



Practical Guidelines for CIVL/FAI Category 1 Competition Organisers Chapter 7

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7 Operational Aspects – Venues & Logistics

7.1 Headquarters

A well-equipped, well organised headquarters can make a huge difference to the smooth running of the Championships and contribute greatly towards a friendly atmosphere throughout the duration of the event. If your planned HQ is a public building, once the bid is accepted, it is advisable to acquire written agreement that the premises will be available from at least one day prior to the opening of registration, through until at least one day after the closing ceremony. Even if there is no formal rental agreement (offered free of charge by the town hall, for example), written permission with the dates of both events, should be secured.

Determine whether essential services are available and included (power, telephone, wifi connection, furniture, toilets, cleaning services etc). The following elements should be provided, if not in a single building, at least within a short walk of each other:

- GPS up/download area and scoring office (preferably partitioned or in an adjoining room)
- Communication/transport/retrieve coordination desk/area (preferably partitioned or in an adjoining room). NB Live tracking may need plenty of space and power/cables for charging up to 200 units.
- Organisers' office/admin centre to allow several staff to work
- FAI Officials office/meeting room and Press Room
- Public area with welcome desk, multiple, large information boards for posters, photographs, press cuttings, scores
- Briefing room big enough for all staff and team leaders to meet at one time, with seating and audio-visual equipment
- Lockable office or storage area for valuable equipment.
- Toilets, rubbish & recycling bins
- Parking within a short walk

Start planning the layout for registration, and the subsequent layout during the competition. If the same venue is to be used for Opening/Closing Ceremonies and/or receptions, consider the logistics of the timings and change of use. Think about decorating the HQ area(s): Posters, flags, models, photoboards etc for public/pilot/press interest and to create a convivial atmosphere.

The Pilot Briefing room may be in a separate location to the Headquarters, but preferably, it should be within a couple of minutes walk. For the Mandatory Safety Briefing, you will need one room big enough to hold all pilots and staff at one time. This must be equipped with a good sound system, and preferably large screen and projection facilities to show maps, photographs etc.

During the rest of the event, a smaller room may suffice, to hold Team Leaders and staff comfortably. A microphone is advisable, depending on the size of the room and the acoustics. Similarly, audio-visual facilities, for presenting Meteorological information, for example, are

useful. If the Briefing Room is permanently available during the competition, it can be a good place to put information for Team Leaders (labelled files, filing trays or 'pigeon holes').

Holding important Briefings outside is not often advisable as the acoustics can be bad, bad weather can be a problem, and people are more easily distracted. It may also discourage questions. The obvious exception is Task Briefings held on launch or on an airfield immediately prior to launch.

It may seem obvious and convenient to co-locate the scoring function with retrieve coordination. However, the scoring team can become very busy in short bursts with pilots queuing to download their tracks, and the area can be hectic and noisy. The retrieve coordinator may require a quiet area where he can answer phones or talk on the radio to pilots, team leaders and drivers. It is important to be aware that if there is an incident, the retrieve coordinator may be involved in conversations of a sensitive nature, especially if Live Tracking is used. It is advisable to ensure he has the facility to work undisturbed by pilots at such times.

An organiser's office area is essential, equipped with PCs, printer/scanner, laminating machine, stationery, etc. There are always new documents to create and print, pilot cards to replace, daily pilot lists, receipts etc. It is useful to have someone manning the office in the mornings prior to the briefing, and again later in the afternoon/evening as pilots return. A secure storage area for launch/goal/target equipment, task boards etc, is also useful.

7.2 Launches

If improvements or maintenance work is planned for the launches, this should be initiated as soon as practicable after the bid is accepted. Keep the Steward informed of progress if any of this work is a condition of the bid, or as a requirement following the Test Event.

Consider the schedule of routine maintenance work of the access routes, parking areas and launches themselves (strimming, road repairs, scrub clearance). Ensure windsocks, streamers and other launch aids are in place or renewed prior to the start of the competition.

If portable toilets are required, book them in advance and ask for confirmation of the cost, including delivery and regular cleaning and water supply management. If existing facilities are to be used, such as airfield buildings, a café/restaurant or other public/municipal facilities, ensure the relevant personnel are aware of the dates of the events and the number of people to expect.

