



CIVL President report

The bureau and subcommittees & working groups

During the year our treasurer, Stephane Malbos, who has done a great job in setting up and updating our website, resigned from his bureau function. The bureau realizes how difficult it is to keep the website up to date and to take care of producing information for the website. And what a great job Stef has done. It is a pity that different ideas about how to run the CIVL have made Stef resign and I feel it as a personal defeat that I have let it come this far. I wish to thank Stef for all the good work that he has done during his time in the bureau.

Louise Joselyn has taken over the duties of treasurer in the interim, and she has also been updating the website with actualities that need to be known to the world wide HG and PG communities.

Because of a very busy study schedule and other obligations our Paragliding Subcommittee chairman, Leonard Grigorescu, will not have enough time to run the PG SC in the next years. The bureau will propose to the plenary to approve that Scott Torkelsen takes over the function of PG SC chairman.

Last year during the plenary I have expressed my intention to try to involve the SC's and WG's more in the bureau activities during the year. It is a pity to see that we have not been able to spread some of the work of the SC's and WG's over the year and that the biggest part of the work has to be done during the SC and WG meetings the day before the plenary. Because of the ever increasing workload of the SC's and WG's the bureau will in the future schedule two days for the SC and WG meetings prior to the Plenary meeting.

Sporting activity

2006 has been a very busy and turbulent year for the CIVL.

The sports activities are ever-growing and as a result we are confronted with increased numbers of FAI/CIVL-sanctioned events worldwide. Many of these are Category-2 events which contribute towards updating the World Pilot Ranking System (WPRS) and also as qualification criteria for competing in Category-1 World and Continental Championships. It is good to see how more and more NACs appreciate the value of these

sanctioned competitions. We believe that competing and scoring well in Category-2 events provides a valuable safety ladder to Category-1, and compromises in these rules will not be considered. The bureau realizes that the safety situation in some of our major competitions is far from how it should be and that further measures will have to be taken as a matter of top priority to enhance safety.

As I already stated in my president's report last year the absolute first priority of the CIVL bureau is and will continue to be, safety.

In 2006 we sanctioned 215 Category-2 and 7 Category-1 competitions in the calendar.

The 2006 Category-1 Championships were:

- World Championships HG Classes 2 & 5 and Class 1 for Women at Quest Air Flight park in Groveland (Florida) in the USA
- European Championships HG Class 1 at Roc/Buzet in Croatia
- European Championships PG at Morzine in France
- World Championships HG and PG Aerobatics at Villeneuve in Switzerland

Test events for 2007 Category-1 Championships in 2006:

- (Pre-)World Championships PG Accuracy at Trakai in Lithuania
- (Pre-)World Championships PG Cross Country at Manilla in Australia
- (Pre-)World Championships HG Cross Country at Big Spring (Texas) in the USA

In 2007 (January 1st) 6118 pilots are ranked in the WPRS:

- HG class 1 - 1333
- HG class 2 - 8
- HG class 5 - 96
- HG Aerobatics - 10
- PG - 4191
- PG Accuracy - 355
- PG Aerobatics - 125

During the Plenary meeting in 2006 no bids for organising the "World HG Championships classes 2 & 5 and women class 1" and the "European HG Championships class 1" in 2008 were received. The bureau has been able to find an organiser for the European HG Championships class 1, but not for the class 2 & 5 and women class 1 World Championships. The European HG Championships 2008 will be organised at Greifenburg - Berg in Austria and information can be found in the competition calendar on the CIVL website.

During the Category-1 competitions the CIVL has been represented by International Juries and Stewards. The test competitions have been attended by CIVL Stewards, who assisted and advised the competition organisers and competitors about rule interpretations etc. and made recommendations for smooth running of the championships to come. I want to emphasize that the success of a competition depends for a great part on these volunteers and I wish to thank all the CIVL officials and

people in the organisations of all the competitions, who invested their free time in organising and running the competitions.

