

US Sailing Race Officer Certification

Draft Administrative Manual

Introduction

This manual sets out the structure of the new race officer certification programs. It describes each program and shows who is responsible for implementing each step of the process. The Club Race Officer program is handled mostly by the Area Race Officer (ARO) for each area of the country. The higher level programs begin with the Area Race Officer, and proceed to the US Sailing Race Management Committee. The US Sailing Race Management Committee, Sub-committee for Testing and Certification (STC) expects that there will be an initial surge of demand at all levels of certification. After the programs are in place and the initial group of applications has been processed, we expect the heaviest load to be in the Club Race Officer program.

The US Sailing Race Management Seminars are the key to all of these programs. Initially, the pool of instructors will be small and the pool of applicants large. The ARO of each area will need to work with groups in their area to find the level of demand for seminars and help establish places and times for seminars to meet the demand. The RMC hopes that there will be qualified instructors in all parts of the country, so that travel costs can be kept to a minimum. In the areas where there are initially no approved instructors, the STC and the ARO-WG need to identify qualified people and help them to become approved to teach the seminars.

The STC will continue to develop materials to help run the programs and to keep track of the information generated as people attend seminars and apply for certification. This description is only the beginning. Any ideas and suggestions to improve these programs should be submitted to the RMC.

Club Race Officer

Overview

The Club Race Officer Program certifies that a candidate is qualified to run races at the local or club level. This certification covers a basic understanding of the Racing Rules of Sailing as they relate to the administration and running of races. It also covers a basic understanding of race management practices as found in the US Sailing Race Management Handbook. While US Sailing appreciates that there are many variations in local racing practice, a person certified as a Club Race Officer has demonstrated familiarity with the rules and standard practices set out by US Sailing. This person has also shown a range of experience that helps insure that they can take a lead role in organizing and running most club regattas.

Qualifications

Membership

Applicants for Race Officer Certification must be a member of US Sailing. If the applicant is part of a family membership, then he or she must be the primary name listed on that membership. This is necessary so that US Sailing can track recognized race officers in their computer records.

Age

An applicant for certification as a CRO must be at least 18 years of age when applying.

Publications

All candidates for certification as a Club Race Officer must own a current personal copy of the following publications:

- Join the Race Committee Team
- US Sailing Race Management Handbook

Experience

Events

Each applicant for CRO certification must show experience at each of the race committee jobs listed in Join The Race Committee Team. This experience must include serving as the PRO of at least four regattas in the past four years.

Venues

CRO certification is based on experience in a candidate's home area. There is no requirement for experience beyond local racing activity. CROs should keep track of race management outside their home area, since higher levels of race officer certification do require that experience.

Recommendations

Each applicant for CRO certification must be nominated by a flag officer of a local sailing organization. This organization can be a yacht club, sailing club, sailing fleet or class organization or the local Regional Sailing Organization of US Sailing. The nominating flag officer should sign the application form and attach a letter of nomination.

Seminar Attendance

Each applicant for CRO certification must attend a one day Basic seminar and pass the Basic written exam given as part of that seminar. Basic seminars may be sponsored by a yacht club or Regional Sailing Organization, but must be conducted by a US Sailing Instructor, who will provide study material and administer the exam. An applicant may also meet this requirement by attending a two day Advanced seminar and passing the Advanced exam at or above the Club Race Officer level.

Testing Requirements

The Club Race Officer exam will be an "open rule book" test which includes True/False and multiple choice questions. Candidates must receive a passing score for certification as a CRO. Club Race Officer applicants may take this exam as part of either a Basic or an Advanced seminar.

Requirements for Renewal

Each CRO must apply for re-certification at the end of their 4 year term. When applying for re-certification, the applicant must show:

- They own the then current editions of Join the Race Committee Team and the Race Management Handbook
- They have served as the PRO, in charge on the water for at least 4 events during their last term of certification.
- They have attended a US Sailing seminar (Basic or Advanced) and passed the exam at the CRO level within the last 4 years.

Administration

The Club Race Officer certification program is administered by the Area Race Officers of US Sailing. Each area race officer will maintain a database of area residents who have been certified. The ARO will handle all record keeping for the program and report necessary information to US Sailing for publication.

New Application

Distribute applications

Each ARO will make application forms available through local organizations and clubs. These forms will also be available through the US Sailing Fax-Back program and may be downloaded from the US Sailing

Web site. Candidates may request an application directly from the ARO by mail. Once a candidate has completed an application, he/she will submit it to the ARO for processing.

