

OKDIA

Strategic Roadmap

2015-2024

Version history

February 25: Version 1 (draft for discussion) RD to AD, Mro, MW
February 28: Proposal 5.5 added
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April 8: Full draft to committee for comments
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Objectives

- ✦ To increase membership and increase participation
- ✦ To build a strong class that has a foundation to sustain it for the next 10 years.
- ✦ To establish a more efficient operational structure incorporating the appointment of paid class officials.
- ✦ To become the natural choice for non-Olympic single-handed sailors
- ✦ To become a leading class for media, marketing, communication and administration
- ✦ To stage attractive global events that are well attended and competitive

Preface

OKDIA is the governing body for the OK Dinghy elected by you to oversee the management of the class internationally.

The following proposal will effect every single member of the national OK Dinghy Associations. OKDIA cannot get involved at a local level but can only help to facilitate local growth through a global strategy.

It is the objective of OKDIA to put in place the necessary structure, protocols and programmes that allow national fleets to develop and the class to grow.

This proposal has the support of your Executive. As its implications are significant the support of each national authority is sought.

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Preamble

Since OKDIA was formed in 1963 much has changed. The class has moved through a period of decline and is now witnessing good representation and renewed interest in its traditional strongholds supported by modern fleets and spars. We have seen a number of other classes which, with their removal from the Olympic stage or the advent of more modern craft, have either become insignificant (it would seem through a failure to accept change and move forward) or resurgent on the back of active class management, class development (ie acceptance of modern manufacturing techniques and products) and embraced increasing interest from an older participant group. OKDIA has maintained a framework which has accepted evolution of the boats in a controlled manner, that has seen with particular benefit the introduction of carbon masts, however it is yet to fully adapt to a changing demographic in terms of governance, administration, marketing and communications.

To achieve strong participation on a truly global stage the reliance on purely voluntary roles and personal expenditure to secure ongoing development of the class is counter productive as financial, distance and time constraints of committee members often means that tasks cannot be undertaken with the necessary effectiveness required. This also means that focus tends to be on existing rather than new areas.

The class currently gets a lot of services free of charge (website, promotion, administration, transport of equipment, technical management etc), and free services tend to result in a base level of support with reliance on an often undervalued and unappreciated minority. In order to achieve greater reach and performance these services could, and indeed should, be supplemented from class finances. The class may have reached saturation as far as voluntary help goes. In order to grow, some degree of professional help is needed, particularly to achieve a wider international representation. We are still very much working from a class structure that was created in the 1960s as a non-profit making organisation when the OK Dinghy was the only choice for many sailors. Today, the choice of classes is much larger and the market in available sailors is much smaller. So we have to work harder to attract each sailor to the class.

To grow the class in existing and new regions does not just take commitment and enthusiasm. It helps if the class has enough financial strength to take small, calculated risks and become actively involved on a local level and where that commitment is supported by a range of communication mediums and an active and enthusiastic governing structure.

This document discusses various ways to move forward, modernise management and improve perception of the class with a goal to expanding its membership. It also offers a series of proposals aimed at achieving that goal. Ultimately, the success of the class will be measured by more members, more boats on the water and more events of a very high standard.

In arriving at this discussion we have considered many proposals and taken input from many sailors. In summary, we have two options. 1. Do nothing, and let the class continue in its current form, with little likelihood of it ever growing much beyond that. 2. Find a new way to manage the class, perhaps by adopting some of the proposals in this document.

Current position

Our current membership of about 750-800 worldwide has been static for several decades. We claim to offer one of the most fun single-handed dinghies in the world, yet we are under represented in many countries where dinghy sailing is strong. With even some UK National classes having larger memberships, we must aim to bring our membership back up to 2,000 by 2017 (and perhaps 4,000 by 2024). In order to do this we must engage with sailors in areas interested in developing the class and improve our engagement with the Americas, Asia and Africa.

