



CIVL President's Report to the 2012 CIVL Plenary

Our Internal Regulations require that the CIVL President reports to the Plenary covering CIVL activities since the last meeting and the President's activity for the same period. This report starts with an outline of CIVL activities and then the President's activity.

As you should be aware, the elected CIVL President, John Aldridge, had serious health problems from late July, so this report is written by acting CIVL President Agust Gudmundsson and CIVL Secretary Louise Joselyn.

Sporting Activity and Competition Review

In 2011 both hang gliding and paragliding, international competition activity within the FAI continues to grow, with a total of 325 competitions across all disciplines. There were three 1st Category World Championships, one in each of Paragliding cross country, Hang gliding Class 1 cross country and Paragliding accuracy. There was an increase in the number of Category 2 sanctioned competitions worldwide, from 316 in 2010 to 322 in 2011.

By far the most active discipline, and increasing year on year, is Paragliding cross country competition with 176 events sanctioned, the next largest number of events is in Hang gliding cross country, as detailed in the table.

Competitions 2011	
Paragliding XC	176
Hang Gliding Class 1 XC	60
Paragliding Accuracy	44
Hang Gliding Class 5 XC	22
Hang Gliding Class 1 Sports Class	12
Paragliding Acro Solo and Syncro	11
Total	325

This table shows sanctioned competitions, but some of them were not valid where the cause was most often weather. It is interesting to note the increase in the number of Hang gliding Sports Class competitions sanctioned, although the number of participants remains small and only 2 of the 12 were validated, mostly because of minimum number of pilots. At the Plenary 2011 the minimum number of pilots was removed for Class 1 but not for Sport Class or Class 5. Note also that there has been no increase in the number of Hang gliding Class 1 XC Cat 2 events in 2011 over 2010.

Paragliding Accuracy continues to increase in popularity as the number of Cat 2 events increased to 44 from 35 last year.



Future Championships

As you will know, for 2012 we have Continental championships in:

- European Hang Gliding Cross Country in Kayseri (Turkey)
- European Paragliding Cross Country in Saint Andre Les Alpes (France)
- Asian Paragliding Cross Country in Linzhou (China)
- European Paragliding Accuracy in Ohrid (FYR Macedonia)
- Asian Paragliding Accuracy in Wai-ao (Chinese Taipei)

This shows clearly the Asian countries are becoming stronger in organizing competitions.

At the 2011 CIVL Plenary Meeting the following Category 1 events were awarded for 2013:

- World Hang Gliding Class 1 in Forbes (Australia)
- World Paragliding XC in Sopot (Bulgaria)
- World Paragliding Accuracy Championships Sarajevo (Bosnia & Herzegovina)

There have been no bids for HG Class 2, Class 5 or Women's worlds for 2013.

Records

There have been no new Hang gliding Class 1 records ratified since 2009. As CIVL introduced Continental records in 2009 there have been no records ratified, even though there are very many new opportunities to do so in every continent.

The same applies for Hang gliding Class 2 and Class 5 where one record was ratified in 2010 and a few in 2008.

There have been no Continental records set in any of the Hang gliding classes.

In Paragliding most of the records are set as World records although they are also registered as Continental records for the Continent in which the flight took place.

Very few pilots attempt record flights in order to set Continental records even though there many good possibilities to set them.

We all need to promote Records, particularly Continental records, to regain the interest of pilots in our countries. It is most likely that pilots simply do not generally know that Continental records can be claimed, so they do not seek to set them.

At present, records for PG Accuracy and Aerobatics do not exist, but there are proposals to establish these this year.

Safety

Hang gliding: CIVL has continued its programme of ensuring pilots are informed of correct pitch stability settings for hang gliders in 1st category competitions and acceptance checks, including the measurement and enforcement of these settings has taken place. It is our intention to continue this work in 2012, with the emphasis on team leaders and competing pilots to use the information and equipment available, with the proven measuring procedures to check the tolerances in future



championships.

Paragliding: Last year, the OCTWG made extensive efforts, to create the 'competition class' paraglider, and put in place procedures to improve the safety of uncertified wings. The programme had mixed results as some manufacturers struggled to meet the deadlines to register new wings, and few chose to register earlier (but still current) models.

After the tragic events at the World Paragliding Championships in Piedrahita, the CIVL Bureau had no choice but to place a temporary suspension on competition class gliders in Cat 1 events, until such time as we had more information on the causes of the fatalities and many other incidents involving these wings. The Paragliding Competition Safety Task Force was created to look into the incidents, try to determine the causes, and to make recommendations to improve safety. The original chairman, Gregory Knudson resigned for personal reasons, and the gauntlet was taken up by the remaining members of the Task Force. The CIVL Bureau would like to thank the Task Force for its concerted efforts, and for the extensive report containing its findings and recommendations, which will be a primary reference source at the upcoming Plenary. The Paragliding Competition Task Force has been a very important work for CIVL and it should guide us forward in Paragliding safety.

Meanwhile, some manufacturers have reacted by re-designing their 'competition class' wings such that they pass EN-D certification. This has led to some serious concerns in the industry, from pilots (competition and recreational), test houses and competition organisers.

