

FAI General Aviation Commission (GAC) in Cyprus, November 2016,

Report by Rodney Blois President GAC

1) Important activities, projects or events since last GAC Conference held in Ponta Delgado Azores

The most obvious item on which to report is the World Air Games in Dubai. His highness Prince Mohammed al-Maktoum the Ruler of Dubai was the most generous host to the FAI. It was a spectacular setting, right beside the world's tallest sky scrapers, sited on the beach, where most of the main events were staged. There were breath-taking demonstrations or rather competitions involving microlights, parachutists, model flyers, and balloonists; right in front of big crowds. Everything was free except flights to Dubai. All hotels and meals were complimentary. It was a staggering gesture of hospitality.

GAC was represented with an ANR championship held 45 kilometres out into the desert. This was the HQ of SkyDive Dubai , a well-established year round parachuting centre. So there were adequate facilities for a ANR event.

The WAG concept was to have the best of the best competing to choose the ultimate best competitor. So if this was to be applied to GAC the best 16 crews to compete would have probably comprised about 8 Polish pilots 2 or 3 the from France and the same from Czech republic. This would not have been in the spirit of the games and would have had less spectator appeal. So the decision was taken to invite only 1 crew per country so it turned into a truly International event with excellent social interactions amongst the crews. There are, however, lessons to be learned from the first major truly big competition and ideas have come forward to both improve the spectator appeal and reduce any unfairness between competing crews. The ANR sub committee has been working on this. You will hear more of this from their report later this morning under Item 7 of the Agenda with reports from the responsible FAI officials under Item 6

The 20th World Rally Flying Championships were hosted by Portugal in Santa Cruz Airfield, just north of Lisbon. Likewise under item 6 and 7 your will hear reports on the event; and recommendations for the future of the sport. So I

would just like to say how much we all appreciated the wonderful hospitality extended to us all by the Portuguese Aero Club for whom nothing was too much trouble and all problems were somehow solved; and all by Joao Francisco and Filipa Olivera who are here today. Thank you.

2 . I am pleased to report that the repair to the World Precision Flying Championship Trophy has been carried out, as approved by you all last year; and a protocol is now in place for recording and photographing the trophy as we have lost several trophies over the years by not adequately ensuring their safety and accountability.

3.Live Tracking. This is now near the top of the FAI list of targets for improvement. We in GAC are behind the drag curve. Our first real major attempt was at Dubai. The aim of course is for spectators to look at a big screen and see the aircraft progressing along the corridors of an ANR event. I have to say it was not the most successful display and did not really capture the attention. The display was slow and jerky and completely stopped from time to time. Blame in these cases gets shifted about. The hardware on board; the software analysis system; the download broadband speed ; the lack of 4G coverage; the costs and budget approvals, and so forth. Other FAI commissions are far ahead of us and no doubt some of you have seen some of the microlight and gliding displays. Even the Balloonists have better stuff than we have. But nobody is yet perfect and the big news is that FAI is putting a lot of effort into ensuring the Commissions share their info, and all provide help to each other to get a better solution. Much of the trouble is due to there being too many solutions on offer from too many software providers. To this effect later this month in Lausanne there is to be a workshop where info is shared; where problems are aired with a view to getting improvements. Armin Zuger, here from Finland, has been doing a lot of work on this subject and will be the GAC representative at this seminar. Thank you very much Armin.

We as GAC commissioned 3 short 5 minute films about our air sports. These seemed to have disappeared from the FAI website. I contacted the producer and now via a Vimeo link they are up on the website and very easy to find. If anyone who had not seen them and would like to; so they can point the way

to your local aero clubs and so forth; we can try to find a slot and show them here today.

President's meetings.

1. I was invited, with all Commission Presidents, along with World Air Games Event Organisers to a Dubai post mortem conference in Lausanne. All the failures and things that were less than perfect were aired and solutions proposed. An interesting format with 3 outside professional moderators to guide and help the discussions among us as we divided up into working groups. This actually was a good format and avoided any blame and attacks on any individuals and avoided any 'us and them' against FAI head office.