For tow/winch launch events, ensure you have written agreement for the use of the airfield from several days prior to registration (for practice flights), until the last competition date. Similarly if you are renting winches or tugs and their respective operators, that dates and costs are confirmed in advance.

7.3 Goalfields and Target Area

Ensure all planned goal fields (and target field) have the required written permissions for use. Check or confirm that grass will be cut or crops harvested by the start date of the competition. Check that there are sufficient high visibility windsocks and streamers available. For lesser used goal fields, double check the GPS coordinates match the turnpoint lists. Consider access for retrieve vehicles.

If the general public, spectators or press are going to be encouraged to be present, consider access, parking, barriers and facilities such as toilets or refreshments.

Accuracy: Even if the field is regularly used for locating the target, double check for obstacles and that the measuring area of the target is flat. A target mat (10 or 20m diameter) pre-marked with the required measuring circles can be useful, especially if it may need to be moved during the competition to suit different weather conditions. It can also be a useful promotional tool for printing sponsor logos. If circles are to be marked directly on the ground, ensure the centre point is clearly marked, that the distances to the circles can be measured accurately and can be marked clearly so that they can be easily identified from the air. Check Section 7C for facilities that should be provided (shade, toilets, refreshments, other equipment).

7.4 Accommodation

The bid documentation probably included some information about local accommodation options and costs. Ensure this information is easily accessible on the website. Many pilots will look for the lowest cost options, typically campsites. If preferential rates can be negotiated, so much the better. Teams sometimes prefer to find group accommodation.

The Tourist Office may be a useful resource in this respect, and may even undertake to handle enquiries. If not, and/or if there are not a great deal of options in the vicinity, consider trying to find whether there are houses or apartments to rent.

Think ahead about options for FAI Officials, essential staff who are not local, VIPs and Press. Some better class accommodation (equivalent to a 3 star hotel, for example) may be required for some visitors.

7.5 Transport & Retrieve

Depending on your bid, you may be providing transport to launch for pilots and staff, and a retrieve service for pilots. This requires careful planning and coordination. If you have local volunteers with their own minibuses, check they are available for the duration of the event, that their vehicles are serviceable, safe and adequately insured, and what recompense they require (fuel, contribution towards wear and tear, driver fee etc). If you are renting buses, make provisional bookings and get prices confirmed. Check for any insurance restrictions (named drivers, etc). Start making a list of drivers prepared to work the whole event.

When calculating numbers, consider also transport for launch staff. Normally, FAI Officials should be provided with their own vehicle(s) so that they have more flexibility on timing and where they go.

Even if you are not providing transport for pilots, you may need extra vehicles to transport staff.

If you are running a retrieve service for a cross country competition, you will need an experienced Retrieve Coordinator fluent in the local language and English. Liaise on how this will be done and what equipment or facilities are required.

Drivers should know the area and know how to use a GPS to locate pilots by coordinates if necessary or have an assistant with gps, radio skills and appropriate language skills to communicate with the driver and pilots. They should have radios with booster aerials on the roof,

a mobile phone (with credit), first aid kit on board, and an up to date, clean, pilot list every morning.

7.5.1 Check in procedures

It is important to set out clearly for pilots, Team Leaders and Staff, the pilot check-in procedures. It is strongly recommended that it is made mandatory for each pilot to check in personally according to these procedures. This could be by SMS to a specific check-in number, or by signing out at the Headquarters, for example. Even if the retrieve service or goal marshal records pilot numbers, and/or pilots call in by radio, pilots should be clearly briefed that they must also check-in personally, since errors can occur in translation or relaying pilot numbers or names.

You will need a check-in coordinator, even if you are not providing a retrieve service, to ensure all pilots have been checked in after each task. A cross reference to pilots who have downloaded their tracklogs provides an additional security check. It is essential to collect contact details of all team leaders, drivers and their vehicle details (at registration).

If you are not providing a retrieve service, it may be useful to put information on the competition website about vehicle hire and/or drivers available for teams coming from afar, especially other continents.

