

2 February 2021

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Sent by email only

### **Your 20 January 2021 Letter**

Dear fellow sailors, Olympians, coaches and officials,

Thank you for your 20 January 2021 letter. Thank you also for your courage in speaking out and bringing the issues raised in your letter to the attention of officials in Greece, World Sailing and the international sporting community.

We are incredibly concerned to learn of the allegations of mismanagement and economic irregularities within the Hellenic Sailing Federation ('HSF'). We were also incredibly saddened to hear Ms Bekatorou's account of the abuse and harassment she experienced as a young athlete.

All sailors have the right to a positive and enjoyable experience of our sport in a safe environment, free from abuse and harassment. Just as World Sailing exists to foster and promote sailing for current and future generations at an international level, we expect all member national authorities ('MNAs') of World Sailing to represent and protect the interests of sailors in their country. We also expect all MNAs to represent our sport in way which is consistent with the core values of our sport, including integrity, good faith and mutual respect.

We understand from your letter that you are concerned about the transparency and integrity of the upcoming elections in respect of the HSF, and that you wish for World Sailing to put in place a new, temporary administrative body to facilitate the elections.

While we certainly understand your concerns and desire for independent oversight, regrettably the World Sailing Constitution and Regulations do not permit World Sailing to be involved in the internal affairs of its MNAs.

Regulation 1.13 is very clear in that it requires all MNAs to manage their internal affairs, including the election of officials, independently. It also requires MNAs to ensure that no third party interferes with their operations, which includes World Sailing.

While World Sailing is not able to appoint a temporary administrative body, or facilitate or oversee the elections directly, please be assured that you have our full support in calling for the election process to be overseen by an independent third party to ensure the integrity of the process, and that it is carried out in a fair and democratic way. We have also expressed our support for such measures to the Hellenic Olympic Committee and the Minister of Culture and Sports.

As you may know, World Sailing held its Presidential and Vice-Presidential election via electronic vote in 2020. It was the first time in our organisation's history that a matter of such magnitude and importance was voted on by electronic means, but it was a huge success and enabled more MNAs than ever to participate in the process.

A team of World Sailing staff worked closely with an independent Election Committee to ensure the process was fair and transparent from the time candidates announced they were running, throughout the campaign period and electronic voting process. We also engaged an independent firm of auditors to oversee the voting process, administer the voting system and verify the outcome of the election. This allowed our MNAs and other stakeholders to have confidence in the integrity of the election process.

We would be more than happy to share our insights as to how we managed the election process in conjunction with the Election Committee, and we would also be happy to introduce you to the team of auditors we used to oversee the voting process.

Once again, thank you for your courage in coming forward. Your intervention has made an impact, and we will continue to support your calls for the upcoming elections to be held in a transparent, fair and democratic way, in the interests of all Greek sailors.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you would like our support and assistance as outlined above, or indeed for any other matter.

Yours sincerely,



David Graham  
**CEO**