There will be benefits from this as the next WAG approaches.

2. From the General Conference in Bali I can tell you that it is now a two horse race between North America and South East Asia. The Executive board has been authorised to make this final choice between the remaining bidders and no doubt their decision will be made public soon and ratified at next Gen Conference. Visa-Matti here will give the Secretary General's report as the next item on the Agenda; but I would just briefly like to touch on a couple of things that fall outside his remit! There was a mistake made in the minutes of the previous General Conference concerning the rights of the Home built and experimental Commission which needed correcting and involved a full electronic voting procedure to rectify a situation which could have affected us adversely. Thank you Art for getting that sorted.

We did not see much of Bali you will be pleased to hear. Too busy sitting in freezing conference rooms. FAI is still in an expansive mood and taking on marketing staff to promote its image and range of products on offer with the Air Games Series incubating.

Also and not an Agenda item but came up for discussion. Jury Composition. Some commissions and Championship organisers feel the costs of hosting 3 Jury members is a significant factor in calculating the entry fees; and the idea, with a view to reducing these fees, would be to invite and pay for just the Jury President. When dealing with a protest the President would invite 2 additional people to sit with him. These could be pilots from unaffected

countries, or international judges or other technical experts in situ. No decisions of course; just food for thought.

Organiser Agreements

This is a complex document. However it is now deemed outdated and a new version is appearing. Austria has just signed the old Agreement for Spitzerberg. I think a new one is in the offing? Maybe Visa-Matti might comment on this as maybe problems have occurred with other Commissions over this contract? Maybe the new one is for Dubnica next year??

We are not normally involved in many Cat 2 events. However they should be a source of income and Cat 2 event organisers are very keen to get their event listed in the FAI Official Calendar of events. This has real value and other commissions are regularly charging for this and I think we should do likewise and charge 100 Euros minimum. The Cat 2 events listed so far are the Crete to Cape Town Vintage Air Rally departing very shortly from Crete. I told the organisation that there would be a 100 Euro charge They replied "What only a 100 Euros: no problem of course.. Just send an invoice and the money will be yours". Easier said than done in FAI speak. A simple GAC headed invoice" 100 euros for approval and listing on Calendar." Ah but GAC plenary conference has not given official approval to make such a charge! So maybe we have to fix that somehow.

Likewise the organiser of the Toulouse to St Louis de Senegal rally asked for that to go on the calendar and we got that one on without an organiser agreement or letter from NAC . Small triumphs. But no cash as yet received.

The same story applies to our own GAC Hans Gutman Memorial Long range flight. This time last year Jean Birgen here presented to this conference his suggestions for this trip around Europe to Georgia. We minuted our approval and Jean went about recruiting successfully a group of pilots who went off the Georgia. It would have helped him if this event had been listed on the FAI calendar. However I really tried hard to make this happen but was frustrated at every turn. Although Jean is our Approved Long Range Race organiser and GAC approved the event and I personally got the agreement

for it to go on from the President of the Luxembourg NAC. Verbal agreement not good enough said FAI. Then changes within that NAC negated that attempt. So politics prevailed and nothing got done and I expect the same this year.

Air Games Series

This is a new FAI concept to take a small selection of spectator friendly airsports around the world on a frequent basis to widen the exposure of FAI and airsports in general. Hoping for wide media attention and hence sponsor interest and so forth. These would probably be contemporaneous with other sporting events co-located. Or a multi-sport event! This would be most unlikely to include GAC/ANR as not sufficient spectator appeal (unless we modify it a bit as there is a suggestion to this effect) . Probably ballooning, parachuting, paragliding, possible aerobatics in display format rather than competition format.

In conclusion; This has been a quantum leap for me being kicked upstairs from the comforts of a delegate to becoming your President. A steep learning curve with many new people to meet and get to know and is far more time consuming than Jean Pierre led me to believe. However I am doing my best for you.

Thank you