

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

Proposed revision to Sail Measurement Rules for approval at AGM on 15th February 2015

A number of owners have had an old main sail cut down for use when reefing is required. There was no provision for this in the sail measurement rules and, since the new foot of these cut down sails was seen to be below the original reefing points, the legality of cutting down sails in this way was queried. The Class Sail Measurers were asked to look into this issue and report back to the Committee. A small sub-committee was set up comprising David McFarlane (the Class Captain), William Prentice, Mick Donohoe (Sail Measurer) and Brian Bond (Sail Measurer). The Sail Measurers' findings were discussed with the sub-committee and with appointed sail makers (Watson and North). The review included consideration of the way sails are currently measured and the adequacy of the present provisions relating to windows.

New sail plans, which are attached to this report, have been prepared showing all maximum permitted measurements. These plans contain all relevant rules relating to sails.

The purpose of measuring sails is to ensure is that no sail is bigger than the permitted maximum size. All the existing maximum dimensions have been retained.

While the two ends of the reef line (at the luff and the leech) were previously defined, its centre (and so its shape) was not. It clearly needs to be. Further, the two ends were defined by measuring upwards from the foot (with a tolerance, thereby, undesirably, introducing a minimum reefed sail size). This was neither satisfactory nor good practice.

The reef line position is now to be established by measuring from the head of the sail, thus defining the maximum size a reefed sail may be. A new maximum dimension has been introduced from the head of the sail to the centre of the reef line. This dimension has been established by measuring the positions of reef lines in a representative sample of existing sails and adding an allowance, as a tolerance, to ensure existing sails comply. All existing (full) sails have a pronounced curve to the foot of the (full) sail, defined by the specified maximum dimension from head to the centre of the foot. As stated above, to date there has been no such measurement to the centre of the reef line and it has been found that the sail makers have been providing only a slight curve in the reefing line, with surprising consistency (except for a couple sails made by North in 2015 after the issue started to be discussed). While a more pronounced curve might be desirable, it has been decided that the new rules should not put existing sails at a disadvantage and so the proposed maximum dimension from head to centre of foot of the reefed sail provides only a slight curve, similar to what the sail makers have been providing to date.

It is proposed that cut down sails should be permitted, provided they comply with these maximum dimensions. Only sails which have been previously measured and passed and

used for at least one full season may be cut down. All cut down sails must be measured and passed by the Sail Measurers before they are used.

It has been concluded that the presently specified optional windows are much too small to be effective in preventing collisions. Philip Watson fitted two larger 'trial' windows to an old sail belonging to Mick Donohoe and it was tried out at Lough Boderg. This was found to be functional and of acceptable appearance (see photographs provided). Based on this trial, it is now proposed that windows of approximately this size shall be mandatory (two in the main sail and one in the jib) in all new sails and in cut down sails. It has been decided to make these larger windows mandatory because of the increased size of the fleet and the need to avoid damaging collisions (of which there have been several this season).

These proposals have evolved over an extended period, after much study of the issues and a lot of consultation. They have been approved by the Committee and are now recommended for adoption at the AGM.

It is emphasised that these newly introduced requirements apply to new sails only and that the effect of these changes is not to be in any way retrospective. Nonetheless it is recommended that boat owners have the larger windows fitted to their existing sails.