CIVL Plenary 2009 - Records & Badges Subcommittee Proposal

The proposal is in response to issues raised by pilots, organisers, SSC members, delegates, Steward & Jury reports etc.

Subcommittee or Working Group: **Records & Badges**	Date: **31 Dec 2008**
Name: **Stewart Midwinter**	

Proposal Highlight: Allow the use of SMS declarations for badge & record attempts when Official Observers are present, or when the Official Observers that are present do not meet the arm's length requirements.
Details of proposal: The R&B SC proposes that SMS declarations be considered for adoption at this 2009 plenary meeting, as it is not always possible to have a valid, or in some cases an arm's length, O.O. on hand when making a record flight.   Many times it is difficult to find a valid official observer to be on hand on the day when a badge or record attempt is to be made. And in some cases, the only official observer that can be found is one that does not have an arm's length relationship with the pilot, i.e. the O.O. is related to the pilot in some way, and thus may be perceived to have a conflict of interest. It is proposed that the following procedure be considered by the Plenary: - All flights attempts that currently require an O.O. may use this procedure.   - An arm's length official observer may be used in all cases where an O.O. is required.   - If an O.O. is not available, or if the available O.O. is not arm's length, then the following procedure shall be used   - The pilot will file one or more flight declarations with his/her National Aero Club or delegated record-homologating body (usually the hang-gliding/paragliding federation). Eac h declaration must contain a short, unique title (e.g. "right-hand 50 km triangle") which identifies the declaration from amongst those on file with the national body. The paper declarations will include all of the usual details like turnpoint order and coordinates.   - The national body will need to designate an official to receive messages from the pilot and be available on a standby basis if needed (i.e. have internet or cell-phone connectivity).   - On the day in question, the pilot will send an SMS or email message to the national body's designated official to indicate which task is being attempted that day. Example SMS (actually used earlier in 2008 by a Canadian pilot attempting a national and world record):   "Mia Schokker L Rd. R Tri. 50 km 2008-06-15"   - This means: the pilot Mia Schokker is launching at L Road in pursuit of a right-hand (clockwise) 50 km Triangle. The specific turnpoint details would have been communicated previously to the records coordinator.   - Since delivery of SMS and/or email messages, while highly reliable, is not guaranteed, it is helpful for the national records coordinator to reply with an acknowledgement.   - After the flight, the pilot must upload the GPS tracklog to a recognized online contest where validation of the tracklog takes place. (e.g. xcontest.org, dhv.de, onlinecontest.org). Processing of the claim then continues as per normal procedures, with an official from the national body acting as the O.O. for the claim.

From Record & Badges SC

Discussion between Dr. Dietrich Münchmeyer, Martin Henry, R&B SC re SMS declarations for world or national record claims

Stewart Midwinter
 to Ágúst, Scott, Hans, Martin

Record declarations are a problem, because Official Observers are a problem.

We now allow flights to be recorded by GPS or datalogger, but we still require an official observer to be on hand to witness the declaration and the start. And that's a problem because OOs are hard to come by. In many cases the only person you can rely on is your driver, who is often your spouse, but that spouse may be perceived to have a conflict of interest. So, do we really need OOs? Can we dispense with them?

If you use an IGC-certified datalogger like the Colibri, the declaration is right in the instrument, and can't be changed once downloaded from a PC. So you can't cheat by declaring a big triangle, then modify it to a smaller triangle en route. So do you need an OO in this case? Well, yes and no. No OO is needed for the declaration, because it's not possible to falsify it. BUT you can still cheat. If you have the money, just buy several dataloggers and load a different task in each one. After the flight, submit the task that you actually flew. What's the solution to this? Either have an OO on hand, or... read on below.

On the other hand, if you use a GPS, there's no tamper-proof declaration in the instrument. The next-best thing is to create a route in the GPS, and have the OO witness that before takeoff. As above, if there is no OO on site, there's nothing stopping you from flying with several GPSes.

