



4th November 2019

To: All FAI members and Commission Presidents

In the beginning, there was ballooning.....

In the beginning, there was ballooning. During the last half of the Nineteenth Century the usefulness and potential of gas balloons became more and more evident, and were highlighted during the siege of Paris during the 1870 Franco-German war. With the advent of the aeroplane, however, balloons and aeronauts were soon overshadowed by aeroplanes and aviators, and aviation became for all practical purposes just powered flight.

Importantly, there was little distinction between amateur and commercial aviation during the first two decades of the century. The Aero Clubs were the pioneers of all forms of aeronautical activity, and this pioneering nature attracted many persons from the upper levels of society, including royalty. In this respect the Aero Clubs outshone even the early automobile clubs. This is the historical basis of the high social standing that many Aero Clubs have to this day.

It was a natural consequence of this environment that the FAI was designed as a world-wide organisation of national Aero-Clubs where only one organisation from each country could be a Member. The Members were given the sole right to exercise FAI "sporting powers" in its country, i.e. the rights to issue FAI sporting licenses, participate in FAI competitions, host international competitions, control and file world records etc. This principle is still valid, and each Member is assumed to be representative of all air sports practised in its country.

By 1919 the military role of aviation was firmly established, and commercial aviation took off on its own, quickly achieving the status of a political tool and an object of high finance, leaving non-commercial aviation in the hands of the Aero Clubs. Ballooning went into hibernation while their successors, the Zeppelins, went commercial with some success until the Hindenburg disaster of 1937.

All this changed the role of the Aero Clubs: the non-commercial part of aviation was still prestigious, but without financial clout. Private aviation as such was still of little practical value as a form of transportation, so that throughout the twenties and thirties private flying remained primarily a sporting activity. The Aero Clubs became more and more caretakers of a leisure activity, retaining a strong sporting element.

In the early thirties the first of the specialisations appeared, with gliding entering the scene as the first separate air sport. Its similarity to powered flying made for easy absorption into the Aero Club structures. Later on, aeromodelling came under the FAI umbrella, recognised as an important entry stage to Aero Club activity, and was also embraced by the Aero Clubs without conflict.

The four decades from 1945 to 1985 saw the emergence of a number of new air sports successively entering FAI: parachuting joined in 1949, modern ballooning around 1965, hang gliding in 1974, microlight aircraft in the early 1980's and paragliding in 1985. One by one they came in under the FAI umbrella, and new Technical Committees were created to accommodate them (except for paragliding, which joined the hang gliders).¹ In the 21st Century drones and electric and solar powered aircraft were added to the list of air sport specialities.

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¹ FAI President Eilif Ness (1995). "Past, Present and Future: the Development of Air Sports". A presentation to the FAI General Conference Discussion Group on the Future of Air Sports, Sun City, South Africa.

FAI 2020 : REFRESHING FAI

The introduction on the previous page is provided to refresh your memory about the origins and initial development of the FAI. Next year will mark the 115th anniversary of the founding of the FAI. It is timely now to consider how the FAI should be refreshed to make it better able to endure into the future.

More than 20 years ago FAI President of Honour, Eilif Ness, proposed significant changes to the FAI to the General Conference (GC). This included replacing the Council by an Executive Board (EB) to provide a more responsive decision-making process for FAI. However, the minutes of the GC in 2000, recording discussion on the “Fundamental Structural changes”, note that “... *less clarity of perception became apparent amongst the Structural Working Group members when it came to agreeing a framework for more radical reform of FAI’s structure, possibly involving changes to the rules on membership and methods of financing the FAI*”.

Fast forward to 2019 and FAI is very much challenged, including with new and evolving air sports, and also potentially significant commercial opportunities, that find the respective ASCs not necessarily sufficiently empowered to exploit the emerging opportunities in a timely manner.

And the recent, unexpected shortfalls in FAI’s financial income are so severe as to require far more than simple expenditure adjustments. The financial adjustments being proposed for the budget for 2020 are intended to carry us through 2020; the necessary financial reforms to carry us beyond 2020 may be so deep as to change the very scope of our organization.

Such changes are clearly beyond the managerial mandate that the Statutes assign to the EB and require a wider consultation process among all FAI stakeholders.

A new vision on how FAI should address these opportunities is clearly needed; a vision that also addresses the development of a stable income stream enabling the services required by the stakeholders and providing income for research and development projects to protect the future.

The time has therefore come to consider another profound redesign of FAI’s organization; a redesign that recognizes the growing involvement of ASCs in economic activities and the need to further align ASCs and NACs to efficiently represent the many new air sports in many different countries and regions.

This briefing paper is the start of that process. I want to give you an idea of the thoughts that have been developed by the EB building on and expanding from, the One FAI Project.

The main goal is to start an exchange of information and align the views of NACs and ASCs on how FAI could be reshaped, sketching a feasible and widely shared evolutionary path and allowing the GC in December to productively engage with FAI’s redesign as its chief goal.

I would like to propose that I have discussions, in Lausanne, during the GC week, with the Commission Presidents and with NACs who are present prior to the conference proper. For the Commission Presidents this would be during some of the time currently scheduled for the CPG meeting (Tuesday 3rd and Wednesday 4th). For the NACs this could be on the afternoon of Wednesday the 4th in parallel with the CASI Meeting.

