



CIA President's Annual Report to the FAI General Conference 2008 St. Vincent / Aosta (Italy)

Reminder

At the 2006 annual meeting of the FAI Ballooning Commission in Moscow, the UAE NAC delegate, Mr Abdul Aziz Naser, made a proposal to hold the 2007 meeting of the Commission in Abu Dhabi from Wednesday 7 March to Saturday 10 March 2007. In this proposal, the delegate undertook that the UAE would provide, in addition to normal conference facilities:

- Free accommodation for Delegates, and Subcommittee and Working Group members (2 rooms per country)
- 50% reduction on airfares with Etihad Airlines (subject to confirmation)

Another proposal to host the meeting was made by Germany, host of the 2007 European Hot Air Ballooning Championship. This proposal was much less financially attractive to delegates. The result of the plenary session vote was: For Abu Dhabi - 23 votes, for Germany - 2 votes, Abstain - 1.

There was thus a massive vote in favour of holding the meeting in Abu Dhabi. However, the meeting had to be cancelled late in 2006, because we had received no further information about the arrangements proposed by Abu Dhabi. Germany was then asked if they were prepared to organise the meeting, despite losing the vote in Moscow. They refused. It was not possible to hold the meeting at the FAI headquarters in Lausanne, because all hotels there were full, as a result of the Car Show in Geneva.

As a last resort, the CIA President therefore arranged the meeting himself, in his home city of Luxemburg. This meant that the FAI Ballooning Commission had to pay a total of Euros 19'413 in unbudgeted expenses. In these circumstances, where the FAI Ballooning Commission delegates accepted in good faith a proposal made by a duly accredited delegate of the Emirates Aviation Association, we believe that the EAA has an obligation to arrange reimbursement of this sum.

As a consequence the CIA Plenary in Salzburg in March 2008 therefore took the following resolution of which the President of the UAE FAI Member was duly informed by email on April 5, 2008 as follows:

Dear Mr. President,

As a result of the unsettled business regarding the organisation of the 2007 CIA Plenary, and the compensation payment requested, the CIA Plenary has decided at its meeting in Salzburg to adopt the following resolution:

"CIA shall request the FAI to immediately require complete payment of the CIA Plenary 2007 – Abu Dhabi invoice from the UAE NAC. Should the invoice not have been paid until 1st April, 2008, then the CIA will request the FAI to enforce the CIA's decision in accordance with para. 2.8 of the FAI Statutes."

As we did not hear from you in this respect, we suspect that you have not been informed of this decision by the FAI Secretary General, and therefore we are prepared to extend the above deadline to May 1st 2008.

Hoping that this will help us to settle this issue once and for all,

With my best regards,

**JC Weber, president
FAI Ballooning Commission**

On May 22, 2008, having had no feedback on the subject, the CIA President referred this violation of duties of an FAI Member to the FAI President, requesting that the UAE FAI Member shall be penalized in accordance with Statute 2.8. and By-Law 6.3.

Highlights 2008

1. CIA Annual Meeting

The CIA's 2008 Plenary meeting was held in Salzburg / Austria from March 5 to 9, 2008. 27 NACs were present or represented. The FAI was represented by Max Bishop. The meeting successfully dealt with its agenda and among the items discussed the following are noteworthy:

- CIA delegates reported on ballooning activities in their respective countries (2001-2007) statistics are available from the FAI secretariat).
- The delegates appointed and approved the FAI International Juries and key officials for the 2008 sanctioned events.
- The delegates decided to support the DFSV Youth Camp organisers with a grant of 1,500.- Euros, to be allocated to the organisation of the 2008 International Youth Camp in Stuttgart (Germany) from August 4 to 10, 2008.
- The delegates decided to financially support the efforts of Europe Air Sports with 1,200.- Euros.
- The delegates gratefully took note that thanks to the efforts of the Belgian NAC, the CIA President had succeeded to obtain from the Belgian Balloon Federation the complete reimbursement of entry-fees for the cancelled 51st Coupe Aéronautique Gordon Bennett in Brussels.
- The delegates regretted that the FAI's efforts in respect of the World On-Line-Contest project did come to nothing. The CIA's ATMOS WG chairman reported that according to some recent email exchanges, Naviter did not seem to be interested in continuing the development of the portal.
- The delegates decided that the CIA Bureau members shall be elected for a one-year term.