So, for both of these types of instruments, it's possible to cheat, and we need an OO on site. Or do we? I'm testing an alternative right now with Martin Henry, a Canadian pilot and world record-holder. He will provide me with record declarations for himself or his wife Mia Schokker (also a world record-holder) ahead of all his flights this summer (one sample is attached). The attached SMS message clearly indicates who will do the flight, and what the task is. Mia won't be able to fly with two GPS units tomorrow and then submit a claim for a 50 km triangle if the 100 km triangle didn't go well. (only one problem with the attached SMS: it doesn't indicate if the triangle is going to be flown clockwise or counter-clockwise).

I see a lot of promise in this technology. It's simple, cheap, and likely goof-proof. I'll let you know how it goes. Any comments?

Dr. Dietrich Münchmeyer
 to stewart, Ágúst, Scott, Martin, Hans

Hello to all!

Thanks to all for this valuable discussion. For me, everything seems clear in this case. In Germany, we had no new OOs since some years. I will start an initiative to get new observes here. For the people responsible in overseeing records (that's me in Germany) it's much better to have an independent OO with no personal ore business relation to the pilot. On a good day, pilots don't fly alone. If we come back to an understanding among pilots, that OOs are not "old fashioned and bureaucratic" but help to verify reliable records, it will not be a problem to get a sufficient number of OOs.

For the future, we can think about some "electronic task declaration centers". Pilots can then send via SMS, email,… a task declaration valid for one day or until the next task declaration for this pilot arrives. This is much better than some private SMSs between a pilot and an OO. We shall setup the minimum information required. Technically I see no problem to have such a server operated by DHV

in Germany. To make it safe for the pilot that his message arrived, the server could echo an acknowledgement.

Greetings, Dieter

Von: Stewart Midwinter [mailto:stewart.midwinter@gmail.com]
Gesendet: Mittwoch, 11. Juni 2008 17:36
An: Dr. Dietrich Münchmeyer; Ágúst Guðmundsson; Scott S. Torkelsen
Betreff: Re: Fw: AW: record declarations
- Hide quoted text -

Martin has written everything that I would have, and more, about Hans' question.

Hope this helps.

cheers
S

On Wed, Jun 11, 2008 at 9:18 AM, Martin Henry <gliding@telus.net> wrote:

Stewart,

Regarding Hans's question.

As far as our experiment with OO options I don't think we really have a plan that is tested. I'm not comfortable with any sort of procedure that we could make up to get "it" to work... we need to figure it out first. I think SMS or Email combined a Data Logger may prove to be a valuable procedure that will enhance the validity of a claim, it may not prove to be enough to deal with the perceived need to control and observe the use of the recording device.

For now, he will still need an OO, to observe the protocols (GPS- the observation of the clearing of the track log.... through to the download as defined by the present rules. Data logger- OO as defined by the present rules). The key to free distance and the OO, is to supervise the instrument for the claim. The the actual claim is established after the flight. What I will suggest is, Hans should contact the NAC that will oversee the claim, and question the use of a family member as a OO (might I suggest he at the very least he make the effort to get a few more pilots signed up as OO's! This in fact is, if a pilot wants to come down and fly with us in Mansfield, it is mandatory that he/she get their OO status!....)

The essence of the rules is the idea that the pilots claim can be verified by an acceptable Official Observer. The OO administers the device and is willing to verify all aspects of the claim. This question of "more then one device" is settled by the OO. The question of changing a non free distance task (a declared task) during the flight is handled by the OO who "secures" the declaration prior to flight.

By the way, I would also like to point out.... Its not always the wife that performs the ground crew duties!..... Sometimes the Husband gets stuck with the task! ;-)

Response by Hans Bausenwein to above proposal

This sounds to me like a very good proposal. It could also be one central server run by the FAI where you have to send your SMS to and which sends out a confirmation SMS.

I don't see a point of running multiple national servers. We should get it going soon.