



CIVL 2016 PLENARY – ANNEX 6 CIVL PRESIDENT REPORT

Stéphane Malbos

First, thanks to all who are running CIVL. CIVL is us, a dedicated bunch of volunteers involved in high-level competitions and also running regular jobs and taking care of families. I am proud to have been elected last year to chair our Commission and in the various meetings I had to attend, I never forgot that, before all, I represent you.

If I was ready to become CIVL President, I did not quite realize the amount of work it would represent if all problems had to be addressed, all projects moved forward, all events attended: in my CIVL 'In' box, I count 5684 mail from election day to the beginning of February and 1697 mails in the 'Out' box, which shows that a President follows everything and gets involved often but not always.

During this first year, I learned quite a bit about how the system works, the intricacy of the FAI rules and procedures and, hopefully, how to use them. This was done mainly during the meeting of the Commission Presidents (Lausanne, 4 days), the FAI General Conference and the CASI meeting (Rotterdam, 5 days), and Dubai World Air Games.

I also took part in the European Hang gliding and Paragliding Union (EHPU) meeting in Lisbon, along with Adrian Thomas, to discuss current affairs and specially the new CCC paraglider requirements and IPPI Card scheme.

Cat 1 & 2

CIVL is mainly here to run international competitions. In 2015, we had 359 events (382 in 2014, 376 in 2013, 324 in 2012, 319 in 2011). See our Competition Coordinator report for details (Annex 20).

Amongst these events, we had three World championships in Colombia, Mexico and Indonesia. Next year Continental and World championships will take us to Macedonia, Kazakhstan, Lithuania and France. We are truly a worldwide sport and we can be proud of it.

Understanding why today trends are what they are – Cross Country down, Accuracy up, Aerobatic surviving – is a tricky issue for which I am not sure there are simple answers.

Paragliding Accuracy has not finished growing, obviously. Asia is currently the continent where the discipline is expanding the most but some of the top European XC countries have not been really getting involved in the game yet, as well as the Americas. Accuracy probably needs to find its second wind though, and make the sport more exciting for pilots and public.

Cross Country might also have to find its second wind. The race format has been basically the same for a long time. During last plenary an informal working group spent one afternoon imagining better task format and rules, with the hope of encouraging organizers to implement these new formats. Their job is unfinished and should be encouraged.

In paragliding, it has been said that the top competition gliders were part of the problem. The CIVL Competition Class (CCC) gliders' requirements implemented in 2015 ended up with too few manufacturers interested to build such gliders. The new requirements that the Plenary will have to vote on should open the game to more manufacturers without sacrificing safety.

In Aerobatic, the numbers are too low to have significant value. The discipline is not in very good health due to shortage of organizers and officials. Aerobatic remains our most spectacular

discipline, its format adapted well and thoroughly tested, its scoring software a must that should inspire other disciplines.

Coordinating Competitions

After Paula Bowyer-Sayer, Brian Harris and Nicky Moss, CIVL Bureau hired Claudia Mejia de la Pava as our Competition Coordinator. Claudia will be at the Plenary to meet you all and learn the ropes of CIVL bureaucracy in action!

WAG & AGES

The 2015 FAI World Air Games, another First Category event, took us to Dubai. Probably the 'best ever' WAG but far from being perfect. Check Annex 12a for a more complete review. We can use these WAG as a stepping stone to build 'air show' events adapted to our disciplines. It will be a big job to define new formats and very precise requirements and budgets, another big job to find cities and local organizers able to welcome us and still another one to go there and run the show. But all this could be very rewarding and help our disciplines to grow. Such project is in line with FAI new objective, the creation of the 'FAI Air Games Event Series' (AGES), so if we decide to move forward, hopefully we will get support from FAI.

Olympic Project

Tokyo 2020 organizers were looking for new sports and asked FAI to propose one. FAI chose Paragliding. We worked on a project that, in the end, was not accepted. We are still working on it through our Asian contacts and in relation to the 2018 Asian Games.

We have also been contacted by people involved in the Paris candidacy for the 2024 Games. Another opportunity if Paris is chosen.

Paragliding Speed Riding

FAI asked us if we would be ready to deal with it. We were very cautious. Although some federations have training and competition programs, it still lacks a structure we can rely on and volunteers to do the job.

Sporting Licences

CIVL is the Commission that run the most FAI Second Category events – 50% of them in 2014 – and whose pilots represent 25% of FAI Sporting Licence.

This particularity has its advantages and drawbacks. Air Sports Commissions differ a lot in their history and culture and in the way they work. Some have no Second Category events at all, some have a few, some have a lot.

FAI has drafted in its General Section of the Sporting Code rules for all sports and these rules have a very different impact if you are a pilot or an organizer from one ASC or from another. Some of these rules, and specially the ones in relation with the mandatory Sporting Licences, are poorly adapted to CIVL. They are for us, in fact, defeating FAI's aim to 'bring together air sports men and women of the world in international competition'.

We have also witnessed abuse of some NAC using their exclusive power of issuing or withdrawing Sporting Licences to their own purposes, without explanation, with no regard to the above FAI's aim.

Hence our proposals on the Sporting Licence.

The power of NAC is likewise absolute concerning sanctioning or not competitions. Moreover, if a NAC is suspended because he did not pay FAI its membership, its competitions disappear from the calendar.