Overarching objectives

The overriding objective of **increased membership and increased participation** is a pretty simple one and hard to argue with. Through these proposals we intend to show that through the adoption of various business and organisational changes, that growing the class is both possible and obtainable. If these proposals are adopted it should be our goal to noticeably expand OKDIA membership within five years. We think this is possible both through attracting existing boat owners who are not currently members as well as attracting new sailors to the class. One will assist the other.

Up to now OKDIA has been a small group of people overseeing the class internationally. Many sailors have never had cause to deal with OKDIA and hardly know of its existence.

The purpose of these proposals is to present a different future for OKDIA, and for the class.

The current status is that we have sat at around 800 members for the last 20 years. Sailors come and go but numbers stay the same. We must put measures in place that attempt to grow these numbers; there are non international classes with greater membership numbers than us.

This paper assumes the class wants to grow, improve its visibility, and become a serious class to contend with the largest of international classes. Not only will this improve our racing but also assure the future of the international status of the class. We are constantly in danger of losing our international status, and with that our right to hold a world championship.

Historically there is much evidence of thought, discussion and recommendations, that are buried by inaction. Therefore the central proposal is to employ a class manager, or other personnel, to coordinate and implement the recommendations of the committee. This requires a guaranteed revenue stream, so many of these proposals are focussed on creating income to pay the class manager. Other proposals focus on important tasks the class manager can undertake to solidify the class structure and improve its processes as well as take it forward.

There are a lot of potential actions here, and most work together and rely on others being adopted to succeed. There is no point in adopting most of these if there is no class manager and no way to pay for that. Hence the order these are presented is important. That is why proposal to attract income comes first, as without that the rest are generally untenable.

The discussions and proposals focus on these areas:

- Revenue sources
- Structure of OKDIA
- Event management
- Technical overhaul
- Marketing and promotion

Timescale

Present to February 2014: Discussion group to produce OKDIA Strategic Roadmap (RD, AD, MW, MRo)

March/April 2014: Discussion and modification of OKDIA Strategic Roadmap by OKDIA committee

May/July 2014: Discussion and feedback from OK National Associations and sailors.

SGM 2014/Sailors meeting at Europeans: Approval or dismissal of OKDIA Strategic Roadmap.

[SGM must be confirmed by May 24.]

Late 2014: Rewriting and adoption of new constitution to incorporate proposals (appointed by Executive Committee)

2014 AGM in Melbourne: Ratification of OKDIA Strategic Roadmap and any amendments from SGM

January 2015: Implementation of OKDIA Strategic Roadmap

January 2016 (earliest): Appointment of Class Manager (or when revenue makes it possible)

Objectives

Our over-riding objectives should be:

- Increase membership and participation (2,000 by 2017, 4,000 by 2024)
- Improve event management and introduce new venues
- Create new events (i.e. Southern Hemisphere Championship)
- Encourage new countries to join OKDIA.
- Better, and more timely, communication internally, and with NCAs
- Improve technical issues awareness and implementation
- Achieve ERS compliant Class Rules
- Improve financial flexibility
- Seek and find major sponsors

The OKDIA Strategic Roadmap has the following principal goals

- Restructure committee and redefine roles with specific, and achievable, goals, including Paid Class Manager by 2016
- Rewrite constitution and Class Rules
- Class magazine, online and/or print
- Increase revenue generation (memberships, event fees, advertising, sponsorship)
- Use revenue for other tasks: website development, promotional materials and video, media etc

These goals are outlined on the following pages.

Perception of OKDIA

One of the key proposals in this document is to raise OKDIA fees to a level whereby OKDIA has financial flexibility. However, a common question from the sailor is what does OKDIA ever do for me? For £1.50 (the current fee), the answer actually is quite a lot. Website, organising events, class management, all of which maintains the values of boats. But a lot of this is done for free by existing class members. For £15 (the proposed fee) the answer should be quite a lot more. We need to create an organisation that has a solid and transparent answer to this question so that we can justify the increase in membership fees and it is deemed value for money by the average club sailor as well as those attending world championships. Changing the perception of what OKDIA is or what it can do for every sailor is perhaps the biggest hurdle.

