



# Practical Guidelines for CIVL/FAI Category 1 Competition Organisers Chapter 10

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Aéronautique  
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## 10 The Practice Event

### 10.1 Purpose

The primary purpose of the Practice Event is to test the organisation team, in the location, and the discipline, that will form the FAI Category 1 event the following year. Providing pilots with an opportunity to fly the site one year prior is very much a secondary purpose. For this reason, Section 7 clearly states that the Competition Organiser must arrange a practice event on the proposed site one year before, and as close as practical to the proposed dates of the Category 1 Championships.

### 10.2 Duration

The Practice Event needs to be long enough to ensure that the organisation has the opportunity to work together for several consecutive flyable days. A weekend competition will not suffice. It may be combined with another competition, such as a National Championships, providing the event is Cat 2 sanctioned, properly promoted also as the Practice Event, and meets Cat 2 requirements for open, international entries. Obviously a multi-class Category 1 Championships must be preceded by a multi-class Practice Event.

### 10.3 Sanctioning

The Practice Event must be sanctioned as a Category 2 event. It should be sanctioned as soon as possible after the bid has been accepted. If dates have not been finalised at the time of bidding, they should be decided as soon as possible after, and the event sanctioned without delay. This will help other international organisers plan their own Cat 2 events to avoid clashes which could impact revenues from pilot entry fees.

### 10.4 Rules

The Practice Event shall be run according to Category 1 rules – *as far as appropriate* - with the exception of Entry Requirements, Ceremonies and extra FAI Officials (Jury). Seek advice from the appointed Steward or Chairman of the relevant discipline Committee if necessary.

### 10.5 Personnel

The Competition Organiser, Meet Director and Safety Director, as named in the original bid documents, which form part of the Organiser Agreement, must each be present to fulfill their respective roles at the Practice Event. They are not allowed to compete in the Practice Event. If a change of these key personnel is required, either for the Practice Event or for the Championships,

a request must be submitted as soon as possible, to the CIVL President who will seek approval from the CIVL Bureau.

It is strongly recommended that other key staff, such as launch and goal marshals and scorers are in place for the Practice Event.

## **10.6 Financial Implications**

Typically, a Practice Event will not attract the same number of pilots as the Category 1 Championships and the entry fee is likely to be lower. While a Cat 2 event may easily be run on entry fees alone, with various costs scaling according to numbers, this is unlikely to be the case for a Practice Event.

The Competition Organiser needs to demonstrate that sufficient numbers of appropriately trained staff are available, working as a team. Although Opening and Closing Ceremonies need not incur too much expense, perhaps more 'formality' and less 'hospitality', there will be some costs involved.

Other logistics will need to be in place, such as Headquarters, briefing room, AV equipment, portable toilets on launch. The website must be in place and kept up to date, the media machine must be operating. The Steward's costs will need to be covered.

It is strongly recommended that additional funding is secured for running the Practice Event. If applications for grants to government, sporting or regional authorities are being made, it is a good idea to 'sell' the idea of a 2 stage, 2 year process, with perhaps a lesser amount requested for the Practice Event.

## **10.7 CIVL Steward**

As soon as practicable after acceptance of the bid, CIVL will appoint a Steward to provide advice and guidance to the Competition Organiser. The Steward will attend the Practice Event and report back to CIVL on the suitability of all aspects of the organisation, in particular the key personnel, venues, logistics and manpower. The costs of the Steward to attend the Practice Event (travel, hotel and food) is covered by the Competition Organisation. If a further visit is required later, to verify work has been completed on a launch site, for example, these costs will also have to be paid by the Competition Organisation.

Don't hesitate to contact the Steward if you need some advice or guidance on any aspect. Do let the Steward know of any material changes to any of the organisational aspects before the Practice Event.

## **10.8 Steward's Report**

The Steward should alert the Competition Organiser during the Practice Event about any issues that could be or need to be improved before the next year. Try to set aside a time at the end of the Practice Event, before the Steward leaves the site, for a meeting to go through some or all of these aspects. This is also a good time to outline to the Steward plans for the following year

concerning Ceremonies, Social Events, Media Coverage and other aspects that will probably involve more planning, effort and expense than for the Practice Event.

