



Practical Guidelines for CIVL/FAI Category 1 Competition Organisers Chapter 4

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4 Role of the Meet Director

4.1 Introduction

The Meet Director of an FAI Cat 1 event is selected by the Organising team and approved by the host NAC, and once the bid is accepted, is approved by CIVL. Any request to change the Meet Director from that stated in the original bid must be sent to and approved by the CIVL Bureau.

In terms of qualifications and experience, the Meet Director should:

- NOT also be the Competition Organiser (Event Director) – both roles are too much to be performed well by one person.
- Must NOT be a competitor in either the Practice Event or the Championship
- Have successfully conducted national and international Cat 2 competitions in the past
- Have a thorough working knowledge of the CIVL Section 7 Sporting Code
- Ideally, have been a competition pilot or at least be/have been a pilot
- Have very good communication skills and speak English in a way which is clear to the pilots
- Ideally be familiar with the competition area to be used*

* If a Meet Director has been asked to run the event in an unfamiliar location, s/he should establish an advisory group which includes the Safety Director, Task Committee and any other local pilot deemed to be an expert in that area, who could even be appointed Assistant Meet Director, if necessary.

4.2 Summary of the Role and Responsibilities of the Meet Director:

Before the Practice Event & Championships:

- Safety: The Meet Director, together with the Safety Director, have a collective responsibility for all pilots flying a task.
- Liaison with Safety Director and Competition Organiser on all safety matters, and preparing/agreeing procedures to follow in case of an incident.
- Work on the Local Regulations before the Practice Event, with the FAI Steward and Competition Organiser, to ensure that both the Practice Event and Championships will run smoothly.
- Check with the scorer that he has everything he needs, is familiar with the CIVL-approved scoring formula, and (cross country) that the scoring parameters to be used are appropriate for the competition task area, or, (accuracy) checking with the Chief/Event Judge that the team is in place and target area prepared and equipped.
- Check with the Competition Organiser about any airspace restrictions and restricted areas, and that any dispensations or permissions needed are in progress.

- Check that all launches and/or tow fields are suitable for the number of pilots competing. e.g - the organisation may need to build extra start places or improve existing ones.
- Check that the rigging/gliders preparation areas have been considered with regard to the method of launching to be used.
- Check that all the equipment needed at launch, to write up the task, conduct the briefing, and to launch pilots safely, will be provided.
- Ensure that there are adequate staff working on launch/in tow field, in goal (or target) and in the HQ, and that they know how to perform their roles. Reassure yourself you can rely on key personnel to run their teams (Launch Marshal, Tow team manager, Goal Marshal, Scorer, Chief Judge etc).
- Check that the arrangements for transport (if provided), retrieve (if required) and check-in are adequate.

During the events:

- Work with the Safety Director & Competition Organiser to give the Mandatory Safety Briefing and hold the 1st Team Leaders' Meeting.
- Prepare and run daily briefings with input from Safety Director, Meteorologist & Competition Organiser.
- Liaison with HQ/Admin staff to ensure all necessary paperwork is available.
- Work with the Safety Director during the competition to ensure that safety is the number one priority whenever decisions are being made regarding task setting, launching, and the stopping or cancelling of tasks.
- Make the final decision about which task is to be set for the day, after discussing recommendations from the Task Committee and after the Safety Committee and Safety Director have approved the task.
- Write up the task on the taskboard. Then give clear task briefings on launch (on time and in English).
- Monitor the airspace with the Safety Director during launching to avoid overcrowding of pilots.
- Monitor launch procedures, and liaise with Launch Marshal to close launch temporarily if necessary and record the time and duration of such closures.
- Relay to the scorer/retrieve manager the pilot numbers of any pilots who did not fly the task or who were absent from the task.
- Monitor, with the Safety Director, the general weather conditions on course during the task both visually and from in-flight information received from the safety committee, any air marshals, and from the meteorological staff member.
- Ensure that correct procedures are being followed by the staff at goal or at the target.
- Check that the pilot retrieve and check-in procedures are working as planned.
- Check if there have been any problems with task scoring, and that the results are published as soon as practicable.
- Sign and date the task results once they have changed from provisional to official.