1. Financial plan

Introduction

We can't do everything without funding. An average sailor spends in the region of £1,000 to £1,200 (see appendix 1) a year on his or her sailing. An internationally active sailor spends two or three times that each year. Currently OKDIA collects just £1.50 per member (subject to small variations according to country membership levels). OKDIA has reserves, but it does not maintain a strong enough income stream to justify risking those reserves on any extraneous expenditure.

Whilst historically World, European or Interdominion events have been run by the representative national body, where these events take place outside the reach of these bodies a greater reliance falls on OKDIA's revenue. Wider global class development can only be driven at OKDIA level where there is active interest but this cannot be entirely supported on a voluntary basis.

OKDIA currently holds c£10,000 in reserves. We believe this should be the minimum target for annual revenue for the Association and that we should budget to spend up to 75% of that in each year to promote the class. OKDIA should also build up reserves for when the Worlds is outside an established nation and there are more costs involved.

Assuming we want to take on a paid Class Manager at a salary of, say, £20,000 per annum, that equates to just £25 per sailor who is a member of an OKDIA recognised OK class association. We also need extra capital to realise some of the objectives within this strategy, but 80% of the work simply requires time-costly management and communication.

Possible income streams:

| | 800 members | 2,000 | 4,000 |
|--|--------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Increase OKDIA member fee from £1.50 to £10 | £6,800 | £17,000 | £34,000 |
| Introduce sail label fee (say £10) (120, 300) | £1,200 | £3,000 | £6,000 |
| Increase boat building fee by £25 (20, 100) | £500 | £2,500 | £5,000 |
| Increase Worlds levy from £10 to £25 (£15 juniors) | £1,300 | £1,300 | £1,300 |
| Advertising on OKDIA website (10 banners/£50 year) | £500 | £500 | £500 |
| Mast Labels at £10 (30, 60) | £300 | £600 | £1,200 |
| TOTAL | £10,600 | £24,900 | £48,000 |
| Extra income if OKDIA member fee is £15 | £4,000 | £10,000 | £20,000 |
| TOTAL | £14,600 | £35,900 | £68,000 |

Proposal 1.1

Increase the OKDIA membership fee per sailor to £10-£15

[Revenue raised = £6,800-£10,800]

Proposal 1.2

Introduce a Mast/Sail Label fee of £10 per mast/sail, payable by the Mast builder/Sailmaker to OKDIA on a quarterly basis. Sails may have labels attached to show the fee has been paid.

[Capital raised = £2,000]

Proposal 1.3

Increase Fee of ISAF Plaque by £25

[Capital raised = £500]

Proposal 1.4

Increase worlds levy from £10 to £25

[Extra capital raised = £1,200]

Proposal 1.5

Introduce £25 levy on Europeans and Interdominions/Southern Hemispheres

[Capital raised = £1,800]

Proposal 1.6

OKDIA takes sole responsibility for Personal Sail Numbers, including allocation, record keeping and collecting fees.

Reason: A lot of countries want PSNs and this can be utilised to provide a significant income stream for OKDIA.

Structure: PSNs will only be sold by OKDIA (each country must allocate each boat a unique and sequential number, the certification and registration being done by the NA, but the boat must then be registered in the OKDIA database. The sailor can then apply for a PSN for four years, renewable without query as long as they remain a member, with a premium placed on lower numbers

1-9 £150

10-99 £100

100+ £75

Problems: Some National Associations already receive an 'illegal' income from 'illegal' PSNs so this may need to be worked into the calculation.

[Capital raised, assuming 100 boats register over a four year period = £2,500 per year]

Conclusion

If all these measures are accepted then we have raised capital per year of £20,000

NOTE: If none of the above measures are adopted then it is the considered opinion of the Strategy Discussion Group that this discussion stops here, as very few of the following proposals will then be financially possible.

