



August 4, 2016

Attention all Viper Owner/Members:

There are three IMPORTANT topics discussed in the letter. Please take the time to read this letter thoroughly. They say decisions are made by the people that vote...here's what you need to know so you can vote wisely.

I. Creating an International Class Constitution

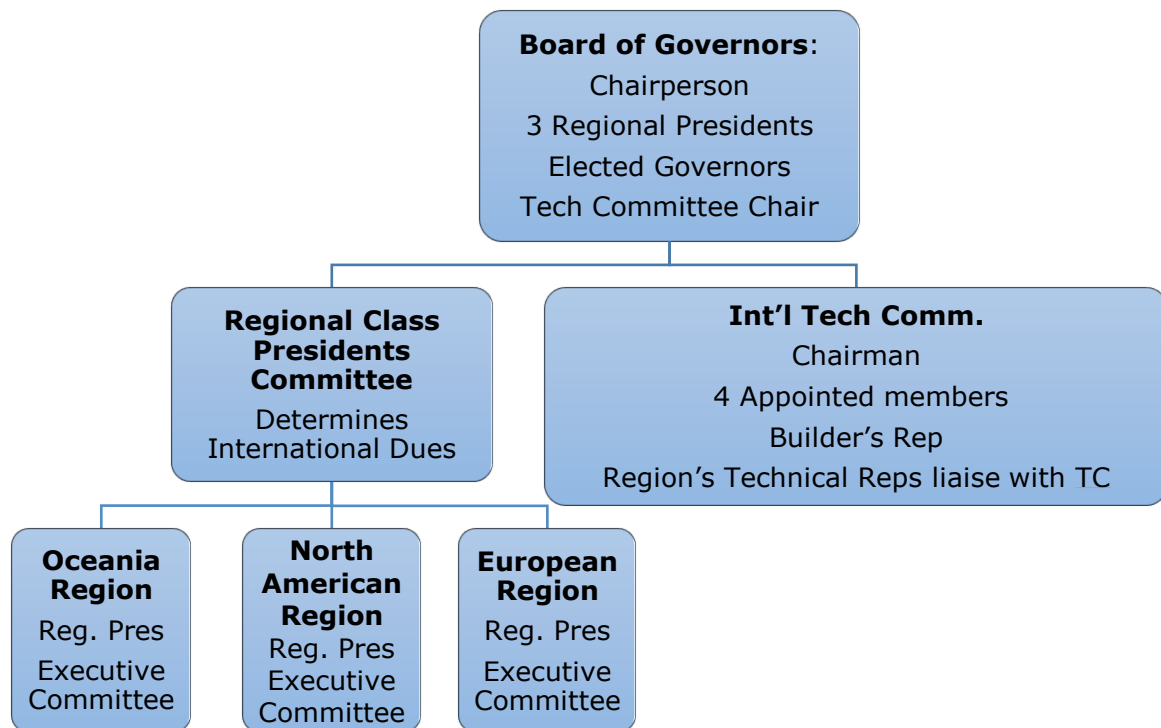
The current Class Association was formed in 2004 as a US entity with a focus on North America. However, with over 25 Vipers Australia, over 20 in Canada, 7 in Bermuda and 9 in Europe, it is appropriate for the Class to codify a true international class recognizing the recent and forward-looking global growth.

This was first discussed in Miami in 2014 and Governor Justin Scott was asked to coordinate assembling an "international constitution" which preserves the existing ethos and character of the class but provides us with an effective international class structure. We looked at the structures of over ten other international class organizations and talked to many of their class officers and administrators. We sought input from active spark plugs in different Viper regions and we got legal advice from lawyer members. We wanted best of breed. We wanted to strike the right balance between empowered decentralized local class leaders and a global one design class. This is what we came up with: -

- The Class Association will be one entity, worldwide.
- The Class Association will consist of three "Regions," each with their own Regional Executive Committee and Regional Class President – North America, Oceania (Australia and New Zealand), and Europe.
- Overseeing the Class worldwide will be an International Board of Governors. The Board of Governors will consist of the three Regional Class Presidents plus three (or more) elected Governors allocated depending on the number of boats in each region and one Chairman of the Board nominated and elected by the worldwide membership.
- The Regional Executive Committees manage the day to day affairs of the Class Association in their Region on behalf of the membership in the region and on behalf of the membership worldwide.

- The International Board of Governors liaise on international matters, ensure that the Regional Executive Committees are talking to each other, discuss the long term strategic direction of the Class internationally. and providing oversight for the International Technical Committee.
- The Technical Committee becomes an International Technical Committee.
- The Class Association preserves our emphatic objective of a Class run on behalf of the owner members, by the owner members, for the owner members along with our One Boat/One Vote democratic process and all officers accountable to the membership at large; in their region for the EC and worldwide for the International Board. The single most important measure of success for our governance is ensuring that Viper owners are having fun in their boats!

Proposed International Viper 640 Class Association Structure



This constitution is entirely independent of the following proposal for the Class to become a World Sailing International Class. The Executive Committee and Governors unanimously recommend that members should vote in favor of the International Constitution regardless of whether the Viper becomes a World Sailing Class

II. Viper 640 Class Association's World Sailing Update

As most of you know, for the past year the Executive Committee and the Board of Governors have been reviewing the possibility of the Viper becoming an officially recognized international class by World Sailing (formally ISAF).

