



FAI Microlight Commission (CIMA) Report to the 105th General Conference Belgrade, 14-15 October 2011

Sporting Activity and Competition Review

It was reported this time last year that there were no current bids for the 2011 World Paramotor Championships; the subsequent November 2010 CIMA plenary instructed the Bureau to extend the bid deadline to a point barely 6 or 7 months before a possible event. Unfortunately the practicalities of the one new bid which was received were such that the Bureau considered the risk of it concluding in a successful event were too high given the very short lead time.

And then in early August 2011, and despite strenuous efforts to the contrary, the organizers of the October 2011 World Microlight Championships in Israel announced its cancellation. This decision was made after long and detailed discussion with the CIMA Bureau, consultation with the FAI Secretary General and FAI Executive Board, and arose simply because NACs, although a majority voted in favour of this event at the CIMA Plenary, were not able to provide enough competitors to make the Championships financially viable.

A replacement 'World Cup' is being organized in Spain on the same dates. It is a Category 2 event but will be run to the same regulations.

Continental league cup

CIMA introduced this new concept at its last Plenary, initially just for Paramotors. The objective is to encourage pilots to travel more between open national events by linking up their results, and simultaneously to create a new line of income for CIMA from the sanction fee, equivalent to 'one entry fee' the same as CIVL's very successful ranking system.

This experiment has had a slow start because:

- The Sporting Licence database has not been working for most of the time.
- Since its assets disappeared in FAI's new budget scheme, volunteers have lost the incentive to help earn income for CIMA.
- The organizers of some important National Championships did not feel the need to participate.

This scheme was introduced on a 'one year' experimental basis so there will be a review at CIMA's forthcoming November plenary; significant changes are needed to make it work as intended.

Future Championships

Category 1 Championships

CIMA sanctions Continental and World championships in alternate years. 2011 was a World Championships year, but to synchronize the cycle of championships with WAG, the 2009 CIMA plenary decided 2012 will also be a World Championships year. CIMA has accepted a very good bid from Spain for the 2012 World Microlight Championships, but as with 2011, there are still no bids for the 2012 World Paramotor Championships though this time there is the prospect of a good one emerging before a decision must be made at our Plenary in November.

*Fédération
Aéronautique
Internationale*

Despite attempts to improve it, the known calendar for Cat. 1 championships beyond one or two years in advance remains disappointing. It is recognized that it is very difficult for organizers to arrive at a sustainable budget which is a large disincentive for them to bid to host championships at all. The November 2010 CIMA Plenary identified various ways it could attempt to improve this:

- From January 2012 a new sanction fees structure will help organizers make a more reliable budget.
- CIMA recognizes the cost of FAI officials (Jury and Stewards) to an organizer is a significant issue. In its appointment of officials it will take greater care in considering travel costs, take greater consideration of the number of stewards required, is continuing to discuss new concepts such as 'remote juries' and is actively experimenting in ways to find new sources of income which might be used to subsidize the costs it imposes on organizers.

World Air Games

CIMA remains disappointed there is no news of WAG 2013 at this time at all. This will soon become critical because it plans to run a qualifying system the same as it did for WAG 2009, and that must start at the beginning of 2012. In order to provide a good 'show' at WAG the qualifying tasks should be close to those which will be flown at the Games, but they are unquantifiable while information about the proposed 2013 site remains unknown.

Asian Beach Games

As announced in FAI-News of 29 April 2011, Paramotors will be part of the official sports program of the 3rd Asian Beach Games to be held in Haiyang (CHN) from 16 to 22 June 2012. This is the first foray by CIMA into the world of multi-sport games.

The Asian Beach Games is held every two years among athletes representing countries from Asia. The Games are regulated by the Olympic Council of Asia (OCA) which currently has a membership of 45 National Olympic Committees (NOC).

FAI is recognized by the IOC and hence OCA as the World governing body for all airsports and is therefore responsible for providing the rules and technical assistance for this event; the President of CIMA has been appointed by the FAI as Technical Delegate to the Local Organising Committee (HABGOC).

Since pilots are required to have FAI Sporting Licences, but entries are exclusively via National Olympic Committees who generally have no experience in air sports at all, it has been necessary for FAI Secretariat to actively 'match-make' between FAI NACs and IOC NOCs. In most cases this has proven to be extraordinarily difficult, and thus far impossible in at least one important Asian nation. Nevertheless, CIMA is confident the event will be a success and special thanks must be extended to the Air Sports Federation of China and the FAI Sports & Development Director who have all put a lot of hard work into this project.

Records

Pilots continue to claim records in both Microlights and Paramotors, there are usually about 25 successful claims each year and it looks like 2011 will be no different.

As the commission which holds the 'record' for rejected World record claims, CIMA is very concerned the proposal before CASI to delete the ancient requirement that World record claims must already ratified as a National record first. It believes this will lead in the longer term to 'devaluation' of FAI World Records and consequently its standing as 'The World Air Sports Federation'.

Relations with 'FAI Central'

The 2010 CIMA annual report concluded: "*The new management style at Secretariat unfortunately seems to be putting itself into direct conflict with the people who it is actually there for, we can only hope this will change.*" Far from improving, things seem to have got much worse.

Most of the important issues of the day have been discussed at ASC Presidents meetings or with ASC President's representation. I have come away from these meetings concluding the discussions were generally satisfactory, but this has frequently become less certain once the minutes are published, and even less certain once action is taken.

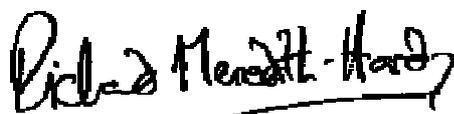
The disappearance of ASC assets is the big issue which seems to have brought on a crisis. Many ASC Presidents, including me, understood the final FRTF solution preserved them, when the new budget system was published they were nowhere to be seen.

There has never been any dispute that CIMA's assets were not FAI assets, nor that it might be an improvement if they were accounted for in a more consolidated manner, but this does not absolve the fact that these funds were raised by volunteers on the implicit understanding that they were to be used by CIMA to benefit the sportsmen and women CIMA provides for, and it is intrinsic to the management of our commission that we operate within the fiscal bounds of this income and reserve. Remove them, and commission funding becomes a bureaucratic, fractious and wasteful annual bidding auction typical of government institutions and of no benefit to FAI at all.

It is clear this is of sufficient concern to some large commissions to have prompted them to very seriously think of unilaterally leaving FAI. This possibility is of great concern to CIMA as it stands to become part of a less important global family as a result.

This is but one issue, there are others, the primary problem seems to be one of 'trust'; one thing seems to have been agreed, another thing actually happens. If ASCs were superficial to the functioning of FAI it would not matter, but Secretariat and EB combined do not have the time or knowledge to deal with the vast amount of every-day detail managed by expert ASC volunteers.

It is within the power of the new Secretary General to re-establish sensible two-way communication and cooperation with the 'engine room of the FAI'. It can only be hoped he will.



Richard Meredith-Hardy
CIMA President