- Deal with official complaints from pilots.
- Ensure any official notices are signed and published on the official notice board.
- Ensure final competition results are sent to the FAI office.

4.3 Liaison with the FAI-appointed Steward

It is very important to work closely with the FAI Steward for the event. The Steward has experience from previous competitions and acts as an advisor to the Meet Director (and Competition Organiser) to ensure that the competition will be conducted according to the rules set out by the FAI and CIVL. The Steward also communicates with the pilots if they have problems regarding the event. A pilot package should be given to the Steward so that she/he has the same information that pilots receive.

The Steward will give advice on the Local Regulations which are being used for the event, and also the timeline which needs to be followed for this. After the Practice Event, the Steward will make recommendations on any concerns which may need to be addressed for the smooth running of the Cat 1 event the following year, and these recommendations must be implemented (see Section 7).

4.4 Local Regulations

The Local Regulations are supplementary rules to those set out in the General Section and Section 7 of the Sporting Code. They are designed to qualify certain aspects of the Section 7 rules according to the site and event-specific factors of the Championships. They must not conflict with the rules in the General Section or Section 7 of the Sporting Code. Correct wording is essential as the CIVL Jury may need to refer back to these rules in resolving any protests. While the rules for the Practice Event should follow those of a Category 1 event as far as appropriate, clearly there will need to be some differences between the Local Regulations of the Test Event and the Cat 1 Championships.

It is essential to use the Local Regulations template in Section 7 as a start point, and adapt this template for the competition you are directing. The Steward will be familiar with this template, and it contains all the necessary information for Team Leaders and pilots. Check that the references made to chapters in Section 7 apply to the most current version of Section 7, which is published on 1st May each year.

The Meet Director may have some input to certain aspects of the Local Regulations, such as maximum wind speeds on launch, scoring parameters, entry qualifications, penalties etc.

Local Regulations should be submitted to CIVL for approval at least 8 months before the Cat 1 event. See Chapter 6 for further information on Local Regulations, Entry Requirements and Registration.

4.5 Launch preparations

4.5.1 For Hang gliding

Staffing: It is vital that there are sufficient experienced, trained staff on launch or at the tow field. Typically on a hill launch, at least 4 launch staff per lane should be present – a launch director, someone to record launches, and 2 staff to assist pilots to move to launch and do safety checks.

Role playing before the event is advised, especially for situations such as when the 'push rule' is called by a competitor.

Tie down points may be needed if dust devils are a problem. If ordered launch is to be used, pilot rigging numbers will need to be visible on the ground so that pilots can move easily to launch. Rigging maps will need to be supplied to team leaders for their pilots.

4.5.2 For Paragliding

The launch area should be free of vegetation and obstructions that may snag lines. Assess the number of simultaneous launches that can be achieved with gliders laid out across the launch area. If ordered launches are necessary, it is advisable to have an entry 'lane' with pilots queuing to enter outside the launch area while they wait their turn to take-off.

Staffing: There should be sufficient staff to help pilots layout out gliders and assist with untangling lines, should they need it. Ideally, helpers should be experienced in this task.

4.5.3 Equipment

Anticipate what equipment you will need, or may need at launch, and if necessary, allocate someone from HQ to check the contents daily and ensure it is taken to and from the launch point each day. Check that there are sufficient windsocks and wind indicators in prominent positions.

4.5.4 Paperwork

Despite being in the electronic age, there are times when paper is still the best option. Make sure you have a clip board and document wallet with you at all times. For an ordered launch based on the pilot's position in the results to date, a new flight order and/or rigging (HG) lists will be needed daily.