Check qualifications

For each application received, the ARO should verify through the national office that the applicant is a member of US Sailing, and has bought the required publications. The ARO should review the experience listed on the form to be sure that all requirements have been met. Finally, the ARO should verify that the applicant has attended a Basic seminar and passed the Basic exam.

Issue certificates

For each successful applicant, the ARO will prepare and send out a notice of certification. The ARO will also notify US Sailing that a new certification has been given, so that new CROs may be posted in American Sailor. The ARO will enter the necessary information in the local database and be sure that the area list of CROs is up to date.

Renewal Application

Verify qualifications

When a CRO applies for renewal, the ARO will check the renewal application to be sure that the experience requirement and the testing requirement for renewal have been met. The ARO will verify with the national office that the candidate continues to be a member of US Sailing. If any of the required publications has been reissued, the ARO will need to verify that the applicant for renewal has bought the updated editions of those publications.

Issue certificates

Once the qualifications have been verified, the ARO will send the applicant a renewed certification. The ARO will also report successful candidates for renewal to US Sailing for publication in American Sailor.

Routine Administration

Maintain accurate information database

The local area database that the ARO maintains is the fundamental source of information about certified CROs. This database will contain records of personal information (name, address, etc.), race management activity, and certification status.

Report to national office

US Sailing will publish the list of certified CROs each year in the US Sailing Year Book. The information for this publication must come from the AROs each year to be sure it is accurate and current. All successful applicants for new or renewed certification will be listed in the appropriate section of American Sailor as the certification is granted. The ARO must report this information as needed for publication.

Reminders for renewal

The ARO should keep track of which CROs are up for renewal. As each CRO approaches the date for renewal, the ARO should send a reminder and a form for the CRO to use in applying for renewal. If a CRO does not apply for renewal, the ARO should update the database and be sure that an accurate list is sent to US Sailing for the next publication cycle. CROs which are not renewed will be listed as retired in the first directory published after the expiration of their term, and then deleted from future lists.

Regional Race Officer and National Race Officer

Overview

The Regional Race Officer Certification and the National Race Officer Certification are given to experienced race officers who have demonstrated the knowledge and ability to organize and run regattas at higher levels of competition. This certification shows familiarity with the additional problems found in running a regional or national level event. While previous certification is not required to apply for a higher

level certification, the requirements are cumulative and a candidate for any level of certification must meet the requirements for all levels of certification below the level being sought.

- A Regional level event is a major regatta that includes competitors from a broad geographic area or determines a regional or higher level championship.
- A National level event is a major regatta that includes competitors from all areas of the country or determines a national or higher level championship. This includes regattas that select US sailors to represent the US in international competition.

Qualifications

Membership

Applicants for Regional Race Officer or National Race Officer Certification must be a member of US Sailing. If the applicant is part of a family membership, then he or she must be the primary name listed on that membership. This is necessary so that US Sailing can track recognized race officers in their computer records.

Age

Applicants for Regional Race Officer or a National Race Officer Certification must be 21 years of age or over when their application is filed.

Publications

All candidates for certification as a Regional Race Officer or a National Race Officer must own a current personal copy of the following publications:

Join the Race Committee Team

US Sailing Race Management Handbook

US Sailing Appeals/ISAF Cases

Reporting

Each certified RRO and NRO must file an annual activity report with US Sailing. The form for filing these reports may be found on the US Sailing web site, through the US Sailing fax back system, or requested from US Sailing or the appropriate ARO. These reports will be used when evaluating a Race Officer's application for renewal at the end of each term. Since re-certification is based on these reports, failure to file these reports will delay or prevent renewal of certification.

Experience

Events

Candidates for certification as a Regional Race Officer must show experience as a Principal Race Officer in 5 regattas over the past 4 years, 2 of which should be regional level or higher regattas (see definition of regional level regatta).

Candidates for certification as a National Race Officer must meet the same requirements as for Regional Race Officer, except that one of the regattas for which they were PRO or Race Management Consultant must be a national level or higher regatta (see definition of national level regatta).

Venues

Candidates for certification as RRO or NRO must show experience as PRO in a regatta held in a venue other than the one where the candidate normally works.

Candidates for certification as NRO must show experience as PRO in at least one regatta area where current was an important factor in managing the race course.

