

Six months after taking the helm of the Irish Sailing Association, the President, David Lovegrove has now laid out the ISA's plans for the organisation focussed on servicing the needs of grass roots sailing enthusiasts whilst retaining the commitment to the successful High Performance programs that support our existing and aspiring Olympic athletes.

Having considered the **SRG** report the Board is making a number of operational and policy changes:

The Board regards its primary challenge as the necessity to remodel the ISA into an organisation with relevance and accessibility to its members, affiliated organisations and training centres. This has to be achieved with initiatives that are seen to have a positive impact at grass roots level. The ISA's role has to change in emphasis from being largely a regulator of standards to one of providing guidance and support to its members and the organisations affiliated to it. This will require much greater communication between the ISA and its stakeholders and we are determined to demonstrate our commitment to realising this ambition over the coming months.

Strategic Plan

Under the Chairmanship of Neil Murphy (a member of Howth and Malahide Yacht Clubs), a Strategic Planning Group is developing a draft **Strategic Plan 2015-2020**. Following consultation with the clubs and affiliated organisations, the new Plan will be presented for approval at the AGM in March 2015. The underlying focus for the Plan is to: ***“Develop Sailing in partnership with Clubs, Training Centres & Affiliated Organisations”***. The Board recognises the need for the ISA to work in union with member organisations to build a strong network of clubs and affiliated organisations. This will be the **Mission** for the next five years.

Policy Groups

Specialist groups in Training, Communications, Competition, Cruising, High Performance, Participation, Government and Risk Assessment will assist with the implementation of the Strategic Plan. These groups will play a key role in connecting with the membership and harnessing the volunteer expertise amongst the sailing community. These groups are up and running and the initiatives already underway are set out in the more detailed document.

Reorganisation

The Core or main body of the Association is being reorganised. The High Performance area remains unchanged. The objective of the reorganisation is to create a more cost effective structure providing accessible expertise at a local level to help Clubs and Affiliated Organisations, increase and retain members. That local expertise will also help facilitate access and increase the numbers participating. The efficient delivery of support services to members remains a major priority.

The roles of Training and Racing Manager are being made redundant as part of this plan. This will allow key resources be redirected at a local level through the investment in Regional Development Officers (RDO'S). It is, when finances permit, proposed to recruit an additional RDO for the Eastern Region and redefine the territories of the two existing RDO's. The changed structure will also allow the Association channel funds into areas of more direct benefit to sailors.

The RDO's, whose primary role is to support the Clubs, will each specialise in individual areas of expertise such as Racing, Participation, and Communications. After the reorganisation, Training and Racing will continue to be pivotal areas of activity and the Board is confident that the necessary expertise and resources are available to support these activities.

Refocus on Core Activities

In an environment where the ISA's members have difficulty sustaining existing activity levels, it is essential that the Association focuses resources on the core activities of members, be it sailing or motor-boating. Peripheral areas of activity are under review and some may be exited over time to ensure the focus of the ISA is not deflected from its primary responsibilities to its members.

Continuity of Operations and Service

The continuity of activities and maintenance of service remain of paramount importance to the Board and staff of the Association during this period of change. The ISA will continue to service the wide range of activities expected of the Governing Body for Sailing. 2015 will be a pivotal year in executing these changes and we look forward to working together to achieve these challenging goals.