4.6 Pre-Competition Task Schedule

It is a good idea to consider early on how to schedule the actions and activities required prior to the competition, including: equipment checks, registration, briefings, practice task and opening ceremony. Ideally, this schedule should be included in the Local Regulations. See also Chapter 6. However, be warned, the logistics can be difficult.

Holding a Practice Task is recommended in the rules, primarily for the organisation, but the pilots often appreciate the opportunity too. Technically, pilots should have attended the Mandatory Safety Briefing prior to any official practice task flying. But not all competitors may have arrived in time for the Practice Task. Physical registration can take more than a day, especially if there are close to 150 competitors, and depending on whether any equipment checks are mandatory before the first task. The Rules state that a Category 1 event should not exceed 14 days, including days allocated for the Opening and Closing Ceremonies. Further information can be found in Chapter 6 of these Guidelines.

4.7 First Team Leader Briefing

Introduce yourself, the other key staff present and the CIVL officials, who should have the opportunity to clarify their roles to the Team Leaders.

The idea of the initial Team Leader briefing is to confirm: the daily schedule with regard to timings, deadlines and events; how operations will proceed on launch and through the task day; and any other information which needs to be given by the organisation.

At this meeting, the Team Leaders will also elect Safety Committee members, and for cross country events, Task Committee members as per Section 7 guidelines. Team Leaders may have been asked at registration for nominations for these committees.

The meeting also provides an opportunity to clarify with the Team Leaders any uncertainties they may have about the Local Regulations. The Local Regulations can be changed when impacted by changes made to the Sporting Code between the date of approval of the Local Regulations and the start of the competition. The Local Regulations cannot be altered once the competition has officially started (after the Opening Ceremony). Only 'minor or necessary' additions can be made, subject to the approval by a majority of the Team Leaders AND the CIVL Steward and Jury President. This is why it is so important to ensure the Local Regulations are clear, complete and unambiguous from the start.

Confirm/agree scoring parameters with the Team Leaders.

Finally, it is important to reinforce the message to Team Leaders that it is their duty to convey all instructions and information from the Meet Director and the organising team to their pilots.

4.8 Mandatory Safety Briefing

The Safety Director must (see S7) conduct a safety briefing prior to the first competition task day. All pilots in the competition must attend the briefing, so it is useful to ask pilots sign in as they enter the briefing room. One of the organisational staff should monitor this signing.

As this is often the first briefing when everyone is together, it can be a good idea to begin by introducing the key staff members and CIVL representatives to the pilots. It can be useful for the Meet Director (among others) to participate in this meeting, as a change of voice, tempo and personality helps maintain the attention of the pilots.

The template for the content of the Mandatory Safety Briefing can be found in Section 7. The most time should be spent on safety points pertinent to the competition area (eg – presence of power lines, special landing field obstacles, local wind dangers, danger areas for rotor, prohibited, restricted or danger areas and penalties for infringement of these etc), and define the procedures (check-in, communications, action in case of an incident, etc).

4.9 Daily Briefings

Run all briefings on time. Pilots will learn to turn up on time if you stick to the set schedule. The first daily briefing is typically a team leader briefing. Daily briefings are typically aimed at Team Leaders, but pilots need not be excluded.

Be at the front where everyone can see you speaking. AV equipment may be useful in a large room, and to show visual information.

For comfort it is preferable to have Team Leaders seated at the early morning briefings, and they always appreciate some morning coffee/tea and snacks 😊

Keep notes of all briefings in a notebook so that you can refer back to them in following days or during protests when pilots may say you did not inform them of something important. It is useful to have a template for the briefing notes.

Points to be included are:

- results and any problems from the previous day
- a summary by the Safety Director of the safety comments regarding the task
- any logistical issues arising (transport, retrieve, goalfield, scoring)
- a meteorological report for the day (see below) and any implications on choice of launch site or task setting
- reminders about danger areas, airspace, stopped task procedures, use of radios and report back time/procedures
- any organisational notes such as scheduled social events
- the time of the next briefing on launch - or HQ, if the briefing is delayed to monitor the weather
- announce the time/place you wish to meet the Task/Safety Committees at HQ and/or on launch

There may be questions from the Team Leaders so it is useful to have all key staff present.