7.6 Parking

If access to the take-off, or parking spaces close to launch are restricted, consider how to minimise congestion and facilitate parking. Nothing upsets pilots more than delays getting to launch. However, it is important to ensure roads and parking areas do not get blocked, as access may be required by emergency vehicles. If you make rules or restrictions, ensure they are well documented and clearly explained to team leaders in advance. Consider also parking requirements (20 to 30 minibuses/cars) in town and close to the HQ.

7.7 Equipment

It can be useful to have someone in charge of procuring and maintaining all necessary equipment. Check with key staff (Meet Director, Safety Director, Launch & Goal Marshals, Chief/Event Judge) about what equipment they expect the organisation to provide for them. Duties of an equipment manager can include: ensuring staff radios are distributed, collected and charged daily; that essential and spare equipment and materials are always available at launch and goal fields (see later); drivers are provided with maps and booster aerials, first aid kits, (for Accuracy) that target equipment is installed and maintained as required; etc.

If you are providing a Live Tracking and/or Fast Retrieve service, you should have people dedicated to running these functions, including monitoring who has what, and the daily charging of electrical equipment, as necessary. They may appreciate some help, however!

Communications equipment can be an important safety aspect, including handheld & base station radios, mobile and fixed antennas, and cellphones. A source of low cost SIM cards running on the network with the best coverage is useful for both pilots and staff.

Equipment for headquarters may need to be procured well in advance, installed and checked: telephone/wifi/routers; audio-visual equipment (microphone and speaker as a minimum), screen etc for briefings; IT systems and stationery for office use and registration. Check with the scorer on what he will provide and what he may require. Ensure sufficient power outlets, extension leads, multiplug sockets, surge protectors/UPS systems.

7.8 Food, Beverages & Lunch packs

Your essential staff will usually have enough to do each morning, without having to think about procuring their own food. If the Competition Organiser is providing lunchpacks for pilots and Team Leaders, it is little extra cost and effort to provide them for the staff too. It is easy to have a stock of bottled water in the Headquarters Office so that staff drivers can ensure they have something in their vehicles. Staff working late into the evening (scorers, retrieve coordinators, HQ Office staff etc), should be considered. Either they should have a small budget to buy their own refreshments, something should be available for them, or someone should bring in a take-away for them if they are too busy to go out, or are too far from local sources.

Although generally appreciated by pilots and Team Leaders, the provision of lunch packs can be a logistical nightmare. Points to consider: are they included in the fee paid by Team Leaders, Drivers and Assistants? Don't forget staff and officials. Also pre-booked Press and VIPs. Options: Vegetarian, special diet/allergy and cultural-based restrictions. Distribution: at HQ before transport leaves for launch? Or take to launch for distribution? Make or buy? = Cost vs. Convenience. What about rest days? What if the day is cancelled early in the morning?

Be warned: The numbers never match. There will always be complaints. Every day. Ensure that whoever has this responsibility is well organised, efficient, calm, and importantly, thick-skinned!

7.9 Event Programming

It is useful to provide pilots and Team Leaders with a printed programme of the event, with the Pilot Pack at Registration. Details should include:

- General programme (practice, ceremonies, flying days, social events)
- Timings and venues for briefings
- Detailed timings and logistics for Opening Ceremony, and later, for Closing Ceremony
- Timings and venues for social events, stating whether food is included or any extra costs
- Typical daily schedule with timings for transport, briefings, land by and report back times

The programme, and changes to the programme or daily schedule, should be posted on the noticeboards at HQ, on the website/blog and communicated to Team Leaders, either in their 'pigeon-holes' or via text messages.

Setting the schedule for the days leading up to the first competition day can be complicated. Typically the following elements need to be planned in:

- Registration: There may be time slots over 1 or 2 days

- Equipment checks: It may be easier/more appropriate to do some of these at launch or goal/target on practice days
- Mandatory Safety Briefing: It should be before the Official Practice Task
- First Team Leaders' Briefing: Agrees nominal scoring parameters and task/safety committees
- Official Task: For registered pilots. All organisational aspects should be in place (logistics, launch, goal, scoring)
- Opening Ceremony: Timing is not flexible as VIPs & Press are invited.
- First Competition day/task:

All pilots participating in the Official Practice Task must be registered and have attended the MSB. Some pilots may be late arriving. Planning the Opening Ceremony on the same day as the Practice Task may not be feasible unless it is a short task and a late starting Opening Ceremony.

