FAO CSSA Affiliates October 2026-paper from GC

Consultation on proposals for a new Constitution for the Civil Service Sailing Association

1. Background

1.1 The Civil Service Sports Council (CSSC) has withdrawn its support for the Civil Service Sailing Association (CSSA), has relegated sailing to a Tier 2 level sport mostly organized on a regional basis, and in recent years had said that the offshore CSSA Divisions needed to become Companies Limited by Guarantee in order to take over the nominal ownership of the offshore sailing boats from CSSC and hold leases. The four offshore clubs, Channel Sailing Division (CSD), East Coast Yacht Division (ECYD), Five Kingdoms Sailing Club (5KSC) and the Civil Service Offshore Racing Club (CSORC) are now CLGs and called: Civil Service Channel Sailing Club (CSCSC), East Coast Yacht Club (ECYC), Five Kingdoms Yacht Club (5KSC) and Civil Service Offshore Racing Club (CSORC). Some of the dinghy clubs, for example Littleton SC had already become CLGs, as had the Portsmouth Offshore Group (POG). CLGs are more independent than were the Divisions and have to abide by their articles and rules rather than those of the CSSA.

1.2 CSSC has ceased funding CSSA directly, but has established three funding streams (Events, Development and Community Clubs) to which individual sailing clubs may bid directly for funds. The separate streams have their own acceptance criteria and schedules but in general the funding available is small and based on %age CSSC membership.

1.3 The plans for sailing under the CSSC and future of CSSA as a SRB have been put back several times leaving us to make our own decisions on the future.

1.4 CSSA will probably no longer receive any further funds from CSSC based on CSSC membership numbers. This funding has been accumulated over the years to provide, *inter alia,* interest free loans for purchase of replacement offshore cruising boats. CSSA still retains some of this money around £260k (this includes funds from the Maurice Gates bequest) and has approx £200k in outstanding loans to the offshore clubs but it is clear that in future CSSA will have a decreasing pot available for loans for purchase of replacement boats.

1.5 **It is clear that Members of clubs are no longer required to be members of CSSC**, although they may choose to remain CSSC members if they wish to take advantage of CSSC's non sailing benefits.

2. Future options

2.1 Given the above, there are three options for the way forward for CSSA:

(i) CSSA could become a CLG which could absorb the four offshore CLGs and other clubs wishing to join (e.g. POG and the dinghy clubs) operating in a manner very similar to how it operated previously. In this model CSSA would be primarily an organization of individual members, the clubs being in essence 'Divisions' of CSSA each comprised of individual CSSA members. The offshore clubs would need to relinquish their CLG status.

(ii) CSSA could become a Federation of the four Offshore clubs, each club retaining its current CLG status.

(iii) CSSA distributes its remaining funds to its constituent clubs including POG and the dinghy clubs, then winds itself up. The four new CLGs would continue independently with no input from CSSA and would apply directly to CSSC for funding through the three new CSSC funding channels on a regional basis.

2.2 The CSSA General Council (GC) has spent over a year considering the pros and cons of each option. In part because CSSC's final position on the role of the CSSA is still unclear although funding for the sport of sailing has materialized for 2027.

2.3 **The GC is now proposing that option (ii) is the best way forward**.

2.4 Option (i) whilst reducing administrative burdens on individual Clubs, would require them to give up their GLG status after spending considerable time and effort in setting them up in the first place. Conversely CSSA would then have to go through the process of establishing itself as a CLG which would take significant time and money. The offshore clubs do not favour this option which would mean them surrendering their independence for little meaningful gain. If they surrendered their CLG status the CSSA would have to take over the ownership of all the yachts.

2.5 Option (iii) offers few if any benefits for clubs who would no longer have a forum for discussion of matters of mutual interest, setting common standards and facilitating mutual recognition of memberships. It would leave a group of isolated clubs with less than obvious links to the Civil and Public Services. Furthermore the mechanism for returning CSSA funds to its constituent clubs would not be straightforward. The Dinghy Clubs and POG would want their share and the basis on which this would be decided is not clear. For example the basis for distribution might be number of active CSSA members, number of active CSSC members (bearing in mind that the funds originated from CSSC) or the total number of members irrespective of CSSA and CSSC membership. The amounts distributed would be unlikely to be sufficient for clubs to purchase suitable replacement boats outright even if outstanding loans to the offshore clubs were repaid prior to distribution.

2.6 Option (ii), which in some ways would be a reformulation of the existing Offshore Group (OSG) would comprise the four offshore clubs (CSCSC, ECYC, 5KSC and CSORC). Other CSSA clubs would not be excluded from joining but to date none have expressed a wish to do so. It would provide a forum for discussion of matters or mutual interest as listed below:

A credit union to provide interest free loans for replacement boats
Skipper Approvals
An Expert Panel for investigation of incidents
Liaising on Club policies eg safeguarding
Publicity and marketing
Interoperability (mutual skippering, common fees for berths)
Relationships with RYA, MCA, CSSC (for organization of National Regattas e.g. the IDOR)

2.7 The remodeled CSSA would be managed by a General Committee comprising:

An Honorary Commodore (Chair)

An Honorary General Secretary

An Honorary Treasurer

An Offshore Secretary

A Membership Secretary

A Publicity Officer

A Training Officer

A National Regattas Officer

Three representatives from each of the four offshore clubs

The General Committee would meet at least four times a year or more frequently as business demands.

All Committee Members would be elected by CSSA members at an Annual General Meeting on a one member one vote basis.

3. Consultation Questions

3.1 Do you agree with the GC's proposal to adopt Option (ii)?
3.2 If not, what is your preferred option?
3.3 Do you agree with the proposed list of CSSA activities and responsibilities in Option (ii)?
3.4 If not, what would you like to see added or deleted?
3.5 Do you agree with the proposed General Committee structure?
3.6 Any other comments?