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## **Ontario Sailing – Annual Report Summary**

### **A Year of Renewal, Growth, and Momentum**

The past year has been one of profound transformation and renewed energy for Ontario Sailing. With the planned retirement of long-time Executive Director Glenn Lethbridge, the Board of Directors began preparations 18 months in advance by forming a Search Committee and engaging a professional recruitment firm. After reviewing over 100 applicants, the Board unanimously selected Murray McCullough as Ontario Sailing's new Executive Director, a "sailor's sailor", whose background in coaching, high-performance sport, and leadership with the Canadian Sport Institute has brought fresh perspective and purpose to the organization.

Ontario Sailing extends sincere appreciation to Glenn for 18 years of dedication and leadership and wishes him well in retirement. Appreciation is also extended to Lisa Roddie, Cameron Lymburner, Rachel Harris, and Jennifer Witmer for their years of service and contributions to the sailing community.

### **Navigating Change and Charting a New Course**

The transition in leadership brought both opportunity and challenge. Early in the year, the shared services arrangement with Row Ontario concluded due to that organization's financial restructuring, prompting Ontario Sailing to conduct its own review of long-term sustainability. Following three consecutive years of deficit results, the organization faced a critical decision: implement a significant fee increase for member clubs or undertake a major internal restructuring. Ontario Sailing pursued the latter approach.

Through careful financial management and organizational realignment, Ontario Sailing is now forecasting a modest surplus for the current fiscal year, an important milestone marking a return to financial stability. This turnaround has been achieved while expanding the scope and quality of services provided to member clubs, athletes, and stakeholders.

### **Highlights of the Year**

Ontario Sailing advanced several key initiatives that demonstrate innovation, collaboration, and growth across all areas of the organization:

- **Athlete Development:** Expanded the Ontario Sailing Team from one to five classes, increasing potential support from 6 to 41 athletes and integrating year-round training opportunities with clubs.
- **Inclusion and Accessibility:** Continued delivery of the Access Boom Program, now in its 14th year, in partnership with Etobicoke Yacht Club and Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital.



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- **Innovation in Programming:** Launched Ontario's first wing foiling learning facilitator clinic in partnership with We Can Foil and the Toronto Windsurfing Club, introducing this rapidly growing discipline across the province.
- **Club Support & Governance:** Developed the "Navigating Governance" webinar series in partnership with Row Ontario, providing province-wide guidance on governance, policy, and grant-writing best practices.
- **Operational Excellence:** Completed an office relocation to Hamilton and expanded the organization's presence in Kingston alongside Sail Canada, increasing provincial reach and operational efficiency.
- **Community & Competition:** Delivered the Grand Prix Regatta Series in partnership with clubs in Toronto, Hamilton, Port Credit, and Kingston, supporting over 375 athletes across five classes and joined in celebrating the RCYC Junior Club's 100th Anniversary.
- **Education & Certification:** Delivered 93 courses and clinics, including 58 Instructor & Coach Development, 11 Cruising, 17 Official, and 7 Offshore and Coastal Survival programs to 847 participants, led by Ontario Sailing staff and Learning Facilitators.
- **Environmental Stewardship:** Strengthened engagement with the Clean Marine Program through partnership with Boating Ontario, reinforcing Ontario Sailing's commitment to environmental sustainability.
- **Future Initiatives:** Advanced development of a club-wide insurance program in partnership with Gallagher, targeted for launch in 2026.

## Looking Ahead

This past year represents not only a change in leadership but also a cultural and operational renewal for Ontario Sailing. Through a comprehensive cultural audit, enhanced professional development, and the integration of data-informed decision-making, the organization is build a strong, responsive, and member-focused foundation.

Ontario Sailing's continued progress is made possible through the dedication of its staff, volunteers, coaches, officials, and member clubs, whose passion and expertise drive success across all programs. The organization also acknowledges the ongoing support of the Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport through the Ontario Amateur Sport Fund and Quest for Gold, as well as the Canadian Sport Institute Ontario for its partnership in advancing high-performance sailing.

Looking forward, Ontario Sailing is undertaking the development of a new High-Performance Plan in alignment with Sail Canada under the leadership of the new High-Performance Director. The organization



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will also be applying for both the new Ontario High Performance Funding intake cycle and the new Provincial Government funding intake for 2026, ensuring continued investment in the advancement of sailing across the province.

In addition, Ontario Sailing will be conducting a refresh of the current Strategic Plan, which concludes March 31, 2026. This process will reaffirm the organization's long-term priorities, align future goals with evolving member needs, and ensure that Ontario Sailing continues to build on its recent momentum.

Ontario Sailing is also preparing to increase its presence at the Toronto International Boat Show, providing new opportunities to engage with members, clubs, and the broader boating community. Furthermore, planning is underway for active participation in the 2026 Ontario Summer Games, extending this tremendous multi-sport experience to athletes, coaches, and volunteers within the sailing community.

### **In Closing**

Ontario Sailing enters the year ahead with momentum, confidence, and a clear sense of purpose. Guided by its mission to serve, support, and strengthen sailing across Ontario, the organization remains committed to creating opportunities, fostering community, and ensuring the long-term sustainability of the sport.

With renewed focus on high performance, member engagement, and strategic growth, Ontario Sailing is well-positioned to continue driving the sport forward. The organization will continue to chart a bold and purposeful course.