

Annex 22 – CIVL Plenary 2012 – Chinese Taipei

Proposal for CIVL Pepe Lopes Award Riikka Vilkuna

Dear CIVL Delegates,

Paragliding Accuracy is a young but successful discipline which in the last ten years has found its remarkable place among other paragliding competitions. As predicted from the beginning, this most straightforward Paragliding discipline has brought an excellent opportunity for the development of a sizeable paragliding community seeking an alternative sportsmanship and competition challenge to XC flying.

Paragliding Accuracy today brings together many pilots from many countries, many of which did not previously participate in CIVL competitions. Paragliding Accuracy has spread its unique sportive spirit among pilots and organizers from so many countries through a continuous series of World and Continental Cat 1 championships and through a growing number of Cat 2 events and the PA World Cup series. The simplicity of this media and spectator-friendly discipline offers a good demonstration of air sportsmanship, as shown by its inclusion in multi-discipline events such as the 2009 World Air Games, the upcoming World Games, and many other opportunities like the Asian Beach Games and France's St Hilaire festival.

A successful story is driven by many individuals, who believe in the vision and are ready to dedicate their effort and time for the pilot community. Paragliding Accuracy has risen high on the shoulders of such individuals: from organizers and pilots, to judges and officials. They have all needed some help and firm support in the form of coherent rules and a consistent approach, which is vital for better understanding and cooperation among different organizers around the world.

Slovenia would like to underline the important and crucial role of RIIKKA VILKUNA, past CIVL Delegate and long time FAI Steward, during the last ten years of the development of the Paragliding Accuracy discipline.

Slovenia would therefore like to propose to the 2012 CIVL Plenary to award RIIKKA VILKUNA with Pepe Lopes Medal for her outstanding contribution to sportsmanship and development of the Paragliding Accuracy discipline.

From the very beginning, introducing paragliding accuracy to CIVL and FAI (1998), Riikka was involved as a guide and reference point. She encouraged and steered the activities of the pilot community into the FAI family.

As a former parachuting competitor, hang-glider and paraglider pilot, she was able to understand at that time the sometimes different views of paragliding accuracy techniques and therefore steer negotiations within the pilot community with diplomacy, sensitivity and a long term vision. She was able with her subtle but persuasive points of view and a positive approach, to act as a central reference for all ideas: from strategic issues such as the early negotiations of the "no fall rule" in 1999 to more mundane but equally necessary, interpretation and clarification of the Sporting Code, which needed some modification to suit the new discipline.

With her guidance Paragliding Accuracy has grown to become a mature discipline with a good outlook for continuing growth. Riikka has always looked to support the "smaller" countries involved in CIVL disciplines, many of which have taken up the challenging competition opportunities provided by Paragliding Accuracy, enabling them to participate successfully in FAI sanctioned competitions at the highest level. The participation of these "small" countries today, has resulted not only in the growth of Paragliding Accuracy as an internationally recognized sport, but has substantially increased the competitive involvement of some FAI members.

Riikka has taken on practically every possible role possible at Paragliding Accuracy competitions: competitor, advisor to the organizer, FAI Steward, Judge and Jury! Whatever her role, her determined and positive attitude and her dedication has always had the same impact: She is regarded as the most valuable and authoritative reference by us all. With her experience and involvement as a first and long standing FAI Steward in Paragliding Accuracy championships, she has contributed hugely to the development of the sport and stimulated the unique brand of sportsmanship present in our community today.

Slovenia is convinced that awarding Riikka Vilkkuna will also contribute to express a trust in another sportsmanship form, which a paragliding accuracy landing discipline brought to CIVL community.

With a crucial help of Riikka.

Jurij Vertačnik, PG Accuracy SC member

Igor Eržen, Slovenian delegate to CIVL