4.10 Meteorological Briefing

This is a part of the initial daily briefing for the team leaders. Ideally, they should receive a summary of the weather report, either as a print-out or by text/email. An accurate forecast is always important, and the main items of interest in the competition area (which can be presented on a template) include:

- Presence of frontal systems
- Clouds – type and amount of cover expected
- Winds – strength & direction for different altitudes (ground, launch height, higher).
- Thermals – expected strength, time of starting and ending, thermal top altitude.
- Presence of inversions, altitudes, expected breaking times.
- Storms or other dangers expected.
- General forecast for the next day/s.

Choosing the correct launch site for the day is usually based on the meteorological forecast, and the Task and Safety Committees may be asked by the Meet and Safety Directors for input into this decision.

If there is time on launch during the task briefing, pilots like a quick summary of the forecast, particularly if the forecast has changed or if they did not attend the morning briefing.

4.11 Task Setting

It is useful to have a shady area or tent with table and chairs for the Task Committee, close to launch but separate from the pilots. If the launch area is restricted in size, it may also be advisable to allocate a priority set up area (not launch position) for the pilots in the Task and Safety Committees, close to where you will be setting the task and/or conducting the briefings. This can be regarded as fair recompense for those pilots offering their time and expertise while other competitors are preparing.

For the task setting, have weather reports, a task map, GPS with turn points, high top pins and string, or marker pen if the map is laminated, to outline the task on a large scale map, plus printed lists of turn points (in name and number order).

It is also useful for the Meet Director to have a clipboard or notebook, with a template of pertinent competition facts written on the front to refer to during task setting. Such facts include: heights of launches used, scoring parameters, important phone numbers, names and radio frequencies of safety and task committee members, plus reminders on the policy on turn direction, and maximum wind speed rule.

With the Task Committee (the Steward will also be present), consider the weather forecast for the day and decide on aspects such as - a suitable task length (distance/time), type of task (generally making the task more difficult as it proceeds), whether the goal will be virtual cylinder or a physical line (refer Section 7) and whether the predicted result will satisfy the scoring parameter requirements chosen.

Hang gliding: Consider the type and number of start gates and intervals, and how much time will be needed between launch window opening time and the first start gate time in relation to the number of pilots and launches, and how easy start conditions are expected to be. Based on past experience, gate intervals of 20 minutes are often used, and with hill launches there should usually be a time of 1 hour to 1hr 15 minutes or even 1hr 30 minutes between when the launch window opens and the first start gate. The slower launch is expected to be, the longer the time.

Paragliding: Consider the type of task (race to goal/elapsed time) and the (window open) time required for all pilots to have a fair opportunity to launch, climb and reach the start. If conditions on launch are not ideal or expected to deteriorate, consider the realistic time it will take for all pilots to launch, and choose a task type that avoids early launching pilots to have to wait in the air for too long time prior to the start time. If the launch site is small, it can be useful to set the start cylinder some distance away to avoid too many pilots in close proximity over launch. Aim to set the start in a location where it is possible for pilots to wait at altitude.

Turn direction for the day can alternate from task to task, or be on odd/even dates. However, on some launches it will always be better to turn one way than the other – so safety takes priority. The maximum window extension time will be dependent on conditions. Re-launch opportunities will depend on the site and transport/logistics.

The Safety Committee can be present during the task setting discussions, to ask questions or offer advice on safety matters. In any case, the Safety Director and Safety Committee should be given the opportunity to consider all aspects of safety of the task to be set before it is presented. They may have comments on issues such as terrain flown over given thermal height and winds for the

day, landing options at turn points and where they are in relation to rotor winds, direction of any developing bad weather in relation to course line, goal field suitability, and any obstacles which are close to goal (eg – powerlines, fences, Texan oil rigs, etc).