Question: If you are against any of the above financial proposals, and yet are in favour of any of the following proposals, would you volunteer to carry out those tasks, or would you just expect someone else to carry them out for no remuneration? If you would not do them for free, would you then expect someone else to do them for free, at the level we need?

2. Structure and operation of OKDIA

Introduction

The principle objective is to build a strong class that has a foundation to sustain it for the next 10 years. The primary plank for this is the establishment of a proficient operational structure incorporating the appointment of a paid Class Manager. The Strategy Discussion Group consider this vital for the future growth of the class. Over and over again, we think of great ideas to streamline our operations, provide a better service for the sailors, and yet it never happens as the current committee have far too many other commitments to make it happen. And yet we currently have one of the most active committees possible. This is just modern life.

The Class Manager would report to the President and carry out the following tasks. [Note these tasks could also be done by several people, co-ordinated by the Class Manager, to suit the skill sets of each person.]

Administration

- Manage OK goods and shop items, to produce a new revenue streams
- Run all membership systems
- Make sure all other committee members are effective and do their jobs, in conjunction with President
- Identify candidates and facilitate the appointment of the Council of Elders
- Class income management
- Monthly email update as to what is going on to committee and secretaries
- Compile a list of class measurers and keep them updated of what the TC is doing and what is expected

Technical

- Manage boats database and measurement database
- Manage worldwide measurement system and standard forms
- Issue mast stickers and keep register
- Issue sail stickers
- Grandfathered boat register
- Begin ERS process
- Manage the world PSN system
- Manage the jig pass database, part of the boats database

Event management

- Be the principle international contact and coordinator for international championships
- Co-ordinate new venues, visit, ensure class championship rules are followed
- Oversee Worlds, Europeans and Asia-Pacifics
- Future event management
- Prepare and advertise the program of regattas for the Ranking List.

Promotion

- Co-ordinate policy of OKDIA (in conjunction with Executive)
- Define achievable goals for sub-committees, and manage the successful implementation of those policies
- 'Network' for the class at ISAF Meetings and major events, in conjunction with President
- Facilitates promotion of the class into new countries
- Oversee the forum for discussion and answer questions daily, plus answer questions on national

forums.

- Identify potential class sponsors and produce sponsorship kit
- Form proposals for future class development

Media

- Source and create regular website content
- Oversee the production of a class magazine
- Create media and marketing plan to promote class
- Greater social media interaction with members and wider sailing community

To fund class manager (and maybe others) we need to, eventually, generate annual revenue of at least £20,000 a year. Initially the position may be paid less than that to ease in gradually, but eventually a full time post (or several part time posts) will be needed.

Other tasks

Rewrite Class Constitution – the current constitution dates from the 1960s, with amendments over many years that has left inconsistencies and is often out of touch with modern practices. It should be remodelled to reflect a modern organisation.

Proposal 2.1

Restructure OKDIA Executive

Reason: The current structure does not always best serve the interests of OK sailors worldwide. The current structure includes office bearers and committee members, without detailing the distinction between them. There is no need for this complexity. A simple Executive Committee is sufficient for our needs.

As an international body, modern communication platforms such as Skype, monthly meetings of the executive should be the benchmark. We should also review the structure, roles and responsibilities of the executive to ensure we are appropriately resourced to achieve the class goals.

Proposal 2.2

Appointment of Class Manager

The role of Secretary should be transitioned to one of a Class Manager. This is not urgent, just a long term goal. There should be a period of consultancy and transition. The role of secretary could also remain to work alongside the class manager in specific areas.

The tasks of the Class Manager are listed above.

The Class Manager should be a paid position. The opening salary can be nominal to test the process, but should rise to a part time or even full time position with three years.

Realistically we are not going to be able to employ a competent Class Manager for under £20,000 on a full time, or nearly full time basis. This should be the goal and one of the objectives of the class manager would be to increase membership, or income, to a level where it supports their salary.

