# CIVL President's Report to the 2013 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.
This is my first year as elected CIVL President, but I served as acting CIVL President before during John Aldridge absence.

## *Sporting Activity and Competition Review*

In 2012 both hang gliding and paragliding, international competition activity within the FAI continues to grow, with a total of 328 competitions across all disciplines. There were three 1st Category Continental Championships, one in each of Paragliding cross country, Hang gliding Class 1 cross country and Paragliding accuracy. The number of Category 2 competitions was the same (increase by one). The total of sanctioned competitions in 2012 was 328 (325 in 2011 and 316 in 2010). By far the most active discipline is Paragliding cross country competitions with 160 events sanctioned; the next discipline is Hang gliding cross country, as detailed in the table.

| **FAI CIVL Sanctioned competitions** | **2012** | **2011** |
|---|---|---|
| **Category 1 Competitions** | **5** | **3** |
| Hang Gliding Class 1 XC | 1 | 1 |
| Paragliding Accuracy | 2 | 1 |
| Paragliding XC | 2 | 1 |
| **Category 2 Competitions** | **323** | **322** |
| Hang Gliding Class 1 Sports Class | 16 | 12 |
| Hang Gliding Class 1 XC | 61 | 58 |
| Hang Gliding Class 2 XC | 3 | 3 |
| Hang Gliding Class 5 XC | 26 | 20 |
| Paragliding Accuracy | 49 | 43 |
| Paragliding Acro Solo | 6 | 7 |
| Paragliding Acro Syncro | 2 | 4 |
| Paragliding XC | 160 | 175 |
| **Total number of competitions** | **328** | **325** |

This table shows sanctioned competitions, but some of them were not valid where the cause was most often weather. There is a small increase in HG of all disciplines where there is a decrease in PG XC competitions. The PG Accuracy is increasing and PG Acro has few. PG Acro competition scene is developing and I expect to see gradual increase in the next years.

## Future Championships

As well known, for 2013 we have World Championships in:

- World Hang Gliding Cross Country in Forbes(Australia).
  This championship took place in January and was very successful.
- World Paragliding Cross Country in Sopot (Bulgaria)
- World Paragliding Accuracy in Bjelasnica, Sarajevo (Bosnia and Herzegovina)

Also the World games have now one of our disciplines.

- World Games Paragliding Accuracy in Cali (Colombia)

At the 2012 CIVL Plenary Meeting the following Category 1 events were awarded for 2014

- European PG XC in Serbia
- Panamerican PG XC in Argentina
- European PG Accuracy in Serbia
- Asian PG Accuracy in Malaysia

There was no bid for HG Women, Class 2 or Class5 before the 2012 Plenary, but in December 2012 the Bureau accepted a bid from France to host the competitions and additionally the HG Sports Class for the main event to be in 2014.

- 2014 World HG Women, Class 2, Class 5 and HG Sports Class together in Annecy(France)

This will be the first Category 1 HG Sports Class event to be held.

## Officials at Championships

CIVL is compensating Stewards and Jury for their valuable and time consuming work at Category 1 competitions and Test Events, and has also been paying all cost of sprog measuring at Hang gliding competitions.
CIVL is reviewing how to support competition organizers more. Trials with remote jury have been conducted in PG Accuracy events and the last remote jury trial was at the HG Worlds in Australia. There are issues to resolve but it seems to work for some competitions and will for sure lower the cost for the organizers and pilots.
CIVL wants to move in the direction of more professional officials contributing even more to the competition organization and operation. The cost of the officials could also be made more predictable.

## *Records*

At the Plenary 2012 I reported no new Hang gliding Class 1 records ratified since 2009. In 2012 there was a very positive change, as numbers of HG records were broken and new limits reached. The great achievements of Jonny Durand Jnr and

Dustin Martin on their duel/dual flight in July in Zapata, TX(USA) where Dustin reached 764 km breaking the previous record of 700.6km from the year 2001. This achievement was brought to the public with a great story featured in New York Times with the title "Two Men, One Sky: A Flight to the finish".
Other HG Class1, Class2 and Class5 World and Continental records were also made in 2012.
In Paragliding 18 World and Continental records were claimed in 2012 that are still under review of FAI Records Officer. No Paragliding record claim has been ratified in 2012. A record claim of flight in May 2012 is still not processed 8 months later. It is not acceptable situation where the records review takes this long time. The FAI Office must correct this situation quickly.
I also want to mention the fact that some Continental PG records have been rejected because the NAC's of the pilots are not performing. The required documents are not sent to FAI in time, so the record flights of their pilots are not recognised and rejected. This unfair to the pilots and NAC's should be more supportive of their pilot's record achievements.
The Continental Records are gaining interest of pilots. We will continue to promote Records, particularly Continental records, to regain the interest of pilots of the world.

## *Safety*

Hang gliding:
CIVL has continued its programme of ensuring pilots are informed of correct pitch stability settings for hang gliders in Category 1 competitions and acceptance checks, including the measurement and enforcement of these settings has taken place. In 2012 HG Europeans in Turkey and at the 2013 HG Worlds in Australia, CIVL has emphasized 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. Knowledgeable persons have invested a lot of effort and time in this project. CIVL has also used large amounts of its funds to pay for the cost of this important safety project. It is now expected the competition pilots and team leaders have the motivation, knowledge and experience to continue the control and adjust the pitch stability settings. It will continue to be part of Category 1 competition checking by the organizers with assistance of the CIVL Stewards.