What caused a serious problem in the European HG Championships in Croatia was the fact that the Croatian National Air Traffic organisation was not prepared to consider easing the air traffic rules during the championship. The result was that there was a maximum permitted flying altitude of 2100 meters. Because our sports need as much altitude as possible to fly big distances, a ceiling that is lower than cloud base can ruin tasks in the competition and that is what happened. Tasks were lost because the organiser was not prepared to enforce the height limit.

During the test competition one year earlier the organisers had assured us that this height limit would be raised. The bureau is now considering to propose changes to the bid process to ensure this situation does not arise again.

Safety

During the Plenary meeting in Lausanne in 2006 a proposal to change the base Paragliding team size in category 1 competitions to 3 + 1 was adopted. After the Plenary the bureau has realized that by accepting this new rule, there was a real possibility that with between 40 and 50 nations entering a World Championships, that the total number of pilots entering would exceed the absolute maximum (150) allowable for a Category 1 event. The 150 limit is a safety measure and we could never accept that this limit will be breached. For this reason, the bureau decided to revert to the 2005 rule for the World Paragliding Championships in Manilla. Using this new rule would also result in less women at the championship and might result in invalidating the women's competition.

The bureau is not happy that a rule voted in by the plenary could not be implemented, but it would compromise safety by accepting more than the 150 competitors stated in the sporting codes .

The bureau agrees that we must have fair rules, in which no countries are disadvantaged. The PG Subcommittee is due to discuss this issue extensively prior to the Plenary Meeting. The bureau supports the setting up of a working group to ensure this issue is resolved satisfactorily for all.

Despite being a very well organised European PG Championships in Morzine in France, there were a significant number of accidents and incidents. Approximately ten percent of the competitors were involved in incidents including parachute deployments, crash landings or low-level loss of control. There were no fatal accidents, but there easily could have been. The bureau realizes that the safety situation is still unacceptable, and that further measures will have to be taken as a matter of top priority to enhance safety at Paragliding Championships.

One of the safety rules in the sporting codes, the rule about cloud flying, will have to be re-examined and that penalties for breaking the rules must be clearly stated in the sporting codes and in Local Regulations.

In Morzine at the first team leader briefing, the penalties for cloud flying were agreed. During the event, a protest was filed about pilots flying in the clouds and despite the fact that a penalty of zero points for the task had been agreed, the jury decided to impose 50% of the agreed penalty on the pilots that broke the cloud flying rules. The jury in Morzine was the first to be confronted with a decision on proven cloud flying. It became obvious that this was a complicated matter, and not an easy "black and white" decision. The issue has been thoroughly discussed with the Jury President and we fully understand the jury's decision which was made in good faith. While we expect our Juries to take all facts into consideration, and that is what the Jury in Morzine has done, we will be reinforcing to all qualified and trainee Jury members, the powers and responsibilities involved with this crucial role and that they do not have the power to change approved rules. This should avoid controversial Jury decisions in the future.

I have agreed with the Safety and Training Subcommittee that it will play a bigger role in safety at competitions. Investigation of incidents and accidents during the major competitions will be a standard task of the Safety SC in the future.

Problems we meet concerning competitions

- Despite the fact that the rules about pilot qualification criteria for the Category-1 competitions are clear, we still receive "exemption applications" for competitors, who are (according to our Plenary-accepted rules) not qualified to fly in the major competitions. The NACs that send in such applications must realize that the qualification rules have been made to make the competitions safer and that exemptions will usually not be given. All countries must accept that checking the eligibility of members of national teams going to Category-1 competitions is the responsibility of the body that selects the team and must have the final approval of the NAC.
- Organisers of Category-1 competitions sometimes fail to follow the rules in the Sporting Codes or diverge from the terms set out in the Organiser Agreement or in recommendations agreed in the test competition in the previous year. In such cases, the CIVL bureau will, typically also communicate with the NAC on whose behalf a competition organiser runs the event. But in the CIVL system there are at present no effective pressures that can be used to convince competition organisers to deliver what has been agreed. The CIVL bureau is now considering setting up a penalty system for competition organisers who "forget" to follow the rules or other agreed promises
- Organisers of FAI/CIVL sanctioned Category-2 competitions often fail to check the pilots' FAI Sporting Licenses. It must be clear to all the organising NACs and HG and PG federations that "only holders of a valid FAI Sporting License are permitted to participate in FAI Sporting Events" (GS para 8.1.2) and that it is their responsibility to check it.
- Meet organizers sometimes take too long to send competition results of the competitions they organized through to Paula for inclusion in the WPRS. This is despite the fact that they agreed when signing the CIVL sanction application form, to send them within the period of 7 days stated on that form. It is the