OKDIA Executive Committee

President

Three Vice Presidents (at least one from each hemisphere) with specific job descriptions (events, development etc) and defined succession to President. Perhaps the third Vice President is the immediate past president who chairs the Council of Elders

Class Manager (paid position and non-voting)

Webmaster

Media Manager

Chair of Technical Committee

Treasurer

Chief Measurer

Plus technical committee, promotion and media sub-committee

Proposal 2.3

Remove from the constitution the requirement for Office Bearers and having a limit on nationalities on Executive.

Proposal 2.4

Create a database of all boats and masts. This can be used for measurement checks at worlds, and assist the Class Manager in administrating stickers and jig passes.

Proposal 2.5

Rewrite constitution to remove inconsistencies and bring into line with current practice

Proposal 2.6

Establish a Council of Elders.

Purpose: The Council of Elders will be an advisory only body that will respond to, and call attention to, motions that are being discussed by the OKDIA Executive. They will also keep an eye on the committee and the class and notify them when they see a matter that needs attention.

Reason: Officers of OKDIA are arguably most effective and knowledgeable in the year they step down. The Council of Elders will draw on this collective experience so it is not lost to the class.

Structure: The Council of Elders will be formed of no more than six former office holders within OKDIA, or other prominent international sailing positions, with the following provisos.

- Nominations can only be received from Executive Committee and Council of Elders
- Nominations must be accepted by Executive Committee first and then existing Council of Elders, if appropriate
- Council members can only be removed by the Executive Committee, the Council of Elders, by an AGM or through resignation

3. Event Management

Introduction

Following the 2013 World Championship in Pattaya, Thailand, many sailors expressed a desire for 'exotic' events more frequently. The traditional venues in Europe and Australasia are still very important for the class and we should not lose sight of that, but the interest generated by events in warm climates cannot be underestimated. It is also important that we continue to bring the OK culture and competition to a wider audience. It will be interesting to see whether there is any renewed interest in Thailand following the 2013 Worlds.

Proposal 3.1

Create Asia Pacific Championship

Establish new southern Hemisphere South Pacific Championship or Asia-Pacific Championship as a major OKDIA event to incorporate the Interdominions and expand on that to try to attract other nations.

Proposal 3.2

Championship Rules

Update a set of Rules and Guidelines for these events and enforce/monitor implementation

Proposal 3.3

Assess the current season structure and create proposals for future class development through more interesting events. Survey of what people want from events and how to attract them.

Proposal 3.4

Attempt to find a global transport sponsor to better enable greater participation at major championship

Proposal 3.5

Look again at opening up open entry, multiple fleet starts to create inclusive events

NB. It should be noted that the vast majority of work in this section will only be possible with paid class management, hence the brief outline of possible proposals.

4. Technical overhaul

Introduction

One of the major discussion points, and points of argument, in the class has been the interpretation of the Class Rules. Most are very dated, and many can and are being exploited against the original intention. This is the core platform on which the success of any class is based. Sailors need to be confident in their rule structure and its integrity. Nothing puts off incoming sailors faster than inconsistency in production and measurement.

We need to assure better technical competence and develop rules that are easy to interpret and without ambiguity. We should promote processes and systems to ensure high quality and reliable equipment inspection at events, and facilitate discretionary funding, advice and assistance to new builders in emerging nations.

The OK Dinghy has thrived on the individualistic element for many years. However it is also counter productive, and very frustrating, when masts, rudders and centreboards are not interchangeable between similar boats. Individual development and thinking is beneficial, but not at the expense of class development. These days, no one has the patience to carry out major modifications to ensure new gear fits first time and is rule compliant. We should seek a much easier plug and play procedure.

Proposal 4.1

The overriding objective should be to rewrite the Class Rules to be ERS compliant as soon as possible. This will remove the vast majority of ambiguities and close down areas open to interpretation. It will be about a year's work from start to finish. It will need funding to see it through.

