Minutes of the

CIVA Safety Working Group (SWG) meeting

Held on
Thursday 14th of September 2023
at the
Pavullo nel Frigniano Airport in Italy

A word from the SWG Chairman: This meeting was held during EAC 2023 in Pavullo on the initiative of the President of the International Jury and the fact that 5 members of the SWG (including SWG Advisor Patrick Paris) were present. The objective was to discuss safety issues during the first 3 days of the championship and to make recommendations. It is important to say that the observations written in this report are not personal and they are solely used for learning and to reduce the risk of incidents and accidents during future championships.

Participants
Hanspeter Rohner (SWG Chairman)
Pekka Havbrandt at the minutes (SWG member and member of the International Jury)
Steve Todd (member of the International Jury)
Pierre Varloteaux (SWG member and President of the International Jury)
Nick Buckenham (Chief Judge)
Maurizio Costa (Contest Director)
Patrick Paris (SWG Advisor)
Victor Lalloué (SWG member)

§1 Safety belts became loose
Cyrial Talon accidentally opened the top lock of his safety belt in a two-handed vertical snap roll. The sleeve of his flight suit caught on the lock. He noticed the belts hitting the canopy in

the following horizontal roll. The Jury decided to let him re-fly. This is maybe not completely according to the rules since nothing was broken. Belts has however been accidentally opened before and will be accidentally opened in the future. The Jury do not want the next pilot to continue flying with partly opened belts.
A penalty rather than losing the whole or part of a flight may be a better solution for the future.

§2 Landing against the normal traffic without a radio call.
After disconnecting the belts Cyrial Talon landed in the "wrong direction" with no radio call. After Cyrial Talon's take-off the runway direction QFU was changed from 02 to 20.
This was potentially a risk for collision with the next pilot taking off after seeing Talon abort the flight.
We discussed that when the direction of the runway changes, the next competitor does not take off until the previous competitor has landed and vacated the runway.

§3 No radio communication between starter and Chief Judge
Due to the terrain conditions, there was no radio communication between the starter and the Chief Judge. To overcome this, dedicated telephones were given to the starter and to the Chief Judge. At the beginning the next pilot started only after the previous pilot had landed. This was however too slow and the Contest director gave radio clearance to start after the previous pilot had completed the sequence.
For safety and operational reasons, every effort should be made to establish radio communication between the starter and the Chief Judge.

§4 Emergency landing due to engine failure
During training there was an engine failure and the pilot landed safely. Patric Paris suggested that emergency landings should be practiced during the training period.

§5 Density altitude
The elevation of the airfield is 2244 ft and the box floor was raised from 100 m to 200 m due to the terrain. This in connection with temperatures from 22 to 30 centigrade would mean a density altitude around 4000 ft. The jury decided after a day to allow a non-penalized break.

§6 Procedures
The procedures for start, landing etc. may need to be explained in more detail during the morning briefings.

§7 Safety proposals

The rule regarding permitted brakes applicable to Intermediate should be extended to apply to all classes.

The rule regarding technical defects should be changed to include a penalty instead of refusing the pilot a new flight if the defect is regarded to be the pilot's responsibility.

All Chief Judges and Presidents of the International Jury's should be allowed to make urgent proposals in order to gather the lessons learned during the competitions.

§8 Forum for information exchange

A forum where safety related issues could be reported and discussed should be created.
Nick Buckenham said that he could maybe create something.

Notes made after the meeting by the secretary.

The communication between pilot and Chief Judge was blocked by music transmission to the pilot during Program 5. This is against the rules and created 3 situations where the CJ was unable to tell the pilot to break and land.

Program 5 was performed with clouds in the box.

One pilot disqualified for dangerous flying after the flight, by the contest director after recommendation from the international jury.

Pekka Havbrandt
Temporary secretary

Appendix 1:

Patrick Paris, Advisor to the Safety Working Group, coach and national trainer, made following pertinent observations in an email to the meeting participants, shortly after the end of the championship:

Patrick writes:

My personal view in a tricky situation is simple: on an emotional/rational side: I always ask myself the question: would I let one of my sons fly with this pilot ?

On a legal side: would the DGAC, FAA or CAA appreciate/evaluate the situation as I do ?

As a matter of fact, three situations have put my red light ON:

One during the Aresti competition, while a pilot landed downwind even if two calls from CD asking him to turn right and go around, I know the story about harness and the change of QFU, but it did not look that the situation required an absolute priority to land: emotionally, rationally and legally: red light, responsibility partial on the pilot, partial on « the system »

The second one was the dangerous flying during freestyle, (whom at the beginning of the results publication was not DQ……for most of us it looked weird), while I believed someone should have stopped him at the very first attempt to fly so low and especially not fully under control, even if I do know that while under stress we can be freeze and even watching the situation and evaluating the danger we remain stuck and we can be unable to say something especially when the decision process belongs to different people CD CJ PIJ: emotionally, rationally and legally : red light, responsibility partial on the pilot, partial on « the system »

The third one was when some pilots flew in the clouds or obviously behind the clouds during the freestyle (Programme 5). Even if I know it is the pilot's responsibility to stop his flight in such a situation, I do believe « the system » let it happen and actually put the responsibility on the pilot's shoulders.

One of those pilots, while I asked him why he did not stop he replied: I did not want to be the one who stops the contest and make Programme 5 not valid: emotionally, rationally and legally: red light, responsibility partial on the pilot, partial on « the system »

While some could say it's easy to make comments and critics after the action, I just want to say that those 3 situations were for me a big wake up call to push safety forward and quickly create a safer ambiance/culture.

I do understand that in general people want to be kind especially while we have so few pilots, we don't want to disqualify pilots, and people want to be kind with the organizers and don't want to deprive them of the final freestyle for several reasons, however we reached a dangerous border.

I am convinced that those two previous points can have an insidious impact on decisions either on pilots or on the « system », however the DDAC, FAA, CAA would have probably said something rough after those events.

Luckily everybody got back home safely and it looks that no aviation authorities were on site.

While talking about safety we can say things kindly but at some point, we cannot be kind, limits have to be defined, to be clearly announced, to be respected by the pilots and to be enforced by the « system »

Appendix 2:

Comments and recommendations from Patrick Paris with regards to paragraph **§5 Density altitude**

Regarding density altitude, the permitted break with stopwatch is a first point.
However, in order not to put pressure on the pilots (and particularly those who make an involuntary break), the flight time allocated should at least be lengthened according to the density altitude, i.e., here (in Pavullo) it takes 30/35 seconds longer than sea level to climb to 1000 meters, and on top of that everyone climbs to 1100 or 1200 meters. So that's another 10/15 seconds and after the safety and the warm-up you lose another 15/20 seconds to get back into the box and the parameters.
So, my conclusion is to increase the maximum flight time by 1 minute, i.e., 13 minutes instead of 12 (to be calculated according to density altitude).
In addition, we need to look at an outside temperature limit for competition flights, like 36 or 37, to limit the risk of G-lock or grey/black out, because the hotter it is, the more fluid the blood becomes and the more it goes down into the legs, increasing the risk of Glock and grey/black out.