The Competition Organiser will be sent a copy of the Steward Report once it is finalised. Copies are also sent to the CIVL Bureau and the Chairman of the relevant discipline Committee. The report is available to Delegates on request. The report will contain a list of recommendations for improvements, and a list of items that must be attended to, probably with deadlines, which have hopefully been agreed beforehand with the Competition Organiser.

The Steward will be in contact about the progress on these issues, but it is courteous to keep him informed during the year. If there are serious issues to address that may result in a withdrawal of the sanction and cancellation of the event, the CIVL President and FAI Office will also want to be informed about progress.

## **10.9 Local Regulations**

The Local Regulations should be prepared well in advance of the Practice Event. The Section 7 template must be used. Enlist the help of the Steward to determine which elements are not appropriate for the Practice Event, or which will be different from the Cat 1 Championships the following year. This will certainly include Entry Requirements, entry fees, deadlines, dates and the general programme. The Competition Organiser/Meet Director is at liberty to set some Entry Requirements however, providing the rules governing Cat 2 events are not contravened.

The Local Regulations do not need to be approved by CIVL, but they should be verified by the Steward, and then published on the competition website.

The better prepared the Local Regulations for the Practice Event, the less work is required the following year.

## **10.10 Preparations**

It is essential that the site is properly prepared in advance of the Practice Event. If improvement works for launches, for example, had been promised in the bid, then they should be completed in good time. Of course, some details may have had to change, such as the location of the headquarters, for example, or the type of transport. Such aspects are less critical, but the Steward will judge whether they are suitable for a Category 1 Championship. If you know in advance that plans will change between the Practice Event and the main event, ensure the Steward is aware, and where possible/appropriate, show the Steward the new HQ location, goalfield or other elements.

Aspects such as providing shade and toilets on launch should also be adhered to for the Practice Event. Again, this will allow the Competition Organiser to better assess the costs and logistics involved, ready for the following year.

The FAI-appointed Steward is generally well-aware of the financial implications of running a Cat 1 event. Therefore, if plans have to be down-scaled due to a financial shortfall, alert the Steward to avoid surprises and what can appear to be broken promises.

Again, it is well worthwhile preparing items such as pilot & display turnpoint maps, task boards, noticeboards and such like, for the Practice Event, as you will receive valuable feedback on their effectiveness.

### **10.11 Following the Rules**

It is strongly recommended that the organising team follow the rules and procedures as closely as possible to those set out for a Category 1 event. If you have not run a Cat 1 Championship before, this is the only way to get an idea of the tasks, timescales and manpower required. The Steward will be looking for an efficient Registration process, Equipment checks (as necessary) and Mandatory Safety Briefing. Also under scrutiny will be the effectiveness of Daily Briefings, Task Setting, Launch Marshalling, Transport & Retrieve Operations, Goalfield/Target Management and Scoring.

While it is not essential to run a team as well as individual competition, it can be a good idea to encourage team entries. Not only might this encourage more pilots to attend, but it is good practice for the scorers, and gives the organisation a better idea of the interplay and dynamics involved that can create a positive, competitive atmosphere.

Be aware that Section 7 rules can change between the Practice Event and the Category 1 Championships. The Steward should advise you on aspects that will affect your planning, but it is worthwhile consulting the CIVL website after the February Plenary meeting prior to the Championships.

### **10.12 Complaints and Protests**

There is no FAI appointed Jury at a Practice Event. The Local Regulations should state how complaints and protests will be dealt with. This could be the 'normal' practice for Cat 2 events in your country. Another possibility is to state that a representative Jury will be elected if a protest is made. Consult the Steward about this. Much will depend on the scale of the event and whether enough acceptably 'neutral', reliable and knowledgeable people will be on site. Alternatively, it is worth simply stating that in the event of a complaint, the Meet Director's decision is final.

### **10.13 Pilot Feedback**

It could be a good idea, towards the end of the competition, to try to obtain some feedback from competitors at the Practice Event. A simple survey can be used to solicit their views on what was good, what was not, how the organisation could be improved, value for money, and what they would like to see different at the Category 1 event the following year. A small incentive to complete the forms may be necessary!

This information can be useful to provide a different perspective from say, feedback from the Steward, staff and sponsors. It may be helpful to determine the priority issues for the pilots, for consideration prior to the main event the following year. Sometimes, a small insignificant (to the organiser) improvement can be found to make a big difference to the enjoyment and satisfaction of the pilots!