



## CIVL 2022 PLENARY – ANNEXE 23C BUREAU PROPOSAL – GENDER-NEUTRAL RULES

Our specific Section 7 rules specify:

*Hang gliding (hang gliding and paragliding) is a sport in which both men and women participate. Throughout this document the words "he", "him" or "his" are intended to apply equally to either sex unless it is specifically stated otherwise.*

Some consider that this statement is not enough and that our rules should be gender-neutral. Hence this proposal.

### **Proposal:**

CIVL is to adopt a gender-neutral policy for its communication and documentation and make use of gender-inclusive language as far as possible.

Section 7 will be modified to make it gender-neutral. These modifications will be considered as a cleaning-up exercise. A Working Group will be implemented to this effect, led by Liz Lawrence.

The gender-neutral versions of Section 7 will be approved by the CIVL Bureau.

### **The following guidelines will be proposed to the working group...**

The use of 'they' or 'their' as a single pronoun continues to be disputed in the UK. Although it does have precedent in the UK, and is widely used in UK/US in conversation and informal writing, linguists and purists and many others, consider its use to be grammatically incorrect. It remains uncommon in formal writing and is not recommended by the UN, for example.

The UK Civil Service, for example, suggests it is better used only in certain contexts, such as when preceded in the sentence by 'any person' or 'a person'.

On the basis that using 'they' or 'their' as a single pronoun is not widely understood for people whose first language is not English, and indeed, may even cause confusion, it would be preferable to try to avoid it wherever possible.

Fortunately, there are many ways to avoid it!

1. Repeat the noun: The pilot will be scored zero if the pilot was found to be cloud flying
2. Rewrite in the passive: If found to be cloud flying, the pilot will be scored zero
3. Convert to plural: Pilots will be scored zero if they are found to cloud flying
4. Change to impersonal: The penalty for cloud flying is a zero score for that task/round
5. Substitute 'the' or 'that' instead of his/her: "The Team Leader is the liaison between the organisers and his team and is responsible for the proper conduct of his team members" becomes: "The Team Leader is the liaison between the organisers and is responsible for the proper conduct of team members..."
6. Omit the pronoun as it is not always needed: As in the last example: ... is responsible for the proper conduct of team members...

7. Use his/her, her/him or he/she (occasionally): The pilot will be scored zero if he/she was found to be cloud flying
8. Use who: "If a pilot is not satisfied with the Meet Director's decision, he can make a protest to the Jury".. becomes: A pilot who is not satisfied with the Meet Director's decision can make a protest to the Jury.

As a last resort:

9. Use they/their in the singular: The pilot will be scored zero if they were found to be cloud flying

The key is to vary the mechanism used in any section, in order to avoid repetition (of the pronoun or double gender, for example), to avoid a clumsy construction and to keep it simple and maintain clarity of meaning.