There are many proposals on the table at this Plenary, many of which follow the recommendations of the Task Force. There is much to discuss and decide for the future of Paragliding cross country competitions.

The CIVL Bureau has been endeavouring to keep in touch with the various parties and players in the industry to ensure it has a balanced view. For Delegates, it is important to stay objective, while listening to the views of the various groups involved in this scenario: manufacturers, competition pilots, recreational pilots, test houses etc. Our priorities, surely, are to find a path towards holding fair, satisfying and safe competitions.

Finance

The CIVL finances remain in good health, mainly due to the continued inflow of sanction fees for FAI Category 2 events. This is a direct result of the integration of our World Pilot Ranking System with our core competition activities and is dependent upon a continuation of that. The sale of IPPI cards is another valuable contributor to our revenue stream.

The CIVL finances are the healthiest of all the FAI Commissions. Partly that is good as it shows CIVL has a lively and successful competition scene. But it also shows that CIVL has not been investing money in strengthening and developing our sport, as it should have.



There have been ideas discussed in the past, but few have come to fruition, and some opportunities are close to being missed. This is primarily due to a lack of forward planning and the people to transform the vision into actions. It is unfortunate that the CIVL Long Term Plan working group has made no progress this year, partly due to the health problems of the CIVL President.

The finances of the FAI as a whole are not quite so healthy as CIVL's, and this has resulted in changes in financial management, some of which will impact on us.

There have already been changes in accounting practice and we will see greater consolidation of Air Sport Commission finances in the future.

One aspect of this may help us with some forward planning. CIVL must now not only finalise its budget for 2012, but (not unreasonably) must provide the budget for 2013 this year also. This budget is reviewed and to be approved by the Executive Board of FAI.

Some Airsport Commissions have responded quite strongly against FAI to what was called "resource sharing" or taxation by FAI. At the last General Conference the FAI President stated clearly "We are not going to steal your money" as a response to this. But there are many 'corporate – style' projects, as well as shared central resources that benefit many of the commissions, so it is not unreasonable to use some CIVL funds to support these efforts.

CIVL Organisation

The CIVL Bureau (like many similar structures) has been experiencing a steady reduction in the number of people who are either prepared or able to give their time to the necessary background activities of our sport. In this advanced age of communications the expectation from our pilot community of what CIVL can deliver has increased and the timeframe in which they expect it has shortened to a degree where some expect action as fast as they can pose a problem by email. These expectations are not being met due to time constraints on those people with the knowledge or motivation to respond, who lead ever busier lives. The immediacy of some expectations is just not realistic.

CIVL has been employing part-time staff for some years: namely our Competitions Coordinator. There are proposals to have more paid workers for CIVL as the workload is too much for our volunteers.

Even now CIVL is recompensing Stewards for their valuable and time consuming work at Category 1 competitions and Test Events, and also sprog measuring at Hang gliding competitions.

It is clear that the volunteer culture of the past is fast disappearing, and makes our organisation in its current structure barely tenable. It is not only the Bureau that is suffering, but the Subcommittees and Working Groups too.

We have unfilled subcommittee posts, and others filled by well-intentioned people who then find they cannot spare the time to fulfil the commitments they have taken on. This is not new and it appears to be getting worse every year.

A significant change in mindset or structure is required to move CIVL forward.



CIVL President Activity

John Aldridge has been very active in CIVL Bureau over 10 years, serving as President since 2010. This summer, health problems took over his life and he has been working through a slow recovery since then. He recovered sufficiently such that he was able to host the October Bureau meeting at his home in the UK. There he chaired the meeting and actively participated in all discussions.

When John could not continue as President it was agreed that I would take the title of acting CIVL President with very good help from Louise the CIVL secretary. Other Bureau members have also contributed a little more than before.

I have personally never had so much work on my hands as this year.

The CIVL President's job is, at times, a full time job, which will suffer if the President has another full time job.

My CIVL activity, which includes my role as Chairman of the Software Working group, has suffered this year from my external workload.

But my work has also been of benefit to FAI and CIVL as I was involved in the project of developing the new www.fai.org website, which was a contracted work by the FAI to the company for which I work and of which, I am a shareholder.

In addition, I have been active in other commissions such as CIMA (Microlights) and CIACA (Amateur built aircrafts), and with the web project I now have a good overview of how other commissions operate.

There are many projects underway within commissions that should be done jointly, across commissions, rather than each one re-inventing the wheel. This includes live tracking devices and systems, many IT projects, standards and safety projects.

I attended the FAI General Conference in Serbia, where I represented CIVL in the Air Sports Commission Presidents' meeting and also represented CIVL in the CASI meeting.

Immediately after the October Bureau Meeting, myself, Louise and Chris (Calvo) Burns, met with representatives of the Paragliding World Cup Association (Goran Dimiskovski, Martin Scheel, Ulric Jessop and Laura Sepet) in Geneva. The discussions were interesting and fruitful, and we have come away with a tacit understanding that we should work more closely together in the future.

Since Louise and I stepped in for the CIVL President, our activity has mainly been trying to ensure CIVL's normal business is conducted, and in helping prepare for the upcoming Plenary.

The future of CIVL should be bright, but with an evident lack of capable volunteers, I cannot help but be concerned.

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Acting CIVL President

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