

FÉDÉRATION AÉRONAUTIQUE
INTERNATIONALE

BALLOONING COMMISSION (CIA)
COMMISSION D'AEROSTATION

CIA Plenary
New Delhi, India
12-15 March 2025



CIA New Technology Subcommittee MINUTES 2025

Present:

NTSC members: Claude Weber (LUX) (chairman), Steve Ireland (AUS), Marc Andre (SUI), Erwin Pellegrom (NED) – online, Bengt Stener (SWE) – excused

Observers: Mike Meinel (GER), Sylvia Meinel (GER), Clément Seigeot (FRA), David Bareford (GBR), Niklas Möre (SWE)

Balloon Live Financial Update

The chair led the meeting discussing the financial status of their app store. He reported a stable number of app sales and a significant increase in credits sold, which contribute to their overall income. The app store's income from both Google and Apple stores was also discussed. Claude projected a break-even point in 2025, with a positive cash flow.

WatchMeFly System Enhancements

The summary discusses recent developments in the WatchMeFly system, including enhancements to scoring and the implementation of sanction applications management. A meeting with EDS was held to align the system and process, resulting in planned changes. The summary also mentions the integration of the BFA's national eligibility list system, which allows US events to use WatchMeFly. Additionally, there are plans to offer national rankings for each country on the WatchMeFly website.

Balloon Live Problems?

The group discussed that issues with the system were reported but no further details have been provided to allow for further investigation. They also discussed the problems with the sensor not connecting or disconnecting, which they are still waiting for more details on. Marc Andre shared statistics from the World championship, showing the relationship between the app going to sleep and disconnects. The group emphasized the need for continuous education to pilots to ensure they have dedicated devices for the app. Marc mentioned the limitations faced with Windows and the need for a dedicated iPad or phone for the app. He encouraged the use of a new Android or iOS version for the app and discouraged the use of old devices.

Developer Compensation and Event Improvements

The group discussed the need for fair compensation for developers who have worked extensively on various projects without being paid. The chair proposed a quote for all the tasks on the to-do list and suggested that it would be fair to pay them for their work. He also mentioned the need for improvements in the event page, email notifications, and the pilot registration process. He suggested the development of a digital logbook feature but expressed concerns about the potential costs and the need to consider whether it would be viable. Erwin agreed with Marc's opinion that they should not do something for the commercial community if they cannot get their money back.

The Group Discusses App Development Costs

The group discussed the potential for developing a new app and the associated costs. The group proposed a budget of CHF4,000, including a reserve for potential additional requests. They also discussed the need for a written agreement with Andrew regarding the long-term ownership of the source code. Praxis presented some statistics on the usage of the app, including the number of events, WatchMeFly, and live competitions. They also discussed the issues with the current framework, including its lack of support and outdated UI, and proposed the use of a new framework called React Native. The cost for this would be €2,500. The chair emphasized the benefits of rewriting the app, including easier maintenance, better future updates, and improved security. They also discussed the potential for future enhancements.

App Enhancement and Visualization Tool Development

The group discussed two main projects: enhancing the WatchMeFly app and developing a new visualization tool. Julius is interested in creating a 2D/3D visualization feature that would integrate with WatchMeFly, including live tracking, social media integration and sponsor displays. The visualization project could take up to a year to complete properly. The chair is waiting for a cost estimate from Julius. Regarding the app itself, they discuss adding a flight analysis feature for pilots to review their own performances. Additionally, Marc mentions the potential for future big data projects to analyze trends in penalties and safety-related issues across multiple events.

Budget Planning and Investment

The chair mentioned the importance of spending money wisely and investing in the community. He emphasized the need for a clear plan and purpose before spending, and the need for a limit on how much can be reasonably spent. He also mentioned the work involved in coming up with a budget request and the potential for a multi-year project.

Improving FAQ Section and Document Management

The Balloon Live team requested assistance from Erwin in handling first-level support, as Christian had stopped doing so. Erwin agreed to help and the chair added him to the email list for support. The group discussed the need for improving the FAQ section on their website, making it easier for users to find answers to common questions. Marc suggested moving some documents from the FAI website to their own website, WatchMeFly, where they could have more control and ensure the documents are always up-to-date.

Official Translations and Project Updates

Marc and Erwin discussed the addition of official translations for different languages in Balloon Live guides. The group also confirmed the importance of transparency regarding the allocation of funds and the people involved in the project. The chair mentioned ongoing work on the World ranking list and updates to the budget. Marc also mentioned the need for a new technology to convert an old program into Python, with a budget of \$1000 allocated for this purpose by PMR. The plan is to find a freelance developer to convert the program and ensure that the new tool produces the same results as the old one.

Improving ChatGPT for Sporting Code

The chair presented the challenges of using ChatGPT for answering questions related to the sporting code and internal regulations. Despite providing the system with all relevant documents, the results were not satisfactory due to the complexity and ambiguity of the documents. The chair also considered integrating a chatbot in WatchMeFly for providing advice, but this idea was not pursued further for various reasons.

Motions and recommendations are included in the presentation.

Proposed NTSC members for 2025: Claude Weber (LUX) (chairman), Steve Ireland (AUS), Marc Andre (SUI), Erwin Pellegrom (NED), Mike Meini (GER)

13th March 2025 - Delhi, India