <https://www.sea-sure.co.uk>

Website, Newsletters and Seahorse issues

The Rating Office continues to issue newsletters to GBR owners with news and information regarding IRC. There are also exclusive free online IRC editions of Seahorse Magazine available to all current IRC members; these include additional IRC-specific news and information.

Weighing, Measuring and General Enquiries

The number of boats which have been weighed and/or measured from 1st January 2024 to date is 84, with loadcells still being booked out for October and November. Hamble is our busiest area for measurement, closely followed by Cowes.

There has been commensurate weighing and measuring during 2024 according to the certificate activity. We have enthusiasm from owners for the racing season and the good programme of events.

As an additional service to IRC certificate holders we continue to help owners and designers in obtaining stability information for racing in the Offshore Special Regulation categories. This can involve helping owners understand stability and also putting them in contact with people who can undertake work to assess the stability.

General enquiries to the office have been high this year with a notable increase in owners new to IRC or returning after a break from racing, including owners from YTC who are wanting to apply for an IRC certificate too, which is exactly what we were hoping for.

We moved to a new internet phone system in the New Year allowing us to answer and transfer calls whether we are in the office or working from home. This is working well and making things a lot easier and continues our professional support of owners, event organisers etc.

IRC Application Process and MyIRC

MyIRC continues to be the main route for UK IRC applications and paying measurement invoices. It allows us to allocate applications to team members and process certificates efficiently. Our developer is now familiar with the system, allowing updates and changes. We continue to look at our systems and have initiated a new contract to develop the next generation of MyIRC for an enhanced user experience and more IRC tools.

Rating Office Staff

The technical team staff of Jenny, Emma and Sally have been extremely busy this year with IRC and also continuing the RYA YTC scheme with almost 1500 boats rated at the time of writing the report. A new application portal developed entirely in-house with associated web pages has greatly helped and streamlined our work on this project and next year we hope to deliver the majority of RYA YTC certificates automatically upon revalidation (with no amendments).

The RORC Rating Office team continue our representation on National and International Committees with Jenny on the RYA Technical Committee and Jason as chair of the World Sailing working parties involving keel failures and the Universal Measurement System. Jason has also worked with the RYA on developing the YTC scheme and other safety areas. Jason sits on the Maritime Coastguard Agency small boat working group to help advise on development of MCA Codes etc. The Rating Office is also the organiser of the RORC Technical Subcommittee, this is a group of renown designers, consultants, manufacturers, builders, race organisers and journalists that are working in the sport and driving development and observing the sport at a technical level.

RORC Rating Office
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IRC Championships 2025 – Applications received to approve

MAY

Event Title IRC Welsh National Championship
Venue: Pwllheli, Cardigan Bay Celtic Regatta
Dates: 2nd – 4th May 2025
Website: www.ircwelshchamps.com
Facebook: [IRC Welsh National Championships | Facebook](#)

Event Title IRC Bristol Channel Championships
Venue & dates: Portishead: 3rd – 4th May 2025
Cardiff: 24th – 25th May 2025
Website: www.shanghaicup.co.uk

Event Title IRC Scottish Championships
Venue: Tarbert, Loch Fyne; Clyde Cruising Club
Dates: 23rd – 26th May 2025
Website: www.scottishseries.co.uk

JUNE

Event Title IRC National Championships (RTYC 250th Anniversary Regatta)
Organised by: Royal Ocean Racing Club & The Royal Thames Yacht Club
Venue: Cowes, Isle of Wight
Dates: 13th – 15th June 2025
Website: www.rorc.org

JULY

Event Title IRC East Coast Championship
Venue: Ramsgate Week
Dates: 23rd – 25th July 2025
Website: www.ramsgateweek.com

Event Title IRC South West Championship
Venue: Royal Dartmouth Yacht Club
Dates: TBC
Website: TBC



SEPTEMBER

Event Title **IRC Channel Islands Championship**
Venue Jersey Regatta
Dates: 13th – 14th September 2025
Website: <http://jerseyregatta.com>
Facebook: [Royal Channel Islands Yacht Club \(Jersey\) | Facebook](#)

NOVEMBER

Event Title **IRC Inland Championship**
Organised by: Windermere Cruising Association
Dates: November 2025 – March 2026
Website: www.windermere-winter-series.co.uk