Estimated budget £1,000-£4,000

Proposal 4.2

Our current plans exist only as poor reproductions of line diagrams, though there are plans for kits sets. The proposal is to recreate them in downloadable 2D and/or 3D CAD files.

Proposal 4.3

Standardisation of gear where possible (masts, foils etc) so gear is interchangeable.

Proposal 4.4

Investigate possibilities for off-the-shelf or pre-measured equipment, and viability of encouraging in-house measurement among our sail makers and boat builders.

Proposal 4.5

Updating of measurement form every year to include new rule changes. Also create a standard measurement certificate so the same document is used across all countries. Currently it changes from country to country.

Proposal 4.6

Create a database of boats to enable faster measurement at major championships and also to record boats passing through the jig.

Proposal 4.7

Reinvent the event measurement process and equipment used to achieve that to streamline the process.

5. Media and Communication

Introduction

Communication is a vital part of growing the class and will gain ever more importance in the coming years. We are ahead of some classes but there is always more than can be done and a lot can be achieved with more investment in both equipment, publications and personnel.

The goals should be better communication and wider awareness. To be a growing class, we need to be taken seriously by the wider sailing community. If we have big events or big names sailing the class, we need to promote it today, not when we have the time.

Proposal 5.1

Publish an international class magazine

Reason: A class magazine, both in print and online is the fastest way to promote the class if it is made attractive and informative enough. It's simple to produce and not only encourages existing sailors, but can be used as a tool to bring in new members at boat shows etc.

Estimated costs for 1000 copies, 24 pages

| | |
|--------------|-------------------------------|
| Production | £400-600 |
| Printing | £700 |
| Postage | £300-600 |
| TOTAL | £1,400-1,900 per issue |

Less advertising

For example, 4 sailmakers, 4 boatbuilders, 4 gear suppliers at £150 each
£1,800

Initial editions could be created just for online publication, saving more than 50% of the costs and could be completely self funded through advertising. The move to print could then be taken once the magazine is established.

A magazine has benefits over the website in that it provides in one document all the current news and events – a snapshot of the class as that point in time. The website contains much more and is much easier for the class newcomer/potential member to be overloaded on information.

Proposal 5.2

Re-establish a functioning marketing committee with committed representative from every national association who takes responsibility for ensuring press releases and magazines are propagated and used in their country.

Proposal 5.3

Create class literature, videos, downloads – anything that keeps interest going.
Estimate budget £2,000/year

Proposal 5.4

We use a lot of 'professional' services for little or no salary. We should generate income to be able to pay for these services to ensure we maintain quality.

Proposal 5.5

Website development

1. Introduce hourly rate for webmaster, for say 10 hours a month.
2. Re-design, to include responsive site for mobile devices
3. Increasing use of web software/cloud within the committee.
4. Creation of members database list for 'office only', same about licenced mast builers etc.
5. Moving host
6. Perhaps have a mandatory sub-domain for major championships so event data is saved, rather than lost after two years when dedicated domain expires.

Proposal 5.6

Produce a centralised association website. One forum for all countries (split by countries), a single multi country boat register, central fixtures database. Each country would pull its data from the central database. This would put forward a single “corporate image” if there was a standard template which each country had to stick to. It would also reduce the burden on local webmasters to keep things up-to-date and spread the workload.

Proposal 5.7

Produce a consistent branding for the class: logos, fonts, styles etc. The goal would have to be that all communication (except email as it's not possible there) would follow the same guidelines. It would look so much more professional without much effort.

Appendices

1. Average annual spend of OK Sailors

| | |
|------------------------|--------------|
| Club membership | £150 |
| Class membership | £35 |
| Insurance | £150 |
| Two local events | £120 |
| One National event | £200 |
| New sail every 2 years | £350 |
| Maintenance | £100 |
| TOTAL | £1105 |