

CIVL President's Report to the FAI General Conference 2007

Sporting Activity and Competition Review

I am happy to, once again, open the CIVL President's report with a statement that sports activities in the CIVL continue to grow and that as a result we have increased the number of official FAI/CIVL sanctioned events worldwide.

In 2007 the CIVL sanctioned three Category 1 World Championships and no less than 260 international Category 2 competitions, of which five were test events for forthcoming World or Continental Championships.

2007 Category1 Championships were:

- World Championships Paragliding Accuracy at Trakai in Lithuania
- World Championships Paragliding Cross Country at Manilla in Australia
- World Championships Hang Gliding Cross Country at Big Spring in the USA

2007 Test events for 2008 Category1 Championships were:

- (Pre-)World Championships HG & PG Aerobatics at Voss in Norway
- (Pre-)European Championships HG Class 1 at Greifenburg in Austria
- (Pre-)European Championships PG Cross Country at Nis in Serbia
- (Pre-)European Championships PG Accuracy at Niska Banja in Serbia
- (Pre-)Pan-American Championships PG Cross Country at Castelo in Brazil

During the Category1 competitions the CIVL was represented by International Juries and Stewards. The test competitions were attended by CIVL Stewards, who assisted and advised the competition organisers and competitors on rule interpretations and organisational improvements for smooth running of the championships to come. I want to emphasize that the success of a competition depends largely on the volunteers and I wish to thank all the CIVL officials and people in the organisations of all the competitions, who invest their free time in organising and running competitions.

Future Championships

During the CIVL Plenary Meeting in February 2007 in Talloires (France) the following Category1 competitions for 2009 were awarded to:

- 5th FAI World Paragliding Accuracy Championship will be organised at Ivanec – Varazdin county, Croatia
- 11th FAI World Paragliding Championship will be organised at Valle de Bravo, Mexico
- 17th FAI World Hang Gliding Championship will be organised at Laragne – Chabre, France

Safety and NAC responsibilities

Safety is the primary reason for qualification requirements set for CIVL-sanctioned events. Consequently we must rely on national HG and PG Federations and their NACs to fulfil their responsibilities in ensuring that only pilots who have correctly qualified – usually through Category 2 events – are entered for Category 1 Championships, which are designed to test the best pilots in the World. At present this does not always happen. For example, at the HG World Championships in Big Spring (Texas) many pre-registrations from unqualified pilots were received.

Ultimately, it is the NAC' responsibility to make sure that the rules – which can be found in our sporting codes and in national documents – are followed. The CIVL will do all it can to make the qualification criteria clear: now we ask for more support from NACs and their related national HG & PG Federations to make sure that only qualified pilots attempt to register for Category 1 Championships.

WPRS and Software development

Because the results of the FAI/CIVL sanctioned competitions influence the World Pilot Ranking System (WPRS), much work has to be done to constantly update the WPRS to be sure that it reflects the actual ranking level of the HG & PG pilots worldwide. Thanks to the time and energy that the CIVL Software Working Group, chaired by CIVL Vice-President Agust Gudmundsson, has invested updating the WPRS with the results of the many sanctioned competitions is now relatively easy for



the CIVL WPRS coordinator to handle. The WPRS plays a major role in safety and therefore it is important that it is maintained efficiently.

Further software features

The WPRS is based on the CIVL database of pilots, competitions and results. It contains information about almost 10,000 pilots who have participated in CIVL-sanctioned competitions in the last six years, as well as data and results from almost 2000 competitions.

Software development in the WPRS and its related database is ongoing. More relevant pilot information, such as photos and FAI Sporting Licence details, can be added to the pilot database. This will make life easier for the pilots and the competition organisers.

The CIVL Software Working Group has also been developing new competition scoring software which will handle all aspects of running a HG or PG competition, including all the different disciplines such as Cross Country flying, Aerobatics and Accuracy. The software handles competition tasks, flight verification and task-scoring. It is directly connected to the CIVL database to ensure that information is transferred as seamlessly as possible from the meet organisations to the CIVL. The system has been trialled in a number of competitions this summer. It will be made available free of charge to everyone, both organisers and pilots on the CIVL website. Version 1.0 should be ready for distribution before the year end. As with all software, it will constantly evolve, to meet the developing demands of the sport and technology.

The CIVL Software WG is also working on addressing the challenges of establishing an international Online contest. There are many online contest databases maintained around the world, covering local, national and international regions. There is work in progress to link these databases to the CIVL website. Ideally, information on pilots, places and flights can then be shared, so that flights registered in one country will become visible to others internationally, via the CIVL website. Centrally held pilot information is also held on the CIVL pilot database, helping to coordinate pilot and



flight data. The aim is to establish a single worldwide online contest, running on the CIVL website, but taking data from around the world.

Flight data from these interconnected servers will also be available to send to CIVL to enable Badge flights to be processed more easily..

The FAI Sporting Licence

The FAI Sporting Codes are clear about the obligation for pilots to hold a valid FAI Sporting Licence when competing in FAI sanctioned competitions. WPRS points cannot be gained by non-licence holders. It is the responsibility of the NACs to make sure that their competition organisers check this. We are still encountering problems worldwide where inadequate checks of the FAI Sporting Licences are made by competition organisers and unqualified pilots are allowed to compete. This causes a delay in handling the results of the competitions, because we have to find out which competitors did not have a valid sporting licence and then remove their scores from the results. This causes some corruption of the WPRS and the pilot database. The good news is that the FAI is working on the development of a central database of FAI Sporting Licence holders. This database will make it possible for the air sport commissions and competition organisers to check pilot validity at competition registration.

Volunteers

Concluding this report I repeat my thanks to all the volunteers, like the people in the worldwide HG & PG federations, the people working for the NACs, the people in the organisations of the many competitions worldwide, the members of the CIVL Subcommittees and Working Groups, the CIVL Bureau members and last but not least the enthusiastic staff at the FAI headquarters in Lausanne, who make it possible that the HG and PG pilots worldwide can in a safe way enjoy our great sports.

It is a real pleasure to work with all these people.

Flip Koetsier
CIVL President