Recommendations

Each applicant for certification must be nominated by a flag officer of a local sailing organization. This organization can be a yacht club, sailing club, sailing fleet or class organization or the local Regional

Sailing Organization of US Sailing. The nominating flag officer should sign the application form and attach a letter of nomination.

Each candidate for certification must be recommended by the ARO of his/her home area.

Each candidate for certification must also be recommended by two additional people who are familiar with the candidate's work as a PRO. These should include:

- A competitor who sailed in a regatta for which the candidate was PRO
- A US Sailing Official (CPRO, NRO, RRO, IRO, or Judge) who directly observed the candidate's work as PRO

Seminar Attendance

Each candidate for RRO or NRO certification must attend an Advanced (2 day) seminar taught by a qualified Advanced Seminar instructor.

Testing Requirements

True/False and Problem Solving

Each candidate for Certification as RRO or NRO must pass a test which includes T/F and multiple choice questions. This test is given as a part of the Advanced seminar, and there are three levels of passing grade on this test. Candidates must pass the test at the level appropriate for the certification they are seeking.

Essay Test

Each candidate for NRO must also pass a 3 question essay test.

The essay questions will be evaluated by a panel from the RMC-STC and the candidate will receive notice of the results of that evaluation.

Administration

New Application

Distribute applications

Applications for RRO and NRO are available upon request from the US Sailing office and from AROs.

Gather recommendations

Applications for RRO and NRO will be submitted first to the appropriate ARO for his/her endorsement. The ARO will send the necessary forms to all people named as references. References will return the completed forms to the ARO. AROs not familiar with a candidate for RRO or NRO may make any inquiries they feel appropriate in making their endorsement.

The US Sailing office will receive endorsed applications with references and distribute the material for consideration by the ARO-WG and the RMC at each US Sailing meeting.

Review qualifications

Completed applications with all reference forms will be evaluated by the ARO-WG and the RMC-STC to verify that all qualifications are met. Verified applications will be presented to the entire RMC with recommendations.

Issue certificates

Applicants approved by the RMC will receive notice of approval and a certificate from the US Sailing office.

Renewal Application

Verify qualifications

Applicants for renewal of RRO or NRO certification will file a request with US Sailing.

Requests for renewal will be forwarded, along with annual activity reports, to the ARO-WG and the RMC-STC for review.

The STC and the ARO-WG will review the applications and verify that the requirements have been met. The RMC will consider these applications at each US Sailing meeting.

Issue certificates

Renewal applicants approved by the RMC will receive a certificate of renewal from the US Sailing office. The US Sailing office will notify AROs of any new or renewed certification issued to a person in their area.

Routine Administration

Activity Reports

Activity report forms will be available from the US Sailing web site and the US Sailing Fax-back system. It will be the responsibility of each certified RRO and NRO to get this form and fill it out each year. The RROs and NROs should file this report with the US Sailing office. US Sailing staff will keep these reports on file for review when a renewal request is received.

Maintain accurate information database

The US Sailing office will maintain a database of all certified RROs and NROs with all necessary personal information.

Test Administration

Test Question database

Sources for questions

RMC Subcommittee for Training and Certification (STC) will develop new test questions as necessary. Any Area Race Officer or certified race officer may submit questions for consideration at any time.

Qualifying Answers

The STC will evaluate all new questions and use them in exams as needed to keep all exams current and fresh.

Each new question will be evaluated after first use to see if an appropriate number of people answer correctly

Updating

STC will review question pool annually to check for rules changes or obsolete information

STC will periodically review questions which have an excessive wrong answer rate and revise or delete them as needed.

Question Classification

Each question will be classified as to subject.

Each question will be classified as to level of difficulty

These classifications will be used to select questions for several versions of each test, such that the tests are of appropriate scope and difficulty.

Test composition

Question Selection

STC will compose tests for all levels and supply questions and answers to qualified instructors as needed for seminars.

For each level of seminar, there will be several tests, using a somewhat different selection of questions in different orders.

Tests will be rotated and replaced on a regular schedule.
Each edition of the tests will be tracked for consistency of difficulty.

Security

Test master copies will be sent to each seminar instructor as needed for each seminar.
Seminar instructor will get one copy of answers for review purposes.
Students will put their names on both the test sheet and the answer sheet. Instructors will account for all copies of test and answer sheets after each seminar and return all to the STC.
Instructors will report any lost test or answer materials to the STC immediately.