responsibility of the meet organizers to send in results on time. Sometimes this can have a big influence on, for example, a nation's team size for a major PG championship. For the benefit of the pilots it is also recommended that delegates and national team leaders regularly check the WPRS for recent updates

Problems we meet concerning pilots representation

We have been approached by certain groups of PG or HG people from some countries, which are not necessarily affiliated to the NAC of that country or their appointed HG and PG federations, yet they claim to represent the majority of the HG or PG pilots. These groups of pilots, who without any doubt have the best intentions, must realize that the FAI and CIVL will only deal with the FAI affiliated NACs. The only people, who will be disadvantaged by the struggles for representing the pilots, are the pilots, who often do not have much influence on these matters.

ATMOS – FAI Flight Data Management Project

The FAI has signed a contract with a Slovenian company called Naviter. Naviter and the FAI have agreed to cooperate for the development, deployment, operation and management of a flight data management system allowing the storage and retrieval of sporting flight data obtained from air sport practitioners during their various activities. The system will consist of:

- A data management system in which all flight data of any discipline may be downloaded, stored and retrieved, allowing data mining for various purposes including the recording of flight data for on-line contests
- A subsidiary system providing scored flight results to those participants who have uploaded their data for on-line contest purposes

The bureau members Agust Gudmundsson and Scott Torkelsen are in communication with Naviter to:

- Investigate how our new ranking and scoring software and the new Flight Data System can work together
- Discuss with the Naviter people how ATMOS can be used for records, badges and flight verification in Hang Gliding and Paragliding.

Klaus Tanzler will on behalf of the CIVL discuss the "online contest" possibilities with Naviter.

Badges

Thanks to the time and energy that Scott Torkelsen has invested in the badges, the new criteria for earning badges have been implemented in the rules, the new badges have been ordered and some HG federations have already ordered badges for presenting them to pilots who earned them.

Software

Thanks to the Software Working Group, chaired by Agust Gudmundsson, for the time and energy they have invested in developing new software for the international Pilot Ranking System, we now have a good working Ranking System which is very "user

friendly". Also there has been worked in updating Race software, fixing known bugs and including scoring formulas that have been in use in some countries.

Important work is being done in developing new competition software for competition organisers. It will be available free of charge and is to be available as an online web software and also as standalone without internet connection at the competition site. Agust will update us and keep us informed about the progress of the working group.

Communication

The bureau realizes that more of the important decisions for the worldwide HG and PG community will have to be published. This will not only have to be done via the message lists to the delegates, but also on the website. The bureau will take care of more frequently informing the members about the bureau activities between the bureau meetings and plenary meetings.

As already mentioned earlier in this report, 2006 has been a busy and turbulent year. Decisions that seem controversial have been taken, but I want to emphasize that the decisions that have been taken during the year, have been taken in good faith in the best interest of the pilots and safety.

I wish to finish this report by thanking all the volunteers including the CIVL bureau members, the members of the Working Groups and the Subcommittees, the organisers and volunteers who ran the many competitions and of course Max Bishop and his staff for everything that they have done and continue to do to make it possible for us to have fun in the sky in a safe way.

Flip Koetsier
CIVL President