- The CIA strongly supports the WAG and is insisting on a meaningful AX event with at least 25 balloons, and an AA event with at least 8 balloons. The delegates decided on a new NAC selection process for the WAG.
- The delegates decided to modify the bidding process for Coupe Aéronautique Gordon Bennett to allow the Coupe holding NAC one additional year to organise the event.
- The delegates decided to create a new competition event category for Women World and Continental Championships.
- The delegates decided that the minimum experience requirements for AX World- and Continental Championships be increased from 50 to 100 hours P1 in Hot Air balloons.
- The delegates approved the new CIA Events Calendar, the 2008 budget and the 2007 accounts.
- The delegates re-elected the CIA Bureau for one more one-year term.

2. Major 2008 CIA Events

8th World Hot Air Airship Championship

The event took place in St. Petersburg (Russia) from June 21 to 28. After 7 tasks in difficult weather conditions, the World Champion Title was won by J.A. Besnard from Switzerland (5585), Nikolay Galkin from Russia came second (5160), and Eckhardt Körner from Germany came third (5125). It should be noted that the event organisers had decided to change the venue for this Championship at the last moment, and without giving notice to the FAI or CIA. This was a major disappointment for all participants and a breach of contract concerning the CIA's Organiser's Agreement. The CIA therefore will have to look very closely at the existing rules and at its event sanctioning program, to analyze the shortcomings and to take the necessary steps to avoid any risks for a repeat of this situation. The CIA will certainly be seen as a not having taken the necessary steps to avoid this situation, and the next CIA meeting promises to be very interesting in this respect.

18th World Hot Air Balloon Championship

The event is to be held in Hofkirchen (Austria) from September 13 to 21. At the time of writing, the event had not yet started and no results were available.

52nd Coupe Aéronautique Gordon Bennett

The event is planned during the Albuquerque Balloon Fiesta (USA) and will be run from October 3 to 11. At the time of writing, the event had not yet started and no results were available.

3. Other CAT1 events staged in 2008:

LUXGSM World Balloon Trophy & Honda Cup 2008	AX	Echternach/Luxembourg	30 th July to 3 rd August
8 th MOL Cup & AX International Championship	AX	Debrecen/Hungary	30 th September to 4 th October
2008 Tochigi AX International Championship	AX	Tochigi/Japan	19 th to 24 th November

4. FAI Championships to come:

19 th World Hot Air Balloon Championship	AX	Debrecen / Hungary	2 nd to 10 th October 2010
53 rd Coupe Aéronautique Gordon Bennett	AA	Geneva / Switzerland	4 th to 12 th September 2009
2009 World Air Games	AX/AA	Torino/Italy	7 th to 13 th June 2009
16 th FAI European AX Championship	AX	Brissac-Quincé/France	21 st to 29 th August 2009

5. FAI Class A and B World Records in 2007

FAI has approved **3 Airship, 10 Hot Air balloon and 5 Gas Balloon World Records** during 2007. Details of these records are available on the FAI webpage at http://records.fai.org/balloons/#history_A

6. FAI / CIA Awards

Montgolfier Diploma-Best performance Gas Balloon	David Hemplemann-Adams	UK
Montgolfier Diploma-Best performance Hot Air Balloon	David Jaworski	USA
Montgolfier Diploma-Contribution to the Sport	Gert Scholz	Austria
Santos Dumont Gold Airship Medal	Stanislaw Fuodoroff	Russia
CIA Hall of Fame Inductees (posthumous)	Hugo Eckner	Germany
CIA Hall of Fame Inductees (living)	Josef Starkbaum	Austria

7. General considerations

Although ballooning is apparently doing well, the activity is still struggling with the same problems as other Air Sports Commissions (air space, licensing, airworthiness, equipment, medical, etc.), and in addition with some homemade ones that have not yet been properly addressed by us: Safety issues at our events, modernisation of our existing competition formats, development of attractive sporting events for the media and public, communication with the grass roots balloonists, rapid aging of our pilot population and the difficulties to recruit new pilots, small proportion of female pilots and competitors. These are the major challenges for ballooning in the future, and we are grateful for the assistance provided by the FAI Members to help us tackle these issues. NAC support is vitally important and only through the participation of their delegates in our Commission's work can we achieve positive results. It is my honour and pleasure to acknowledge the support provided by our delegates, the FAI Secretary General and his staff in Lausanne, and to sincerely thank them for their efforts on behalf of the CIA.

J.C. Weber, President, CIA