

Report of the FAI Strategy Task Force

05 July 2010

To: FAI Executive Board

From: FAI Strategy Task Force (Otto Lagarhus, Chairman)

The work of the FAI Strategy Task Force has been hindered due to an unexpected medical condition, surgery and subsequent treatment period of the Chairman, lasting until early July. Furthermore, the refusal of approval for more than the initial meeting, combined with the cancellation of the scheduled Meeting of Active Presidents has also contributed to a less than ideal setting for effective person-to-person discussion and exchange of views.

This report is therefore not as complete as intended. However, we believe that the work performed and the subsequent suggested strategies and actions paints a good picture of what the FAI Strategy Task Force considers as important to meet the “new challenges” of FAI – *namely identifying a needed modification of the scope and direction of the FAI*. This is especially evident in our views reflected in “adjusting the main purpose of the FAI”, and in our suggestion for new “overall FAI goals”. We also refer to the “conclusion” on page 9 of this report.

The terms selected by the Task Force may well be modified according to other schools of thought, such as adopting the terms “mission”, “vision” etc. However, our main objective is not to create or specify terms, but to describe how we think FAI should respond to the challenges facing it, and to do so in the most effective way.

Please note that this report also contains views pertaining to organization and resources that has not yet been the subject of final discussions and recommendations. However, the views are considered relevant and of interest to the 2010 FAI General Conference.

FAI goals & strategies

Preface

The FAI Strategy Task Force (STF) purpose, as approved by the 2009 FAI General Conference, is to identify the most important “new challenges” to the FAI and air sports, and based on these, develop strategies in order for the FAI to effectively prioritize its limited resources to the areas that will be critical for air sport's future development, and to adjust the organization accordingly.

Work methodology

The FAI Strategy Task Force works by meetings and e-mail correspondence. We have studied the various FAI organizational documents, including the Statutes, By-Laws, existing FAI Plans (including visions and goals etc.), in addition to having had meetings/talks with the FAI secretariat.

Adjusting the main purpose of FAI

Although the present FAI goals and strategies cover a wide area, the STF has identified no current set list of priorities. However, the focus on competitions, records and keeping historical archives is evident, as described in the FAI Sporting Code – General Section, as follows:

The FAI is a world organization that is concerned mainly with air sport competitions, records, including space activities, and other certified performances.

This description of the FAI purpose (“mission”) is considered by the STF to be too limited, given that, in our view, the FAI is a federation of NACs, and NACs represent the interest of their air sport persons. In each country, only a small percentage of air sport persons participate in competitions and record setting. Therefore, it seems that the FAI should focus more on the general interest of sport aviation internationally.

Areas of activities considered the main purpose for FAI

The following five areas of activities are considered as the main purpose for having and supporting an organization such as FAI. This list also indicates the relative priorities for these activities, and should therefore be reflected in the resource utilization and the structure of the organization:

1. *Supporting and guiding NACs and regional (e.g. EAS) organizations, especially through facilitation of the sharing of information and expertise*
2. *Representing air sports at international organizations, mainly ICAO*
3. *Arranging international competitions and administering records/championships*
4. *Establishing and carrying out the FAI award procedures*
5. *Conserving and protecting the air sports history*

Main areas of “new challenges”

The STF has identified the following seven “new challenges”, which we also consider as having the highest priority in the work of the FAI:

1. Further airspace restrictions
2. New and stricter regulations (more limiting; costlier)
3. Reduced availability of airports and air sports facilities
4. New and stricter environmental regulations; increased costs of emissions
5. The need to improve safety through avoidance of accidents/incidents
6. Difficulties in recruiting to air sports activities; how to attract young people to air sports; how to better promote air sports
7. Impact and opportunity of new technology

The STF has also identified other challenges and opportunities, which are considered of lower priority than the above, although still of high importance:

- Issues of flying in various countries and across borders
- Individual’s involvement with FAI (improve)
- Attracting women to air sports and FAI work
- Role/position of FAI in the international community
- Cost impact of FAI and air sports generally

Suggested overall FAI goal in relation to “new challenges”

The STF has formulated the following FAI goal in relation to the “new challenges”, which may also be relevant as an overall FAI goal. We see no conflict between the NACs and ASCs in the formulation of this goal. This can also be considered the “FAI mission”, if the use of such a term among others is desired by the FAI.

FAI shall strive to facilitate the development and promotion of air sports world wide, in order to achieve increased participation and improved public acceptance and awareness of air sports

Suggested FAI activities to meet the “new challenges”

Based on the priority challenges listed above, and the overall FAI goal to meet these challenges, there is a need for FAI to focus on the below listed activities. In order for this to be effective, the resource allocation and organization should reflect this ambition (or “vision” if this term is desired):

- *Improved availability of airspace (absence/removal of restrictions)*
- *Practical and realistic regulations (safety improvement combined with reduced restrictions; improved and simpler oversight systems)*
- *Improved availability/accessibility of/to airports; increased availability of air sports facilities*

- *Improved availability of environmental friendly engines & fuels at acceptable prices*
- *Higher level of environmental focus and adaption of sound environmental practices*
- *More attention to safety; improved safety record in all areas*
- *More effective promotion and recruitment activities, with focus on increasing the number of young people and women*
- *Development and increased use of new technology*

Suggested goals and strategies for the seven main areas posing new and increased challenges

The STF has developed suggestions for goals and strategies for the seven main areas posing new and increased challenges, and even considered the relative priority between these areas. The seven areas are listed below, in order of priority:

- Airspace
- Environment
- Safety
- Regulations
- Air sports facilities
- Promotion and recruitment
- New technology

Below are the suggested detailed goals and strategies for these areas.