Study Questions

Sources

STC will develop sets of study questions for each level of seminar.
Study questions may come from the same pool of questions as test questions.
Study questions will also come from a separate pool of questions found not suitable for test use, but which can generate discussion or be open to interpretation.
STC will examine and update study questions annually or as needed.

Distribution

STC will supply study questions and answers to qualified instructors for distribution to seminar organizers.
Seminar Organizers will copy and distribute appropriate study questions to each seminar registrant at least 2 weeks prior to seminar with instructions to look up and write down all answers as preparation for the seminar.

Test Scoring

Tests from Basic level seminars, and the objective portion of tests from Advanced level seminars, will be scored by the instructors for that seminar and the results will be reported to the appropriate ARO for distribution to certification candidates. The essay questions from NRO candidates will be evaluated by the RMC-STC. The STC will report the results of the essay test evaluation to the candidates, and to the appropriate ARO. The US Sailing office will maintain a master archive of all test results for 4 years from the date of that test.

All letters to test candidates will include the seminar location and date, and the test score. The letter will also explain the level of certification for which that score is valid. It will also advise the candidate to include a copy of the letter with any application filed to help with verification.

Seminar Administration

Basic Level Seminar (One Day)

Curriculum

The curriculum of the Basic Seminar will be published by the RMC-STC, based on material in the Racing Rules of Sailing and the US Sailing Race Management Handbook
The RMC-STC will review the curriculum periodically to be sure all information is current.
The STC will report to the RMC annually on the status of the seminar material.

Seminar Materials

The STC will develop a seminar outline, with presentation slides in overhead projector and Power Point format.

The STC will provide each instructor with an instructor's outline with additional information and a recommended time schedule for all presentations.

A master copy of all seminar presentation material will be provided to all qualified instructors.

The instructor will provide to the seminar organizer a master copy of all material to be distributed to seminar participants.

Each qualified instructor will maintain copies of the basic seminar tests and select one for each seminar taught. Instructors are responsible for maintaining the security of any test material in their possession.

Instructor Qualification

Anyone who wants to be qualified as an instructor must be certified at the CRO level or above.

Basic seminar instructor candidates must attend an Advanced Level Seminar and pass the test at the instructor qualification grade level.

Basic Seminar instructor candidates must prepare and present a part of either a basic or an advanced seminar under the supervision of a qualified instructor evaluator.

Scheduling

Area Race Officers will coordinate the scheduling of Basic Seminars in their areas.

Organizations that want to host a basic seminar should contact the ARO in their area to get an information package. USSA office should refer any inquiries about basic seminars to the appropriate ARO.

The RMC-STC will prepare a package of information for potential host organizations on the necessary steps to organize a seminar.

The ARO will maintain a list of qualified basic instructors and will help make arrangements between a host organization and a qualified instructor.

Report test results

Basic Seminar Instructors will grade the exams taken at a basic seminar and report the results to the ARO.

The ARO will notify all seminar participants who take the exam of their grade and their passing status.

The ARO will maintain a list of seminar participants in their area who have passed the basic level exam.

The seminar instructor will also file a report of all test results with the US Sailing office for the master test archive.

Advanced Level Seminar (Two Day)

Curriculum

The curriculum of the Advanced Seminar will be published by the RMC-STC, based on material in the US Sailing Race Management Handbook and the US Sailing Judges Manual.

The RMC-STC will review the curriculum periodically to be sure all information is current.

The STC will report to the RMC annually on the status of the seminar material.

Seminar Materials

The STC will develop a seminar outline, with presentation slides in overhead projector and Power Point format.

The STC will provide each instructor with an instructor's outline with additional information and a recommended time schedule for all presentations.

A master copy, for reproduction, of all seminar presentation material will be provided to all qualified instructors.

The instructor will provide to the seminar organizer a master copy of all material to be distributed to seminar participants.

Each qualified instructor will obtain a test from the RMC-STC before each seminar taught. All test materials will be returned after the seminar, including all question and answer sheets.

Instructor Qualification

Anyone who wants to be qualified as an instructor must be certified at the RRO level or above.

Advanced seminar instructor candidates must attend an Advanced Level Seminar and pass the test at the instructor qualification grade level.

Advanced Seminar instructor candidates must prepare and present a part of an advanced seminar under the supervision of a qualified instructor evaluator.

