France Proposal : To allow Hang Gliding Class 2 aircraft to launch using an auxiliary motor

➢ 1. The Background:

Hang gliding competitions are on the decline. The number of pilots competing is falling. For many years, the Class 2 World Championship has been run alongside Class 5 and the Women's Worlds (Class 1) in order to make the overall event viable. This has changed in recent years, as the Class 5 World Championships was run alongside the Class 1 Europeans in 2016, in order to make that event more viable. The Women's Worlds, last run in 2014, was cancelled in 2017.
Last year (2017) ADPUL successfully ran the FAI World Hang Gliding Class 2 championship. For 4 years, ADPUL has been one of the very few organisers world-wide of high level competitions for Class 2 Hang Gliders. However, the Worlds attracted just 9 pilots from 3 nations. There are only 16 pilots from 5 nations in the WPRS. Yet there could be up to 100 Class 2 pilots worldwide – most of them will fly with auxiliary motors, thus taking them outside CIVL's current definition of Class 2 hang gliders. We wish to introduce a change to the rules for Class 2 competitions for 2018 in an attempt to attract more pilots to competitions and help prevent the complete demise of this discipline within the FAI.

➢ 2. The Proposal : to modify the rules concerning Class 2 Hang Gliders in FAI Competitions

This proposal introduces the option that Class 2 aircraft can use an auxiliary motor in order to launch and to reach the start window for competition tasks.
The reasons why we are proposing this change are :

- To facilitate the launching of this class of hang glider, eliminating the constraints (and costs) of ULM aerotowing.
- To promote electric motors, both from an environmental and logistical standpoint.
- To dramatically increase the number of competitors in Class 2 competitions, and make such competitions more attractive to organisers.

This auxiliary motor rule has existed in the IGC for gliders for many years, and it is perfectly possible to detect on GPS tracklogs when and whether a motor is in use during a flight. The auxiliary motor is considered simply a means of launching the aircraft and not as permanent power source. This type of flying is nothing like the flight of a ULM, for example, since the rest of the flight will be truly 'vol libre' – free flying. From a CIVL perspective, the rule could also open up more opportunities for our disciplines to be included in multi-airsport events based on an airfield.

➢ 3. The Competition Potential :

ADPUL is planning its 4th 'Big Task Open' at an aerodrome in the southern Alps from 11th to 19th August 2018, for Class 1, Class 2 and Class 5 Hang Gliders. With this rule change, this competition would also attract motorised Class 2 pilots (aerotow by ULM will be available for traditional non-motorised Class 2 pilots).
In competition, an average task with turn points might be between 300 and 350km, scored in the usual way: fastest time over the course. Trackers allow the pilots to be followed in real time. This rule change could dynamise pilots and manufacturers of Class 2 aircraft. Pilots can progress in their sport, in the same way as traditional glider pilots, flying much longer, out and return tasks, easily spanning the entire southern alps and potentially parts of the northern Alps, and joining the competition scene. Many new Class 2 pilots come from Class 1 and Class 5. Manufacturers too, may be stimulated to continue development if the potential base is expanding.

Pilots flying with auxiliary motors, would follow CIVL Section 7 Category 2 rules. All flights would be monitored by tracking equipment which would verify that motors were not used once the target altitude and/or position was achieved from launch. If a motor was re-started in flight, then the pilot will be deemed as landed at that point by the scoring software. Full details and explanation of the use of the auxiliary motor, complete with penalties, would be listed in the Local Regulations.

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For example, the auxiliary motor should no longer be used once the glider had reached the normal release point specified by aerotow. A maximum time of use of the motor would also be specified, to ensure fair play for all competitors.

ADPUL's annual competition already attracts many of the world's best Class 2 pilots, and we hope that with this rule change, we can expand the entry to include many more pilots who currently have no competition opportunity. Further, we believe the move will encourage more organisers to run Category 2 competitions, and will hopefully inspire an organiser to bid for the next Class 1 competition as it should be more financially viable. Finally, it will help more pilots progress in the sport and achieve yet longer distance flights – and even extend the world records !

➢ 4. The Proposal in detail :

Section 7 (Common Section)

Proposed addition to 1.4.2 Wheels and other Launch Aids:

- *Class 2 hang gliders fitted with an auxiliary motor may be permitted by the organisers, provided it shall be used solely for launching the hang glider, in order to reach the height and vicinity that an aerotow aircraft would typically release the pilot. Pilots must carry equipment that accurately verifies on the tracklog any usage of the motor.*

Proposed addition to Chapter 14

14.4.4 Auxiliary motors

Auxiliary motors are allowed only in Class 2 gliders, and where specified as acceptable in the Local Regulations. Although only ultra-light gliders that comply with 1.4.1 may be flown, it is understood that with the fitting of an auxiliary motor the aircraft will no longer be foot-launchable.

Section 7A (Cross Country)

Proposed addition to 4.1 Flight Verification

In Class 2 competitions, pilots flying with an auxiliary motor must fly with a device that not only records a track log meeting CIVL requirements, but also verifies when a motor is in use.

Proposed addition to 8.2.5 Additional (airworthiness) Standards

8.2.5.6 Auxiliary motors (Class 2)

Where an auxiliary motor is fitted to a Class 2 hang glider, the glider must either be certified in that configuration by the manufacturer, or must comply with 8.2.3 Uncertified Hang Gliders.

➢ 5. Background : ADPUL Club:

ADPUL is a French registered club with the objective of promoting the development of ultra light gliders, defined in the FAI Sporting Code as Class 2 Hang gliders. It operates from the Chevalet aerodrome at Aspres-sur-Buëch in the south of France. The club was founded in 2014 by a group of pilots passionate about their sport.

Its main activities in the southern French Alps include :

- Aerotowing of ultra light gliders and hang gliders (Class 1, 2 and 5)
- Guided flights in the high mountains
- Training of Class 2 hang glider pilots
- Organisation of Hang Gliding Class 2 (and Class 5) competitions

Its additional, eventual objectives also include :

- With the approval of the proper authorities, to change the definition of ultra-light gliders such that they no longer have to be foot-launchable.
- To ensure that the interests of ultra-light glider pilots are fairly represented within the overseeing aeronautical and airsports authorities, federations, and insurance companies in France and in Europe.

ADPUL is affiliated to the Fédération Française de Vol Libre (FFVL)

➢ 6. Communication & Publicity

For last year's FAI World Hang Gliding Class 2 Championship, ADPUL managed to secure an extraordinarily high level of publicity in France and further afield. Videos can be seen on FAI's Youtube channel, Vimeo and on the official competition website and Facebook page. Live tracking was a major feature, helping to bring the event to a wider audience. There was extensive TV coverage in France and several articles. The organisers worked with a top PR Agency as well as regional and national sponsors plus the FAI and XC Magazine. Class 2 Hang Gliders are the highest performance aircraft within CIVL and have been seen to attract considerable attention from the media.