



Report to CIVA – the Contest Organisation Working Group

The following items have been relevant during 2023 in the context of the COWG's remit –

Background

Bidding for CIVA aerobatic championships has in recent years tended to be a rather short-term process, in the majority cases NACs and potential organisers advising CIVA of their championship intentions at a late stage in the year – often shortly before the annual plenary conference. Clearly this makes the review and checking process prior to presentation at plenary extremely curtailed and potentially problematic from the bureau standpoint, but provided the appropriate bidding form is completed and a properly detailed presentation made during the conference it is usually possible for delegates and officers to assess the key points and through debate ascertain whether a bid will fulfil its purpose.

When a bid is approved by vote at plenary an Organiser Agreement can quickly be generated by FAI, the bid secured from the legal standpoint, and the organiser encouraged to proceed with their duties. A CIVA Liaison Officer is appointed, normally the International Jury President as selected at plenary, and work can move forward as planned. Of specific importance here are the relevant Section 6 regulations, power or glider, and the CIVA Guide to Championship Organisation (GCO) to enable the organiser to identify and meet the key objectives for their event.

Progress in 2022/23

Of the bids reviewed and/or approved by delegates at the 2022 plenary conference –

- **EIAC-23:** Despite a successful bid from Romania for the 2nd FAI European Open Intermediate Aerobatic Championships at Deva airfield, this event had to be abandoned at a late stage prior to the start date as there were less than the required 15 competitors from 5 nations. This was a particularly disappointing result, and agenda item 7.8 the Intermediate Working Group Report provides further details.
- **WGAC/WAGAC-23:** Approved for 2023 during the 2021 CIVA plenary conference, after further review at the 2022 meeting a revised bid by Lithuania to stage the 2023 WGAC/WAGAC gave rise to sufficient doubt that delegates voted to reject it. The possibility of an alternative bid was however offered by Polish delegate Jerzy Makula, to be detailed and circulated to delegates for review within a few weeks. This bid was ultimately accepted, and agenda items 6.1 to 6.3 cover the outcome.
- **EAC-23:** The Italian NAC bid for EAC at Pavullo nel Frigano was difficult to resolve at plenary as the location and topography of the airfield clearly gave rise to operating issues that would need further investigatory work. Liaison officer Pierre Varloteaux was tasked to visit the site during early 2023 and provided positive feedback, with some specific matters – notably the minimum height to be used and communication

systems – in need of further attention by the organiser. By the time of the event itself a raised ‘Low’ altitude of 200m was set, though radio communications between the judging line and the starter continued to be problematic.

- **WAAC-23:** Originally outlined and approved at the 2018 plenary in Warsaw, the bid by IAC Chapter-12 in the USA for WAAC at Jean Airport in the Las Vegas region during 2022 had to be carried forward to 2023 due to the Covid pandemic and the approved but delayed bid for EAAC at Clinceni, Romania during the designated target year. An FAI Organiser Agreement for this WAAC had been issued and duly signed by the US organiser during 2021, and discussions regarding entry fees and some other key details at the 2022 plenary appeared to settle the fees as given in the bid. However in early 2023 it became apparent that the fees were not as expected, and also some vital temporary hangarage had been arbitrarily removed from the ongoing process. At a subsequent difficult Zoom discussion between bureau members and the Contest Director and lead organiser Duncan Koerbal the entry fees were reluctantly approved at the slightly raised level known to be published on their website at the time of the '22 plenary, though the provision of the hangarage, essential for teams to reassemble incoming aircraft, became a lost cause.

Agenda reports 6.7 to 6.9 provide details of the championship itself, during which relations between the jury and the Contest Director fell at times to an unusually poor level. Despite these issues the championship was duly completed, though the final awards ceremony was particularly marred by there being no awards rostrum, no national flags revealed or anthems played, and when the championship was formally closed the neither was the FAI flag displayed or the anthem played. In addition it was unclear whether the organiser had attempted to retrieve the Peter Celliers WAAC champions’ trophy from the 2021 winner in Russia; this has subsequently become a touchy topic with the Russian NAC due to the continuing military conflict of that nation with Ukraine and the practical difficulties associated with returning physical items from that country, though efforts are ongoing to secure the trophy and present it to the new French champion Tommy Douillard.

The distressing failure to achieve well established FAI standards and meet clearly defined CIVA regulations at this event remains a matter for careful ongoing review. We must not forget that the International Jury has wide powers and authority to seek redress under such circumstances, and these must be properly exercised whenever the need arises.

The prospect for 20214

- **WGAC/WAGAC:** A bid from Germany will be reviewed.
- **EAAC and EIAC:** A bid from Romania is expected, to run these categories together.
- **WAC:** A bid from Poland is expected.

Nick Buckenham
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