Key benefits of WS Membership for VCA

- **World Sailing membership will promote international growth of the Viper Class.** WS Status is a big selling point for a class in some regions of the world. Paul Young estimates that he will sell anywhere from 100-200 additional Vipers over the next 5-10 years with WS status. In some nations, it is virtually impossible to get traction without WS Status
- **Credibility.** The class will gain an indefinable status of a class that has "arrived" and that will help continue to distinguish and grow the class in the North America, Australia, and Europe.
- **Only member classes can hold sanctioned World Championship regattas.** That's right. Our "International Championship" would acquire the prestige, gravitas and fun of a World Championship.
- **Responsibilities of the class appointed builder** – While we are a one-builder class, WS requires member classes to safeguard their manufacturing consistency and build specs via a formal Builder Construction Manual. Rondar Raceboats will create a Builder Construction Manual to be part of our final submission to World Sailing.
- **Strengthens VCA ownership of our intellectual property** – A contract between builder class and WS reaffirms our control of the Class. Unauthorized Vipers built in regions where the class cannot economically enforce our trademark nor impose our rule requiring approved builders will be prevented from participating in any events sanctioned by WS or an MNA, not just Class sanctioned events.
- **Technical Support** .WS has a technical group available as a resource for our Technical Committee to consult when drafting class rules and addressing other technical matters.
- **The VCA becomes part of the world governing body** of sailing with a "seat at the table".

Requirements for the Viper 640 to become a World Sailing class

Over the past few months, the Executive Committee, Governors, and Technical Committee have been working on the two key documents the VCA has to do submit become a WS class: specifically updating, our Class Rules and creating a draft operating agreement stipulating how the VCA would work with WS whereby we would be able to retain the freedom, flexibility, and fun approach to class management that makes the Viper stand out.

Adapting the Viper 640 Class Rules to World Sailing's Guidelines

As alluded to above, the World Sailing class rules structure has been fine-tuned over the years by the WS Rules Committee. And, although our current Viper Class Rules have served the Class well, the WS Rules Committee quickly identified a number of areas that could be enhanced by small edits...making our Class Rules better and easier to administer.

The Technical Committee, under Dave Nickerson's guidance, has converted our current Class Rules to create a draft International Viper Class Rules document designed to conform with the WS rules structure. NOTE: the International Viper Class Rules draft doesn't change our Class Rules' elements but restructures their presentation.

So, you ask, what is the current status of this World Sailing application process?

Last weekend the Executive Committee and Governors submitted to World Sailing a formal application for the Viper 640 to become an international class. Included in this submission were:

1. A letter of application providing background on the current Class structure and quantifying our global membership footprint
2. A copy of our proposed International Constitution document
3. A draft International Class Rules document for WS input
4. A draft operating agreement between the Class and WS as to how the two organizations would operate and interact in the future.

During September, we anticipate receiving comments on our documents from World Sailing. The Technical Committees will rework their respective documents per World Sailing's input. At that time the International Rules and Constitution will be distributed to each owner/member for their review. They will also be resubmitted to World Sailing as the next step of a work in progress.

But wait, isn't this putting the cart before the horse??? Sending documents to World Sailing BEFORE the membership approves them?

Not really. We are actually proceeding down two parallel tracks:

A – World Sailing accepts our application at their early November meeting AND the Viper owner/members THEN vote to enact the Constitution and World Sailing-approved Class Rules by voting to accept them at our AGM in Bermuda.

B – Either World Sailing doesn't approve our application OR the owner/members vote against becoming a World Sailing Class at the AGM in Bermuda. If this transpires, we will still have our own Class Rules changes and an International Constitution to vote on in Bermuda. Note: any owner/member-submitted rules approved in Bermuda will be incorporated into the final International Class Rules working with World Sailing.

Jeez, that's a lot to read and even more to think about.

Yes, but our Class continues to grow and we are at a threshold where we have the opportunity to join World Sailing, continue to have more fun on the water than on any other boat, and watch as our favorite sport boat grows locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally.

III. CALL FOR CLASS RULES PROPOSALS

In accordance with the Viper 640 Class Constitution, Viper owner/members may propose changes to the Class Rules every year. If you've been thinking about a Rule change that could make Viper sailing better, now is the time to act.

This year's AGM will be in Bermuda on November 16 which means you have to submit any Rules change proposal by August 15th. Here's the process:

1. Write-up your Rule change proposal and get at least 5 other owner/members to sign-off on it with you. Note we keep saying "**owner/member**" because only Viper owners who have paid their 2016 Class Dues can I propose/support a Rules change and ultimately vote on it. If you're in the GYA and your club has joined the Class Association, it should be submitted by the Club's Fleet Captain.
2. Send your Rules change proposal to Dave Nickerson, Technical Committee Chairman at dave@nickerson.org and cc Class Administrator Buttons Padin at epadin@padesta.com. They need to receive your submission by **August 19**.
3. The Technical Committee will review your proposal, may contact you to discuss it, put it into the proper "format" to be presented, and develop the Committee's point-of-view on the proposal.
4. The Executive Committee and Board of Governors will then review the proposal and prepare a recommendation on its support or opposition. That recommendation with the proposal will then be circulated to owner/members for their review, discussion, and eventual vote.
5. The vote on the proposal will be at the AGM with electronic voting and proxies accepted. To pass, the proposal will require 60% of the votes cast (present and proxy).

Questions? Shoot Dave Nickerson an e-mail sooner than later.

Got any more Questions??? We bet you do. Share them with the Executive Committee by sending any comments to the Class Administrator Buttons Padin at epadin@padesta.com and he'll collect and distribute them to the EC.

In the meantime, sail fast and make sure to be in Bermuda for the International Championship and the mother of all AGMs.

Respectively submitted,

The Executive Committee
The Board of Governors
The Technical Committee