

Statement from the International Laser Class Association

23 April 2013

The International Laser Class Association (ILCA) is aware that over the past few weeks various web postings by persons unaffiliated with ILCA may have caused some members to become confused about the current status and the future of the class. After close cooperation and direct consultation with the International Sailing Federation (ISAF) ILCA can announce the following:

ISAF and ILCA have taken steps to assure the uninterrupted supply of class legal Laser brand sailboats around the world. This includes making newly designed ISAF plaques available to all the current ISAF and ILCA approved manufacturers of the Laser dinghy in accordance with the ILCA class rules. These plaques indicate that all required fees have been paid to both ISAF and ILCA. In order to receive ISAF plaques, manufacturers must continue to adhere to the strict building specifications and one-design standards required by ISAF and ILCA.

For the avoidance of doubt, ILCA is not changing its name or taking on the management of a class association for any new brand of sailboat. Class legal Laser brand sailboats will continue to be available through ISAF and ILCA approved manufacturers and their existing dealers.

ILCA assures its members that all scheduled World and Continental Championships will be held as planned. We are excited about our upcoming regatta schedule and do not anticipate any disruption to the necessary supply of class legal Laser brand sailboats for any of our future events.

ISAF has confirmed that the Laser brand dinghy remains Olympic equipment and will be used for both the men's and women's one-person dinghy events at the 2016 Olympic Games in Brazil and remains the core equipment through the 2020 Olympics. ISAF informs us that supply contracts for the provision of the equipment for the 2016 Olympics were signed in 2012.

ISAF has approved two changes to Part One of the ILCA Class Rules. These changes have been approved in accordance with the provisions of the ILCA Constitution and the ILCA Class Rules. All necessary votes and approvals have been conducted and are officially recorded. In the case of the member vote, votes were verified for membership validity by each District or Regional authority. The results were then audited by an independent audit firm, which reported 1017 'yes' votes (89.3%) and 122 'no' votes (10.7%), showing that over two-thirds of the voting members approved the rule change as required by the ILCA Class Rules, Part Five, article 30(c).

The reasons for these rule changes have been well documented and more information on this subject can be found here: <http://www.laserinternational.org/info/2011rulechangesvotingended23rdseptember2011>

The new wording for Part One of the ILCA Class Rules is effective immediately and can be found here: <http://www.laserinternational.org/rules/classrules/partone>

ISAF has today made a public statement regarding this situation, which can be found here: <http://www.sailing.org/news/34222.php>

ILCA has been named as a co-defendant in a complaint filed in U.S. District Court for the District of Connecticut and has been recently notified of the plaintiff's intention to formally serve ILCA with the complaint. ILCA intends to vigorously defend itself if necessary, but our primary focus continues to be facilitating a meaningful settlement dialog between the parties in the hopes of reaching an amicable resolution. ILCA has always favoured a negotiated resolution to this dispute.

To be clear, ILCA is not a judge or a court of law and takes no position on the relative merits of the claims made by either of the commercial entities involved in the law suit. ILCA has always maintained that this dispute is based on contracts to which it is not a party and has repeatedly encouraged and requested the commercial parties to these contracts to voluntarily engage in meaningful settlement negotiations. ILCA once again urges the real parties to this dispute to settle their differences and avoid unnecessary expense and damage to the reputation of our sport.

With over 15,000 members organized in over 100 countries, ILCA is committed to protecting the investments made by its members and the interests of sailors on all levels -- from the local club racer to those who aspire to represent their countries in the Olympic Games. ILCA cannot allow a commercial dispute to disrupt 40 years of work fostering the sport of sailing and developing the most successful youth and adult racing class in history.

ILCA is optimistic about the future of the Laser class and confident about its leading position in the sport of sailing. We remain dedicated to organizing great regattas around the world and protecting the organisation and strict one-design principles that have served as the cornerstone of our class.