Scheduling

AROs will coordinate the scheduling of Advanced Seminars in areas where they are needed.

Organizations that want to host a basic seminar should contact the USSA office or the appropriate ARO to get an information package. LSA/YRAs should refer any inquiries about advanced seminars to the appropriate ARO.

The RMC-STC will prepare a package of information for potential host organizations on the necessary steps to organize a seminar.

The RMC-STC will maintain a list of qualified Advanced instructors and will help make arrangements between a host organization and a qualified instructor.

Report test results

Advanced Seminar instructors will grade the objective portion of the tests and send those results to the appropriate ARO for distribution to the candidates. The instructor will send the essay portion of the tests to the RMC-STC for evaluation. The STC will send the results of the essay tests to each candidate, with a copy to the appropriate ARO. All test results will also be sent to the US Sailing office for filing in the master test archive. The seminar organizer will send to US Sailing an administrative fee for each person taking the test at an advanced seminar.

Allocation of Responsibilities:

Area Race Officers:

Distribute applications for certification upon request

Accept applications for filing

Maintain a file of all applicants for CRO certification in their area

Update when certification is granted

Update when certification is renewed

Update when a certification expires

Coordinate the scheduling of seminars in their area

Maintain a master list of seminars scheduled

Work with potential sponsoring organizations to help them select dates and plan seminars

Maintain a list of approved instructors in their area

Maintain a file of all persons taking a test in their area and the test scores (as received from seminar instructors)

Process applications for CRO for residents of their area

Verify US Sailing membership

Verify ownership of necessary publications

Verify that experience listed meets requirements

Verify recommendation of Flag officer

Verify passing test score

Issue certificate

Notify US Sailing office

Process applications for RRO & NRO

Send questionnaires to persons named as references

Attach reference questionnaires to application

Add ARO endorsement to application

Submit complete application packages to US Sailing

Review applications for RRO and NRO submitted by STC for each meeting

Approved Seminar Instructors:

Maintain a current set of seminar materials

Keep presentation materials current and in good condition

Keep master copy of hand out materials ready for copying and distribution

Keep a current set of test questions and answers

Protect the security of all test materials

Have test question sheets available for copying and use at seminars

Have current study questions ready for distribution by seminar organizers

Run seminars as requested by seminar organizers and Area Race Officers

Administer tests to those seminar participants who qualify (attend whole seminar)

Grade the objective portion of all tests and send results to the appropriate Area Race Officer

Submit NRO essay tests to STC for grading

Seminar Host Organization:

Obtains authorization from the appropriate authority to host the seminar

Invites a qualified instructor and agrees on the expense reimbursement

Publicizes the seminar to organization members and other local groups

Provides a person to act as the seminar administrator

Provides an experienced local race officer to assist with the seminar (optional)

Provides copying and mailing of seminar materials

Provides necessary facilities and equipment as detailed in instructions to seminar hosts

Provides for travel and housing for instructor if necessary as arranged in advance

Pays administrative fee to US SAILING for Advance Seminar test result processing

Race Management Subcommittee for Training and Certification:

Generate questions and complete tests for all certification levels

Generate and update seminar material for all levels of certification

Approve new instructors for all levels

Oversee the scheduling of seminars to insure all areas are being adequately served

Grade all NRO essay exams and report the scores to test takers and AROs

Review applicants for RRO and NRO

- Verify US Sailing membership
- Verify ownership of necessary publications
- Verify that experience listed meets requirements
- Verify recommendation of Flag officer
- Verify returned reference questionnaires

Verify passing test score

Notify RMC and AROs of those meeting requirements for certification

US Sailing Race Management Committee:

Review all applications for RRO and NRO certification submitted by the STC

Review recommendations of ARO-WG for each application for certification for RRO and NRO

Notify US Sailing office of action taken on each application

Make necessary applications available through RMC web page

US Sailing Office:

Make applications available through all distribution channels (mail, Fax, Web page download)

Maintain a master list of seminar dates and locations. Refer applicants to the appropriate seminar host or local ARO

Accept applications for RRO and NRO as forwarded by AROs

Prepare a file on each RRO and NRO applicant with necessary information for STC

- Original application

- ARO endorsement

- Reference replies

- US Sailing membership

- Publications purchased

Maintain file of all applicants for RRO and NRO

- Update when certification is granted

- Update when renewal is granted

- Update when status changes