



**CIVL 2023 PLENARY – ANNEXE 6A**  
**CIVL PRESIDENT REPORT – 2015-2023**

*Stéphane Malbos*

This is my last report to the plenary as CIVL President as I will be stepping down from this position in a few days.

Hence my report is in two parts: the first one covers the last 12 months; the second one covers the last 8 years, the length of my tenure as President.

### **2022–2023**

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See [CIVL-Plenary-2023-Annexe-6a-CIVL-President-Report-2022-2023](#)

### **2015–2023**

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Actually, I have to go back to 2012 and our Jiao-Xi, Chinese Taipei, plenary. CIVL was coming out of a difficult year, with its President resigning in midterm after suffering a stroke and most of his Bureau not running again. A few months earlier, at the 2011 World PG XC Championships, two pilots had died in the first two days and the event was stopped. Our rules that allowed prototypes had failed dramatically and had to be dealt with. There was a lot of discussion backstage. Consensus was found: Agust Gudmundson would be President and would be allowed to present his “dream team” before the rest of the Bureau was elected. It was a game changer. The Bureau had a lot more coherence, hence power to work and achieve.

At the same time, Bureau and Committees started to work on Basecamp extensively. This was also a game changer. In 2019, I wrote in my report to the plenary: “Hats off to the 67 volunteers taking part in our discussion in Basecamp. They work all year-long and they work hard. I can count in the last 10 months, more than 3,250 exchanges in 230 different discussions! It requires this achievement to get an efficient CIVL.”

In 2015, with Agust moving to the FAI Executive Board, I accepted the presidency. Since, I have led a quite stable Bureau: Goran Dimishkovsi, Igor Erzen, Jamie Shelden and Zeljko Ovuka have been permanent fixtures. Andy Cowley joined us 6 years ago. Bill Hughes is the latest addition, but not the least.

As President, I have relied heavily on the Bureau and its competent and dedicated personalities. Their diversity is a great asset, as they are involved in and understand all aspects of our sport: NACs and federations administration, event organisation, equipment and software development, legal aspects...

And the Bureau has relied heavily on the Committees and Working Groups to discuss and go to the bottom of things. There also you find competence and dedication.

In the name of the CIVL and in my own, thank you all!

As President, I also came to rely heavily on our Competition Coordinator and Administrator, Elena Filonova, for the daily running of the CIVL. We’ve had Coordinators for as long as I can remember – Leonard Grigorescu, Paula Howitt, Nicky Moss, Brian Harris, Claudia Mejia – but an Administrator only since 2018. When we hired her, Elena hit the ground

running as she had been involved in our sport for a long time. Each year, we've given her more work and each year she has come up with proposals for the development of CIVL. Here also, I can only see competence and dedication, and I thank her for it.

Hiring Elena was part of a global strategy to ensure that the CIVL is more and more professional, more and more autonomous. For the past 8 years, if one goal, if one trend is to be underlined, this is it. A few years back, I wrote...

"If we learned anything, it is that we have to be strong and independent in all aspects of hang-gliding and paragliding. Not because we want to go away from the FAI – we need to be part of it – , but because it is our responsibility to build and run our disciplines, to define our strategies, to deliver spotless events, and because, in the end, we have to be ready to count only on ourselves."

This is still valid today. It is not easy to accomplish as we live in a complex reality. It is expensive too. But when we look backward, we can be proud of what we achieved. Like a day-to-day working environment that is efficient. Like a CIVL Competition Class that is reliable and stable... An Event Managing System that is already a success... New scoring systems... Fleet of live-trackers... Communication on social media...

We can be proud, but not satisfied. We are not without failure and there is so much to accomplish.

During these 8 years, I spent a lot of time working at what I called the "higher level", which means dealing with the FAI Executive Board, Secretariat and General Conference; working with the other FAI Commissions President within or outside the Commission Presidents Group; participating in the organisation of multisport events like the World Air Games or the Asian Games; contributing to projects like the Air Games Serie or One-FAI; trudging through the nitty-gritty reality of the Sporting Code General Section and other CASI general rules. I thought – and I still think – that you have to get involved at this level, if only to understand the rules of the game so you can use them at your advantage. You may also try to change them so they may serve the sport better.

Overall, it has been a very frustrating experience and I don't have much progress to report. The years 2015–2019 were a perfect disaster with the EB ordering us around, pushing its pet projects without commission's input, ruining the FAI along the way, killing the One-FAI project that was supposed to repair the broken links between Executive Board, NACs and Commissions.

2020 was a bit better, with the FAI realising the extend of the crisis and starting to adjust. In the years 2021–2022, David Monks's first term as President, the finances were stabilised. David used the resources of the Commission Presidents Group with monthly meetings. Still, the governance model and issues have remained the same. In sport-related matters, the Commissions are not always consulted, sometimes not even informed when the Executive Board takes its decision, and commissions comments can be ignored. The Executive Board knows better and has absolute power. Although the Commissions run most of the FAI activities, they hardly have any power at the General Conference, with a symbolic number on vote on general matters and none on statutory ones.

Funding is a key matter and money is power. Back in 1997, when sanction fees from events started to feed Commissions' budget, it was agreed that Commissions' reserves would be "segregated" in dedicated account to be used only by them. These years are gone.

The reality is that CIVL has no control on its reserve. In the past, it has been used to run the daily business of the FAI. Today, some want to use it to finance non-CIVL projects. And to save money for FAI central and work for the secretariat, we have to do everything in Swiss Francs. The financial burden is moved on our shoulders, and so is the associated workload.

My conclusion will be optimistic and pessimistic.

Optimistic – CIVL is more professional and autonomous than ever. We have to keep moving in this direction.

Pessimistic – We have no indication that the FAI-governance issues will evolve positively.

We have no indication that the FAI-financial issues will evolve positively. We have no guarantee that we can use as we like the money we raise and that this money is used only on matters that have CIVL's approval.

Thanks again to all involved in the running of the CIVL.  
It's been quite a ride.