

## **President's Report to the IGC Plenary 2008**

The past year has continued the seemingly hectic pace that we have become used to over the last few years. We have lost friends during the year; colleagues who have contributed immensely over a long time to our sport as well as those actively engaged in gliding as a sport. Their presence will be missed.

Five sanctioned Championship events were held in 2007: the 4<sup>th</sup> FAI Women's WGC, Romorantin, France; the 5<sup>th</sup> FAI Junior WGC, Rieti, Italy; the 2<sup>nd</sup> FAI World Sailplane GP Final, Omarama, New Zealand; the 14th FAI EGC, Issoudun, France; and, the 14<sup>th</sup> FAI EGC, Pociunai, Lithuania.

These Championships are the subject of separate reports. The IGC congratulates the organisers and the competitors on these successful events.

The Bureau met in October in Paris in my absence. I was unable to attend because of airline training requirements. The meeting, chaired by Eric Mozer, proved, again, to be valuable and to allow us to continue to manage the development of our sport.

The FAI General Conference was held in Rhodes, Greece and our 1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President, Eric Mozer, represented the IGC. The meeting covered a very full agenda. One of the more interesting discussions revolved around Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV's) and their impact on flight and flight safety in our airspace. Another outcome from the General Conference was the formation of the Navigation and Airspace Technical Commission. I am pleased to report that Bernald Smith is the USA Delegate to the new Commission and Ian Strachan is the IGC representative on the Commission. Also, Eric was elected to serve on the FAI Statutes Working Group.

2009 is looming rapidly as a significant year for the FAI and air sports with the 2009 FAI World Air Games. Gliding will be represented by the reigning World Champions from each discipline and class (including the GP). We will have 12 pilots flying GP tasks as the World Air Games.

It seems, when I look at the challenges that we face, they continue to be the same – safety, membership, airspace, finances. There are proposals from various countries addressing some of these issues for you to consider at this meeting. We also have a presentation from the OSTIV Sailplane Development Panel on safety.

But there are other challenges that we need to meet. Challenges such as:

- Managing the increasing workload being placed on IGC volunteers,
- Creating an opportunity out of the technical capability shown at the GP-Final by Air Sports Live,
- Improving the communication with all gliding persons, and
- Assisting our sport at Club level.

We also have opportunities that we need to respond to - ensuring that the 2008 FAI World Gliding Championships in Leusse and Rieti are successful and continuing the development of the GP through the next round of qualifying events in 2008 and 2009 and the Final in 2009 being key outcomes..

Our external relationships with OSTIV and the EGU remain strong and we need to keep working to ensure that we all work to common aims to assist our sport develop.

One area of concern that I have is that there is very little sharing of ideas and plans between the 10 Air Sports Commissions during the year, except for the formal meetings twice a year. This is one area where I believe we Commission Presidents need to be more active to ensure that we work together for the wider good of the FAI.

My sincere thanks go to all the members of the Bureau and to our Committee Chairpersons and the members of all IGC committees for their dedicated work in the past year. In particular my thanks go to the support that our 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President, Eric Mozer, and our Secretary Peter Eriksen, have provided. The work of all these key people – volunteers – ensures that we are able to look after our sport.

My thanks go also to President Andrea Tomasi and the Officers and members of the FIVV for hosting us in the beautiful city of Rome.

Finally, the FAI team – as always – has provided sterling support and assistance over the past year. My thanks go to Secretary General Max Bishop and all the staff.

**Bob Henderson**  
**President, IGC**