The Meet Director is ultimately responsible for choosing the task, while the Task and Safety committees have advisory functions.

A back up task may need to be planned in uncertain weather conditions, so that a late decision can be made, choosing the most appropriate task.

Provisional details of a task under discussion can be written onto the Meet Director's task template. Once all details have been verified and confirmed, this can be written onto the task board. It is vital to have a task board which shows all the task information clearly. The MD's task template should be identical to the actual task board. After the briefing, a photograph of the task board is an easy way to record the details that were presented to pilots in case of questions or complaints later.

If starting times cannot be set immediately due to (e.g) stable conditions, all information can be put onto the task board for an initial 'provisional task' briefing. Times can be filled in later at a second or final briefing.

Refer to Section 7 of the Sporting Code for further items related to task setting.

Ensure all details of the task finally set are communicated to the scorer, if he is not present on launch.

4.12 Task Briefing

Task briefings need to be held in a location as central as possible to the area where pilots are setting up. On a slope it is best, with the pilots upslope looking down at the MD and the task board.

On days when dust devils create problems a separate briefing may be needed at each launch lane.

Announce briefings with an air horn or clearly audible megaphone. Give pilots a few minutes to reach the briefing place. Allow pilots a few more minutes to put the task into their instruments before starting the briefing, or you will not have their attention.

Work clearly through what is written on the task board. You or a member of the Task Committee should point out any part of the task which may require extra care, including areas of CTR. Ask for any questions.

If there is a chance of the day overdeveloping, remind pilots of the stop task procedure (refer to Section 7). Remind pilots of the latest time by which they must report back to HQ.

Remind pilots to pick up/turn on live tracking devices if they are being used.

Allow a reasonable amount of time (eg – 20 minutes) between the end of task briefing and when the launch window opens.

Never attempt to change the task once competition pilots have started launching. Any task alteration requires a re-convened briefing with all pilots in attendance.

4.13 During the Task

With the Safety Director, monitor the air in front of launch for overcrowding. In liaison with the Launch Marshal, close the launch temporarily if necessary.

Monitor weather conditions on the course line, if necessary drive around the course with the Safety Director, who should also be receiving radio information from the safety committee (if in radio range).

A task which needs to be stopped due to dangerous weather conditions on course should be stopped before conditions on the ground become dangerous to land. Gather information from the Safety Director who should be in contact with members of the Safety Committee, and Air Marshals on the course.

Remember that the 'group' effect of pilots flying in a gaggle can override pilots' own sense of self-preservation. The MD needs to take this into account, while considering the safety of all pilots along the entire course line. The position of the MD can be difficult if he is under pressure from some competitors to stop, or not stop, the task, as well as wanting to see the competition validated, with as many scoring tasks as possible.

If in doubt, remember that no task, however good, is worth endangering the safety of pilots. The Meet Director or Safety Director are the only persons authorised to stop a task in progress.

The time of stopping the task should be noted for scoring purposes (see S7).

4.14 After the Task

Confirm with the Safety Director at the final report back time that all pilots are accounted for.

Check with the scorer to see that the scoring is running smoothly and that pilots fill in the task safety information on the back of the landing forms (run reports).

4.15 Dealing with Complaints and Protests

An official complaint by a pilot should preferably be made in writing to the Meet Director and preferably with the team leader as soon as possible after the problem arises. The Meet Director should always clarify with a pilot seemingly making a verbal complaint, whether it is an official complaint. The Meet Director will decide if the complaint is reasonable – and if so, will rectify the problem. He may need to consult first with another member of the organising team (ie scorer, air or goal marshal, etc). If the complaint is rejected, then the pilot will need to decide whether or not to take the complaint to the protest level. Further information on making a protest is in Section 7 and in the Local Regulations. The MD should make a note of his responses to a complaint for discussion with the Jury later, if necessary.

4.16 Documentation

Equipment and document lists, meeting /briefing note templates and task board templates will be included in a later edition of these Guidelines.