Paragliding:
Safety in Paragliding XC competitions is not in order. That showed clearly in 2012 when there was a fatality in the Pre-Worlds event in Bulgaria. It also was evident when two pilots in the PG Europeans had their wings collapsing and they fell to the ground unable to open their reserve parachutes. Fortunately those pilots both landed in trees which saved their lives. This also shows there are number of elements needing improvements in Paragliding competitions and it is not limited to

the wings as some might think, based on the discussion and time on wing development.

The pilot safety and development of Paragliders is the biggest task CIVL is working on for the Paraglider scene. The Paragliding Competition Safety Task Force findings and recommendations is the primary guide for current Paragliding safety work.
At the Plenary 2012 the CIVL delegates voted unanimously for CIVL to work on developing Competition Class Paragliders to be used in Category 1 competitions from 2014. It was also voted for keeping the requirement of allowing only EN-certified Paragliders in Category 1 competitions. The Category 2 competitions are controlled by the NAC's and it is their decision if they restrict Paragliders in their competitions to be EN-certified or not. The EN-standard is a bit disturbed for current situation where competition gliders are mandated to be EN-Certified. In the current EN-D certification tests, gliders are flown in configurations that do not relate to competition flying, such as using regular rather than cocoon harnesses; and performing manoeuvres that are seldom encountered, while common real problematic situations are not tested.

In early 2012, the Paragliders Manufacturers Association (PMA) agreed that they would be defining the new Competition Class Paragliders. It was expected the PMA recommendations would be ready before mid-year 2012. But PMA informed CIVL they did not have consensus for recommendation. In the Autumn CIVL wrote PMA and EHPU a letter and had meetings with EHPU and PMA separately on the matters of Competition Class Paragliders and Safety. PMA reconsidered and, early November, CIVL received the PMA recommendations regarding Competition Class Paragliders and competition safety, which is published on CIVL web.
The Paragliding Subcommittee chaired by Stéphane Malbos has worked extensively on the PMA recommendations and formed proposals for the 2013 Plenary on many items of the PMA recommendation, some with changes. Even though the Plenary proposals were published as supposed 45 day before the Plenary, the Paragliding SSC has continued their work on the proposals to prepare for the working session in the two days before the Plenary. This preparation and work of the PG SSC will be the cornerstone for successful outcome of the Plenary. This includes new Competition Paraglider Class definitions and other items like conical End of Speed Section.
The CIVL PG SSC and Bureau have been endeavouring to keep in touch with the various parties, pilots 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 the best 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.

CIVL is now compensating Stewards and Jury for their work at competitions. CIVL has also been paying all cost of Sprog measurement and devices in HG Competitions. CIVL faces fewer volunteers and has to compensate for contributions that before was not paid for. NAC's are cutting down expenses so CIVL has to pay more of cost NAC's have covered before.

All adds up to CIVL expenses are getting higher than before and we must be very careful in expenses to keep CIVL finances healthy as they are now.

The FAI office handles the bank accounts of all the commissions and manages the accounting system. The accounting service CIVL is currently experiencing from FAI office is unsatisfactory. Despite many requests of CIVL transactions in 2012 CIVL has only received them two times, in April and October. The accounts published to this CIVL Plenary are preliminary as transactions since late October has not been received. This is not acceptable but we cannot do more without the transactions from FAI office.

CIVL has asked for better access to its transactions and accounts and I am sure all the issues CIVL has now will be resolved in good cooperation with the FAI office soon.

## *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 contribute 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. He has served CIVL, pilots and competition organizers very well. But he has resigned from this post, which is the reason CIVL has been accepting application for that important role. We have received many applications from highly experienced and qualified persons. We expect to have new competition

coordinator appointed in February.
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.
During the year CIVL Bureau has appointed new Chairmen for Paragliding and Records & Badges Subcommittees until this Plenary as their Chairmen stepped down for personal reasons. Stéphane Malbos accepted to chair the PG Subcommittee and Igor Erzen accepted to chair the Records & Badges.

## *CIVL President Activity*

The CIVL President has many duties and there is a lot of work needed for CIVL. Having good people contributing in the Bureau is mandatory for CIVL to handle the tasks at hand. This Bureau has good people and they devote a lot of time to CIVL matters. Some list of Bureau activity is listed in Annex 7 of the Plenary documents.
As a CIVL President I attended a number of meetings. In May, FAI hosts an annual Commission Presidents meeting in Lausanne. At that meeting FAI announced and signed a FAI Sponsorship agreement with Breitling. That is very good news for FAI and will be supportive for CIVL and other commissions. The sponsorship is developing and Breitling was very visible at the HG Worlds in Australia in January. The World Champion received a Breitling watch in addition to other prizes.
FAI announced the creation of FAME a company to market FAI sports in more commercial way than FAI has done before. CIVL is enthusiastic of this move and expects to see PG Aerobatics and possibly PG Accuracy events benefit from CIVL cooperation with FAME.
In October the FAI General Conference meeting was in Turkey. At that meeting our sport received recognition with John Dickenson receiving the FAI Gold Medal. At that same meeting John Aldridge, former CIVL President, was appointed FAI companion of Honour.
A CIVL Bureau meeting was in November in Reykjavik, Iceland. It was a very valuable meeting for the Bureau and synchronized it much better than before. Preparation for the Plenary meetings is a lot of work for the Bureau but, with good help of FAI office, this has been managed well.

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

**Agust Gudmundsson**
**CIVL President**