Along the years we always had to confront sanctioning issues. 2015 and 2016 (already!) have brought a few problems, always intricate and hard to solve, with pilots stuck between a rock and a hard place and finally paying the price for conflicts they do not have much to say about.

This is why the Bureau decided to score any competition that has appeared on the FAI calendar at least one day: a decision you will be asked to agree with.

Sporting Licences and Cat 2 events

The Sporting Licence issue is a very complex one. In the current discussion within CASI (the body that writes the General Section of the Sporting Code), I cannot say that we are getting much support for our proposals. As written, the rule is so beautiful – all disciplines united under the helm of powerful but wise NACs – that any change to it is seen as a breach of FAI principles and an attack against the NACs.

No support offered but no solution either to the fact that 95% of our competitions accept pilots with no online Sporting Licence and should not be considered as FAI events.

So either:

1- The rule is changed as we suggest.

2- We don't change a thing: we take our proposals back, we stop talking about it, we look elsewhere, we keep doing as before and ignore the rule.

3- We implement the rule strictly, keep Cat 1 within FAI, forget about FAI Cat 2 and start a new scheme without FAI sanctioning. CIVL could supervise it: we have the interest, the money and the manpower. It would certainly be very popular with our pilots and organizers, as they would not have to worry about buying or controlling Sporting Licences anymore.

I understand that the above choice is a bit blunt and that the situation might change, but it is very important for the CIVL Bureau that all Delegates be aware of the issue and its possible consequences before we take time to discuss it during the Plenary.

Restructuring Section 7

This has been an important project and this Plenary should finalize it.

Our current Section 7 was conceived 12 years ago. Before, all disciplines were mixed up in a single document.

Along the years, layers above layers have been added and it was time to reorganize the mess that Section 7 had become.

We cleaned up the text, we tried to find as much common ground between disciplines and put it in a common section, we put the specificities of cross-country, accuracy and aerobatic in their own section.

Hopefully the new Section 7 will be easier to use and update.

Most proposals for changes from the Committees have been included in the new text, so we will refer to the new Section often during this Plenary.

Safety

Although safety is an ever-present priority, the global issue is intricate and it is hard to decide what to do and how and with what budget. Raymond Caux will be at our Plenary to explain his work and vision (see Annex 13).

It is agreed that in cross-country, appropriate rules and task setting play a big part in safety. We have not been very innovative in this regard, having been focused on equipment issues. With the new requirements for CCC paragliders and the hang gliders sprog issue behind us, it might be time to change our priorities.

Software

Our Software Working Group has not been properly working in recent time for various reasons. No blame requested nor given. Still, Software plays a vital part in our competitions and rankings, and seeing the evolution of our disciplines stalled is not acceptable.

CIVL Bureau has decided to accept a proposal from Flytec to take care of our IT. FAI reviewed it and accepted it. The contract has been signed on February 11, 2016 (see Annex 18a).

Brian Harris, our former Competition Coordinator and Scorer of many Cat 1 and 2, has accepted to help CIVL to define our projects and follow their implementation.

The Software Working Group is suspended for now and will be reactivated in the future if needed.

IPPI Card

The International Pilot Proficiency Identification Card – the IPPI Card – was created by CIVL twenty-four years ago. It is linked to the SafePro documents that describe, for hang gliding and paragliding, the references of the pilot's progression. This scheme required a lot of work from our volunteers along the years and will require more still, as we need to revise SafePro Para and 'invent' SafePro Tow.

For now, we need you to approve the new SafePro Delta (Annexe 23b).

Recently, a new way of issuing the IPPI Card was implemented. See Annex 23a. Associations in Italy, France, Hungary and Serbia have adopted the new scheme.

Following this implementation, we received mail and comments.

—Two National Aero Club (NAC) that had never issued the IPPI Card requested that they should be the sole distributors of it, instead of the associations that have done it until now.

—We realized that a lot of associations issuing the IPPI Cards are selling them at a big profit. Such attitude can restrain a large distribution of the IPPI Card and defeats its purpose.

CIVL has not created the IPPI Card to give the NAC more control over our sport or to enrich associations that issue them.

The Bureau proposes to redefine our presentation of the IPPI Card so it is clear that:

–CIVL chooses who issue the IPPI Card. It may be more than one association per country.

—CIVL can withdraw its issuing authorization if any abuse is obvious.

(See Annex 24f.)

Documents

We are regularly updating our documentation, to reflect our philosophy and the way we implement it. This year we went through the Steward and Jury handbooks (see Annex 21a and b). Please read and approve.

Finances

In recent years, CIVL has been spending more than what it has been earning. Our reserve fund has diminished considerably. It is time to reverse the trend.

Expenses are hard to reduce if you want to do a proper work, follow everything, be active, develop software... In two words: move forward.

Revenues are hard to come by.

The new IPPI Card scheme should get us extra funds, but not much.

Having Cat 1 organizers pay for the medals will make a substantial difference. It was done this way before 2005, when CIVL was rich and decided it would encourage competition organizers and lighten their financial burden.

Most of our revenue comes from sanction fees, so raising them seems a reasonable solution. Spreading the effort over our many Cat 2 events should be – almost – painless.

The other Bureau proposals on financial matters (see Annex 24c-V2) have more to do with simplification than with getting more revenue, although simplification means less work hence less money spent.