Please let me know your opinions on these proposed meetings, your availability and, in the case of NACs, whether you would like to participate or whether you would recommend a specific NAC to participate in this meeting to represent your interests.

This is an ambitious goal and I pledge to support these meetings by sharing all information available to me as FAI President – withholding none – and chairing the sessions to ensure consideration of all the viewpoints expressed therein.

Building Blocks

A starting point in this process is to ask **Why** an organisation such as the FAI exists, **Who** it exists for and **How** it conducts its core activities? Having established these core principles the next building block is to determine exactly “**What**” stakeholders actually expect the organisation to achieve. Matching these expectations to the ability to fund activities then starts to establish the scope of activities that are actually undertaken.

Great theory – does it translate into reality? The One FAI Workshops delivered the following outcomes:

Why FAI:

- The promotion of recreational and sports flying globally

This Vision was then distilled into three Aims:

- Determining and recognizing achievements and performances
- Developing and maintaining frameworks to support FAI events and achievements
- Promoting and developing air sports

Who does FAI serve:

- For all those who want to demonstrate their performance and those supporting the demonstration of the performance; acknowledging that these people come from the wider community of persons with an interest in air sports

How do these relate to the existing statements about the FAI? Well, from 2014, the FAI has **the following Mission and Vision statements:**

Mission – FAI – the global organisation for the promotion of air sports and recreational flying

Vision – A world where safe participation in air sports and recreational flying is available to everyone at reasonable cost

I suggest that the statements generated by the One FAI Workshops are reasonably closely aligned with the 2014 Mission and Vision statements. There is no need to fundamentally alter this view of the role of FAI and who is served by the organisation, although some refinement of the Vision, particularly, might be beneficial.

The third outcome from the One FAI Work was to define **How** FAI delivers on its purpose to those it serves. The result of this work is detailed in Appendix 1 which compares the One FAI Outcome with the existing Statute 1.2, *The Aims and Objectives of FAI* and Statute 1.3, *The Functions and Responsibilities of FAI*.

All the sub-points of both Statute 1.2 and Statute 1.3 map to the deliverables identified by the One FAI work and some map to more than one. Thus, the outcomes expressed from the One FAI work are already well captured in the *Aims, Objectives, Functions and Responsibilities* in the FAI Statutes although they need be clustered in a different way.

Additionally, in 2015 a body of work was done to identify the values that air sports represent, how air sports are distinct from other sports and what is unique about flying. The outcome of a series of word heat-maps provided the following three distinct, positive and unique descriptions of flying:

- Flying is *Freedom*
- Flying is *Inspiring*
- Flying is *Thrilling*

The challenge then, for us, is to build a structurally and economically sound and efficient FAI that enables the Mission, Vision, Aims and Objectives to facilitate the distinct qualities of air sports.

How does FAI achieve the stated Aims, Objectives, Functions and Responsibilities?

The existing FAI structure is based on the historical shaping of the organisation. As described in the President's 1995 paper, the evolution of the National Aero Clubs, CASI and Commissions was in response to growth pressures. Subsequently, at the end of the 20th Century, the FAI Council was replaced by an Executive Board and a SecGen with extended authority.

This model was intended to enable the FAI to respond in a timely manner to on-going management requirements during the year between meetings of the GC. The Members (the National Airsport Controls) are the owners and they have the responsibility for the overall governance of the FAI, exercised through their voting powers at the GC.

Fast-forwarding to 2019, we are faced with the question of whether the current structure of the organisation is fit for purpose. The One FAI work identified that communication across all parts of the organisation needs to be improved. It also identified that decision-making around sporting activities needed to engage the board and the commissions in a more collaborative manner.

The One FAI work also pointed to a need for clarity about the role and function of the various component parts of the FAI to support understanding by NACs. As a result, a handbook for NACs is already in the final stages of development.

And the need, once and for all, to provide clarity on the status of the FAI Sporting Licence was another outcome. The work on the Sporting Licence has already resulted in proposals to introduce a FAI Supporter Identity Card (ID), which is now combined with the principle of a FAI Sports ID and the FAI Officials ID. The continuing work on these suggestions is clearly a subset of this overall project.

Wider than these factors, though, is the need to be sure that we identify what the FAI should look like to be able to deliver, in the future, the outcomes desired for the organisation coupled with the ability to finance the desired activities. This work is larger than sorting out the financial stability of the FAI; this is also larger than the proposals from One FAI to strengthen both communications and the decision-making connections between the EB and the Commission Presidents.

This body of work needs to consider, I suggest, the role of the Members, the role of the Commissions, the role of bodies such as CASI and SWG and the overall way that the FAI is governed.

Next Steps

I am seeking your support to formally start this work immediately following the GC in December. I will be asking the GC to identify suitable candidates for appointment to a small working group plus a wider reference group. Draft terms-of-reference will be circulated to prior to the GC to guide your decisions on suitable nominees.

The working group will report to me and will share their ideas with the reference group for review and validation.

