

Richard H. Roberts
60 Dart Street
New London, CT 06320-4512
860-443-4621

December 10, 1995

TO: Frank Bohlen Ernie Messer
Wes Maxwell John Philip Smyth

FROM: Dick Roberts

SUBJECT: Lifeline Committee

We have been appointed to a committee to review the Off Soundings Club's requirements for lifelines and to recommend changes, if any, to our current policy.

Early on, the Off Soundings Club encouraged, but not required, conformance to the Offshore Equipment List, Category 4. (See attached sheets.) Later, compliance was required, but waivers for lifelines were allowed. In 1977, Bill Ames and I were on a committee to put together the adaptation of the Category 4 Regs -- largely converting the language and rating terminology to something the OSC members could relate to, and eliminating Regs that did not apply to the OSC events.

The Regs of the day regarding lifelines were couched in terms of (6.62) for yachts of 21 feet rating and over and (6.63) yachts under 21 feet rating. The rating referred to was that of the IOR. The OSC committee making the adaptation decided that the IOR rating had no meaning to the OSC members, then racing under the OSC rule, and selected 35 feet LOA as the crossover point. Later ORC Regs (I have a 1986 version) were changed to read 21 feet rating (28 feet overall) in (6.61) and (6.62), but OSC adaptation was not changed.

In our decision to follow the ORC Regs Category 4 in developing our own OSC Standards (rather than merely "adapting" the ORC Regs) in 1994, this problem came home to roost. Where we had been advocating the crossover at 35 feet LOA, our new Standards set that crossover at 28 feet LOA. This became known when the First Notice for the Spring Race Series was received, and owners of boats in the 28 to 35 foot LOA range pleaded for time to make the change. So, it was decided to grandfather, for 1994, boats in that LOA range that complied with the earlier requirements. This grandfather provision was extended for the 1995 OSC racing season.

Note that the item of interest is only the crossover point. Other provisions of the Regs, namely the other requirements of Paragraphs 6.61, 6.62 and 6.63, have been imposed both by the OSC adaptations and by the OSC Standard.

Remember that right from the beginning the boats in the 28 - 35 foot LOA range that raced in other events (not Off Soundings) which required Category 4 either had to comply with the double lifeline requirement or were racing improperly.

The grandfather provision has been used for two seasons, now. One could argue that there has been enough time for those owners to comply -- unless they expect us to make that exemption permanent, and we agree to do so. This has some liability considerations -- are we competent enough to make such a change in an international standard? Most of the other changes we've made to the Regs have been for clarity; some have been for economics, when considering the kind of racing we do.

I propose that we each mull this over for a bit and then write to me with your thoughts and recommendations. If what I receive indicates a consensus, I will summarize that material into a report. If there is not agreement, I will schedule a meeting for a discussion of our differences.

The OSC Lifeline Requirements

A. Early statements -- the Off Soundings Club adaptation of January 1981 and earlier

(6.6) Lifelines and pulpits

Yachts of 35 feet LOA and above shall have bow pulpits and 24-inch double lifelines in accordance with Paragraphs (6.61) and (6.62).

Yachts less than 35 feet LOA shall have bow pulpits and at least 18-inch single lifelines in accordance with Paragraphs (6.61) and (6.63).

Yachts whos shrouds are so placed that genoas must be sheeted outside lifelines when closehauled may drop forward lifelines to a lower attachment point.

Note that stern pulpits are not required, provided that lifelines of the required height and construction as above are carried aft to at least the mid point of the cockpit and thereaft are arranged as to substitute adequately for a stern pulpit.

B. The March, 1988 version of the Off Soundings Club adaptation is identical to the above, for lifelines and pulpits.

C. The April 2, 1994 version is an Off Soundings Club Standard, based on ORC Category 4.

Lifelines and pulpits: Lifelines shall be stranded stainless steel wire, minimum diameter of 1/8" for yachts under 28.0 ft LOA, 5/32" for yachts 28.0 ft LOA to 43.0 ft LOA, or 3/16" for yachts over 43.0 ft LOA. A taut lanyard of synthetic rope configured to have at least the same breaking strength as the required wire may be used to secure a lifeline gap of not over 4 inches.

In accordance with paragraphs (6.61 and 6.62), a yacht of 28 ft LOA and above shall have a bow pulpit and taut 24-inch double lifelines and a yacht less than 28 ft LOA shall have a bow pulpit and at least taut 18-inch single lifelines. Yachts shall have a stern pulpit unless lifelines are arranged so as to adequately substitute for a stern pulpit.

D. ORC Regulations for Category 4.

Essentially the same as C, above, with these additions:

The table at what appears to be (6.63) provides that

For 24-inch double lifelines, no vertical opening shall exceed 22 inches (Jan 92 & earlier)
For 24-inch double lifelines, no vertical opening shall exceed 15 inches (Jan 93 & later)

For 18-inch single lifelines, no vertical opening shall exceed 22 inches (before Jan 92)
For 18-inch single lifelines, where intermediate lifeline is fitted, no vertical opening shall exceed 15 inches (Jan 92 & later)

Where intermediate lifeline is fitted, it shall be not less than 9 inches above the working deck.

What appears to be (6.63) has three other provisions

Having to do with the location of stanchion bases
Permitting lifeline stanchion and bow pulpit to overlap, for ease of leading the headsail
Requiring lifelines to be effectively continuous around the working deck

History

Excerpts from the Sailing Instructions

1971: It is urged but not required that Off Soundings yachts conform to the NAYRU Offshore Equipment List for Class Four events.

1973: It is required that yachts participating in the Off Soundings Races conform to all NAYRU Category 4 requirements. The requirement for lifelines and pulpits has been waived for the 1973 races, but will be required at a later date.

1974: Same as 1973, but states "but will be required in 1975."

1975: It is required that yachts participating in the Off Soundings Race conform to all ORC Category 4 requirements. The deadline for requesting a waiver for a lifeline or pulpit problem was April 26, 1975.

1977: It is required that yachts participating in the Off Soundings Race Series conform to all ORC Category 4 requirements as adapted by O.S.C. [Similar to but earlier than A.]

1980: To qualify to race in Off Soundings Club races, your yacht must meet all Offshore Rating Council (ORC) Category 4 requirements (as adapted by OSC) including lifelines and pulpits.

1992: Yachts shall conform to the ORC Category 4 requirements as adapted by the Off Soundings Club. In addition, the 1989 provisions of Regulation 6.6, regarding lifeline scantlings, shall apply rather than the 1990 provisions. [The latter sentence did not appear in 1993.]

1994: Yachts shall conform to the Off Soundings Club Minimum Equipment and Accommodations Standard (based on ORC Category 4), dated April 2, 1994. Yachts 28 ft LOA to 35 ft LOA which conformed to the previous standard (at least 18-inch single lifelines) will be "grandfathered" for the 1994 Spring and Fall Race Series. [In 1995, the "grandfather" was extended to the 1995 races.]