



**Commodore R J A Bellfield Royal Navy
Vice Commodore & Chairman
Royal Naval Sailing Association
10 Haslar Marina Haslar Road Gosport Hants
PO12 1NU**

☎:02392 521100

E-mail: gensec@rnsa.org.uk

Website: www.rnsa.org.uk

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Dear Members,

I hope you are enjoying the season so far and making the best of some rather mixed weather, the odd day of glorious sunshine did not help those sailing in the Round the Island Race on Saturday! The conditions certainly have not hindered the RNSA teams, as they continue their winning streak. We are currently the Inter Service champions in Team Racing, Match Racing and Offshore Regattas as well as winners of the Le Crunch Team Racing event against the French and the Royal Yacht Squadron Invitational Regatta. There have been plenty of other great results, not least a third place in the Women's Open Keel Boat Championships. It is great to see such success on the racing circuit, but it is also pleasing to see the cruising community enjoying themselves and I would highlight the gathering in Ouistreham of over 100 members in some 33 boats. The link up with the RNVRYC was well executed and a pleasure to see. The Branches are also on their game and along with the Rear Commodores generating some fantastic opportunities such as dinghy training camps in Garda and the increased use of Jackaroo in Plymouth.

You should have received your Journal by now or if not very shortly and I hope you enjoy the read. As an aside please do start thinking about and indeed drafting your inputs for next years as it makes for a far richer publication than if left to our memories over the winter. You will see in the opening remarks, not least by our Chief Executive, that there has been significant progress on the transformation front and this is the reason for the slight delay in delivery. I am pleased to confirm that the Charity Commission has recognised the RNSA as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) and our number is 1183562. The CIO is currently inactive and deliberately does not have any assets or members at this stage. The charitable objects align with those of the Army and RAF Sailing Associations and are to promote the efficiency of the Royal Navy by:

The provision of facilities and activities for the sport of sailing to improve the health and physical fitness and to promote esprit de corps of serving personnel.

Promote the RN by supporting participation of members of the Naval Cadet Forces.

It was important that the Charity Commission was prepared to acknowledge our aim of promoting the efficiency of the Royal Navy through serving and ex-serving personnel working together in activity designed to meet the Objects above. The Central Committee Meeting held on 10 June agreed that the CIO model represents a robust and credible way forward for the Association for all the reasons laid out in the Commodore's letter dated 1 March 2019. As a reminder the intent is to comply with MOD policy, to deliver optimally as a Service Sports Association sharing in the RN core values and ethos, to incorporate and thereby protect members, volunteers and staff, and ultimately to deliver more effectively and in so doing ensure the long-term sustainability of RNSA.

The feedback from you prior to the AGM was hugely constructive and supportive. This thinking has been reflected in the model that continues to mature with Rear Commodores and Branch Captains fully engaged. In essence, only activity that is deemed charitable under the guidance of the Trustees will be incorporated and open to RNSA funding. The Branches, Rear Commodores or other volunteers, may subsequently execute this. Branches themselves will be given the choice of whether to formally opt in, with Trustee approval, to the CIO or not. It is anticipated that most will elect not to and instead take on an Affiliated Branch status, allowing them to operate much as they do now. This provides greater flexibility whilst maintaining the option to deliver charitable events should they wish. Branches can always change their mind at a later date, noting that it will be easier to fully integrate in to the CIO than extract from it. The relationship with the CIO will be formally backed up with an agreement that will capture status, branding, governance, etc. The key point to remember is that everyone will be RNSA members and, as we largely do anyway, look to use our subscriptions and other funding streams to generate an energetic and fun environment that supports the development of our serving personnel and with it the efficiency of the Naval Service. This of course has been the case since RNSA was formed in 1935.

So, the next step. Your Committee has endorsed a plan that includes holding an EGM in the late autumn, with a planned date of Friday 1 November at 1800, with Hornet Services Sailing Club the likely venue. There will be a brief on the proposed CIO construct and the steps to activate it, including the transfer of assets. The resolution will be along the lines of:

'to endorse the Central Committee's decision to wind up RNSA in its current unincorporated form and transfer RNSA's assets to the Charitable Incorporated Organisation on 1 Jan 2020 and that the payment of 2020 subscriptions will be the process by which members agree to join the new RNSA entity.'

and need a simple 50% majority of attendees to be passed. The logic behind this is that this has been the culmination of many years work and members have been kept fully informed of progress in writing, including the Journal and at AGMs. The chance to feedback has been provided and this has been pulled together to get us to this strong position. The Flag Officers and Committee feel that an EGM offers the right vehicle to formalise the decision making process. Our Commodore intends to join us.

I believe that this really is an exciting opportunity for RNSA to build on our successes and use sailing, windsurfing and other waterborne activities across all skill levels to support the betterment of the Royal Navy, while also maintaining the very strong Service link with our retired members. I fully appreciate how important it is for RNSA to remain a close knit organisation where we all share the common link of having worked in, or with, the Royal Navy.

Phil Warwick will share more detail in the build up to the EGM.

Yours aye

Rob