I expect that this work will result in structural and functional changes to the organisation of the FAI for the future.

The timeline for this review of the FAI is:

- Conference week: discussion on the project concept *FAI 2020 : Refreshing FAI*
- At General Conference:
 - confirmation of member and commission support for the project
 - nominations for the core working group and wider review group
- 31 December 2019: appointment of members of the core working group and reference group with agreed terms-of-reference
- 31 May 2020: formal proposals submitted to the EB
- 31 June 2020: formal proposals assigned to:
 - SWG for review for any recommended changes to the Statutes and
 - CASI for any recommended changes to the Sporting Code – General Section
- 31 July 2020: recommendations for the wording of constitutional changes from SWG and CASI submitted to the EB
- Mid-August 2020: formal report and proposals for Statute and Sporting Code changes sent to members and commissions with the agenda for the GC
- General Conference 2020: conference decisions on the proposed changes
- 1 January 2021: approved changes come into effect

I appreciate that this is an ambitious programme of work. I suggest that it needs to be ambitious to protect our future. It also needs to be done with care and diligence to provide the best possible outcome for the future of the FAI so having the right people involved will be critical.

I look forward to your inputs and suggestions.

Best regards



Bob Henderson
President, FAI

Comparison of One FAI Outcomes and FAI Statutes

One FAI Outcome – How Does FAI Deliver?	FAI Statutes
Facilitates and shapes quality competitions	1.3.3. To establish and enforce rules for international air sport competitions. 1.3.4. To organise Air Games, World and Continental Championships and other international air sport events in those disciplines recognised by FAI, including those staged at multi-sport competitions.
Supports and recognizes records and achievements	1.3.1. To establish regulations for evaluating air and space performances. 1.3.2. To establish, define and verify international air and space records. 1.3.10. To reward excellence in performance and outstanding contributions to aeronautics and astronautics by awarding honours, medals, diplomas, titles, and badges, as provided for in the Statutes and By-Laws.
Develops and maintains rules and tools	1.3.1. To establish regulations for evaluating air and space performances. 1.3.2. To establish, define and verify international air and space records. 1.3.3. To establish and enforce rules for international air sport competitions. 1.3.5. To be the final authority for all international air sport competitions including at multi-sport competitions. 1.3.8. To create and promote international standards for pilots and parachutists and qualification badges and medical requirements for air sport activities. 1.3.9. To govern recognised international air sport activities.
Generates revenue to support activities	1.3.4. To organise Air Games, World and Continental Championships and other international air sport events in those disciplines recognised by FAI, including those staged at multi-sport competitions.
Coordinates, connects and grows the air sport community internationally	1.2.1. To make evident the essentially international spirit of aeronautics as a powerful instrument for bringing all people closer in mutual understanding and friendship regardless of political, racial or religious considerations, thereby helping to create international good will and thus build a better and more peaceful world. 1.2.2. To promote physical and moral qualities, technical knowledge and skill as basic to aeronautical activities and air sports. 1.2.3. To bring together the air sports men and women of the world in international competition. 1.2.4. To educate young people through sport in the spirit of mutual understanding and friendship. 1.3.6 To assemble, analyse and disseminate information and statistics about the FAI activities in its member Countries that can contribute to the improvement of aircraft and their equipment, to the improvement of training methods of pilots and parachutists and to safety in air activities. 1.3.11. To issue publications and other materials promoting and recording the aims and activities of FAI.

<p>Gathers and engages with air sport experts</p>	<p>1.2.3. To bring together the air sports men and women of the world in international competition.</p> <p>1.2.7. To provide a forum for the exchange of information and discussion of mutual problems with other elements of civil aeronautics.</p> <p>1.3.1. To establish regulations for evaluating air and space performances.</p> <p>1.3.2. To establish, define and verify international air and space records.</p> <p>1.3.4. To organise Air Games, World and Continental Championships and other international air sport events in those disciplines recognised by FAI, including those staged at multi-sport competitions.</p> <p>1.3.5. To be the final authority for all international air sport competitions including at multi-sport competitions.</p>
<p>Represents the interest of air sports to international organizations (at a regional and national level)</p>	<p>1.2.5. To co-ordinate its Members' separate efforts to further aeronautics and astronautics throughout the world.</p> <p>1.2.6. To ensure adequate access to airspace for all who wish to fly.</p> <p>1.2.7. To provide a forum for the exchange of information and discussion of mutual problems with other elements of civil aeronautics.</p> <p>1.3.7. To work with other International Organisations to protect the interests of FAI air activities.</p>
<p>Promotes air sport activities to the public</p>	<p>1.2.4. To educate young people through sport in the spirit of mutual understanding and friendship.</p> <p>1.3.4. To organise Air Games, World and Continental Championships and other international air sport events in those disciplines recognised by FAI, including those staged at multi-sport competitions.</p> <p>1.3.10. To reward excellence in performance and outstanding contributions to aeronautics and astronautics by awarding honours, medals, diplomas, titles, and badges, as provided for in the Statutes and By-Laws.</p> <p>1.3.11. To issue publications and other materials promoting and recording the aims and activities of FAI.</p>