7.10 Flight Verification & Scoring

7.10.1 Cross country

Section 7a and Section 7b cover this in detail. See also 7.1 above for facilities and equipment required.

Technology changes rapidly. At the time of writing, the technology in Live Trackers has not been sufficiently reliable to use for scoring purposes. But this may change. With some equipment, the pilot can send his tracklog by email via a mobile phone. However, to enable it to be validated by the scorer, the tracklog must also include the g-record. Such procedures must be trialled in Cat 2 events, before they can be considered by the Plenary to be included in Section 7 rules for Cat 1 events.

For remote goals, some event organisers have experimented with a scorer travelling to the goalfield to allow pilots to download their tracks to the scorer's laptop on site. This can save some time for the scoring team and reduce hassle for the pilots.

While there are always a few pilots who complain about queues to download tracklogs at HQ, most pilots enjoy the conviviality of the HQ and scoring area. It is important to ensure that there is a good atmosphere, with space to chat, a logical queuing system, and that the scorers are not overwhelmed with too many pilots at one time.

Consider having a desk just outside the scoring area with the 'run report' slips that pilots must complete before downloading their tracks. The reports are important means of finding out pilots' views on the safety of the task.

The organisers should liaise with the scorer in advance on issues concerning infringements of airspace, restricted areas and competition limits. The rules and penalties on infringement of airspace are clearly set out in Section 7, and should be stated also in the Local Regulations. If airspace is an issue, it can be advisable to set a competition limit, lower than the airspace. In this way, a sliding scale of penalties may be applied to pilots depending on the level of infringement. It is important to make sure that the rules set for the competition can be accommodated in the scoring system.

The difference between GPS or Barometric altitude measurements can cause controversy. The scorer can advise on this, and an explanation of procedures should be clearly presented. The earth model selected is another aspect that may be subject to change. The FAI has been using the FAI sphere, but there has been some move to changing this to WGS84 ellipsoid. FS should be updated to meet the rules in force. The scorer should liaise with the CIVL Software Working Group, and should have downloaded a copy of the latest version of the 'CIVL Scoring System' at: <http://www.fai.org/civl-documents> under 'Preparing for competitions'.

Task setters should also liaise with the scorer when considering features such as large turnpoint cylinders, goal cylinders, end of speed section, start times etc, to ensure that there are no problems envisaged with scoring the task. The scoring parameters will already have been agreed at the first Team Leaders' briefing, and will be published on the noticeboard and the website.

It is useful for the Meet Director to be in communication with the scoring team to discuss or resolve any issues arising, and deal with any complaints.

7.10.2 Accuracy Events

A simple Excel spreadsheet is used to record the scores for each pilot each round. The worst score is dropped as the 5th round is scored. It is possible to enter the scores directly into a spreadsheet as they are called. However, the scores must also be recorded manually so that the pilot can physically see his score on the score sheet, and sign next to it. This is done within a few metres of the target. This provides an indisputable record that the pilot agreed the score he was awarded. At the end of each round, the scorer should check the paper scores against the electronic version. If a pilot is awarded a re-flight, this is noted on the score sheet. If a score was recorded prior to the re-flight being awarded, it is deleted. Pilots who were at launch but did not fly the round are recorded DNF. Pilots not at launch are recorded ABS.

It is useful, at the end of the competition, to ensure that the final score sheet, which will be signed by the Chief Judge and the Jury President, includes the individual round scores, as a copy of this can be used as a proof for subsequent claims for Records & Badges.

7.11 Production & Publication of Results

From a logistical standpoint, the sooner all pilots are retrieved back to HQ, the sooner all the tracklogs can be downloaded and the provisional scores for the task can be produced. If one or two tracklogs missing, there is the facility to produce provisional scores with those pilots marked as NYP (not yet processed). This at least allows the majority of the scores to be checked by pilots and Team Leaders, and any issues resolved, while waiting for the last pilots' tracklogs. Pilots who were at launch but did not fly the round are recorded DNF. Pilots not at launch are recorded ABS. This can be an important distinction in the scoring program.

