

Rule 89.2 (a) specifies that the Race Committee publish written sailing instructions. In the context of Ontario Sailing events, this will normally be the responsibility of the Principal Race Officer, but should include the Race Officers as well as the Chief Judge (Note: The only exception would be in those cases when there is only one course, and therefore no Principal Race Officer – in which case the Race Officer is responsible).

There are two key elements to writing Sailing Instructions. The first is that they are Rules – see Definitions in the Racing Rules of Sailing. The second is that they express the intentions of the Race Committee and the obligations of the competitors – see note on the seven principles below. For this reason, the Principal Race Officer should involve the Race Officers in this task. After all, it is the Race Officers who will be running the races.

The Protest Committee's job is to resolve disputes. To limit these as much as possible, it is good policy to have the Chief Judge review the SI's in order to avoid any unintended ambiguities that may appear at a Request For Redress hearing. To put it very simply, the Race Committee writes, the Chief Judge reviews. Many Judges have a great deal of experience with this process, so it should be a cooperative effort, but in the end the SI's are the responsibility of the Race Committee.

1. Where To Start

Ontario Sailing specifies that the Sailing Instructions for their events must follow the Sailing Instruction Guide that is found in Appendix L of the Racing Rules of Sailing. Fortunately, ISAF has provided a very useful template to aid in this task. To download this template begin by going to the ISAF website www.sailing.org. From the Main Menu, click on Rules, then ISAF Racing Rules of Sailing 2005 – 2008. On the menu on the left hand side of the screen, click on SI and NOR Guides, and then on Appendix L (word). This will begin the downloading process.

2. Using The Template

At the beginning of the template there is an introduction to the Guide, including the seven principles on which all sailing instructions should be based. Commit them to memory, and then follow them. You should note that there are some inconsistencies in the template, follow the principles.

In filling in the blanks in the template, remember that you will already have some rules for your event – they are in the Notice of Race (which you were involved in writing) – and some of those rules cannot be changed without the express permission of Ontario Sailing. Avoid conflicts, the Chief Judge will spot them.

One last word. Even under the best of circumstances, SI's will occasionally need to be amended. Remember RRS 89.2 (c) and never verbally change the SI's.