It is common practice to put the task scores and the overall scores to date directly on to the website. It is important to identify which scores are still provisional and which are final. The time the scores were produced is generally included on the scoresheet. It is recommended, and can add to a convivial atmosphere at HQ, to post printed score sheets on the noticeboard(s). This is useful for those without the means (or inclination) to connect to the internet, and for the public to see.

7.12 Dealing with complaints and protests

This is covered extensively in Section 7 and in the Steward & Jury Handbook. Procedures and timings are generally also included in the Local Regulations. Official complaints in writing, in English, should be directed to the Meet Director. The Meet Director should make sure he is clear about whether a pilot is making a formal or informal complaint. He should also make a note of the complaint, if not presented in writing, the time it was made, and when and how it was answered. The Meet Director may need to liaise with the Scorer, Safety Director or other officials before answering the complaint. If the pilot is not satisfied with the response, he should make a formal Protest, preferably through his Team Leader, in writing, in English, within the specified timeframe, and should be delivered to the Meet Director. The Meet Director passes this to the Jury for deliberation.

All competition staff should be careful how they respond to general complaints from pilots or Team Leaders, as careless, speculative or opinionated comments may cause difficulties for the Meet Director if a formal complaint is made later and staff comments are cited in support of the complaint. Staff should be briefed to be cautious and not to volunteer opinions on issues related to safety, for example, nor to repeat hearsay or rumour, nor to speculate on any subject or incident on which he does not have the facts.

Complaints can be made on any aspect of the competition (fairness, safety, task setting, penalties, even logistics), although they are most often issues with scoring implications. Sometimes complaints are made about the behaviour or score of another pilot or group of pilots. Sometimes multiple complaints or joint complaints are made about the same incident. This can lead to bad feeling or an unfriendly atmosphere. Such situations are best dealt with swiftly and, once decisions made and the outcome of protests are known, should be published. It may be appropriate to address the incident or clarify factors surrounding the incident at the next briefing.

7.12.1 Accuracy Events

If a pilot refuses to sign for his score, this is deemed a complaint and he must talk to the Event Judge before he talks to any other person. If the pilot still does not accept his score, he should then repeat his complaint to the Meet Director. If the pilot is still not satisfied, he can then make a formal protest, preferably through his Team Leader, in writing, in English, within the specified timeframe, which should be delivered to the MD. The MD passes this to the Jury for deliberation. A Protest template is included in S7C. It is useful to have blank copies printed out and available to Team Leaders, as necessary.

7.13 Post event duties

Unfortunately, the Competition Organiser's duties do not finish with the Closing Ceremony! There will be much packing up and clearing up to be done, moving out of the headquarters building(s), dismantling temporary structures, returning rented equipment, paying bills, finalising the accounts and thanking all the volunteers, local helpers, sponsors and supporters of the event. There are a number of official tasks from an FAI perspective also.

7.13.1 Transmission of signed official results to FAI

The final results should be printed out and signed by the Jury President. If the JP does not undertake to send this document to FAI, immediately after the event, then the Competition Organiser must do so. The scorer should send the full results, in the correct format, to the Competitions Coordinator as soon as possible, and within 7 days of the Closing Ceremony.

7.13.2 Return of FAI flag, unused medals etc

If the Jury President or Steward does not take away the FAI flag and any unused medals, they should be returned to the FAI Office.

7.13.3 Transmission of media archive & promotional material to FAI

It may take a month or more for you to complete the event media archive, with copies of newspaper and article cuttings, listings of links to website articles, photo archives, blogs, tv coverage etc. A copy of this archive, plus examples of promotional material (posters, stickers, press releases etc), should be sent to the FAI Office for their archives.

7.13.4 Confirmation and return of balance of Sanction Fee

Once the Jury President has completed his report and checked for any outstanding monies due from the organisation to FAI Officials, the FAI Office will calculate the Sanction Fee and deduct this from the amount received from the entry fees of the three top teams. The calculation will be checked with the Competition Organiser and when agreed, will be refunded.