1. Airspace

Goal

The FAI shall support the NAC and regional organizations in securing adequate access to the airspace so that air sports can be conducted under the greatest possible freedom and in balanced interaction with other aviation activities.

Strategies

The FAI shall strive to facilitate access to airspace for air sports by:

- Strongly advocating the interests of air sports at the international level (mainly ICAO)
- Working to ensure continued access to currently available airspace
- Working to improve access to airspace unnecessarily blocked by other civil and military airspace activities
- Working for greater flexibility in the use of airspace, thereby facilitating improved airspace access for air sports activities

- Working for good predictability in the availability of air space for air sport activities

2. Environment

Goal

The FAI shall foster a public perception of air sports as environmentally considerate, and as a positive contributor to society.

Strategies

The FAI shall strive to improve its environmental position by:

- Representing the interests of air sports in environmental issues at the international level
- Supporting and guiding the NACs and ASCs in identifying and addressing air sports environmental issues
- Researching and documenting the impact of air sports activities on the environment
- Communicate the impact of air sports on the environment to the affected parties, and the public in general
- Planning and conducting FAI-sanctioned air sports activities with the least possible negative impact on the environment
- Raise the environmental awareness of the air sports community

3. Safety

Goal

The FAI shall strive to reduce the number and seriousness of accidents and incidents in all air sports activities.

Strategies

The FAI shall actively and systematically work to minimize the risk of participating in air sports by:

- Prioritizing and promoting safety in every aspect of FAI work
- Supporting and facilitating the development and implementation of effective incident and accident reporting systems
- Actively communicating developments in air sports safety and the FAI work to promote safety
- Facilitating the sharing of safety information between the various air sports activities and the NACs

4. Regulations

Goal

The FAI shall promote regulations that facilitate air sports activities, and do not pose unnecessary restrictions or deterrent to the growth of air sports

Strategies

The FAI shall strive to prevent the over-regulation of air sports activities by:

- Working to influence international regulations for the benefit of air sports activities and development.
- Supporting NACs and regional air sports organizations in influencing their regulatory bodies for the benefit of air sports activities and development
- Working to improve the regulation of air sports activities in a manner that improves safety, flexibility, service and economy
- Working to prevent and eliminate unnecessary regulatory restrictions on air sports activities

5. Air sports facilities (airports and air sports sites)

Goal

The FAI shall support NACs in their work to make air sports facilities widely available for air sports activities.

Strategies

The FAI shall strive to assist NACs in order to:

- Improve the availability and the predictability of the availability of present air sports facilities
- Ensure that replacement sites are offered if closure/restrictions are imposed on present air sports facilities
- Ensure better air sports access to public places
- Actively promote development of new air sports facilities
- Identify appropriate guidance material for developing/constructing new air sports facilities

6. Promotion and Recruitment

Goal

Working with the NACs and regional organizations, the FAI shall promote air sports activities world wide, with special focus on attracting increased participation, especially among young people and women.

Strategies:

The FAI shall strive to:

- Develop promotional and educational material for use by all NACs and ASCs, and ensure wide dissemination
- Actively use state-of-the-art web methodology to promote air sports (Internet, Facebook, Twitter etc.)
- Develop and arrange promotional activities specifically aimed at attracting young people and women to participate in air sports activities
- Establish activities and procedures to encourage the retention of participants in air sports activities
- Publically promote champions of air sports activities
- Arrange air shows and games
- Develop “public friendly” events
- Publically promote the high safety of air sports
- Establish good relations with media
- Arrange regular FAI activities with a focus and attention on promotion and recruitment
- Actively work to remove barriers to increased air sports participation
- Encourage air sports participant to take part in FAI and NAC organizational activities

7. New Technology

Goal

The FAI shall support research in the use of new technology for the advantage of all air sports

Strategies

The FAI shall strive to facilitate:

- Development of technology making air sports activities safer, more effective, less costly and/or with a lower environmental impact
- Development of improved communications technologies
- Use of technology to decrease FAI costs
- Use of technology in competitions and record-setting
- Use of technology to enhance public attractiveness of FAI events

FAI resource allocation

To successfully implement any new or changed strategy requires a change in resource allocation and priorities. In our view, the present FAI organization is presently very much focused on what is perceived as the main tasks: Competitions, records and awards.

The Strategy Task Force is of the opinion that a realignment and reallocation of resources will be necessary to be able to implement strategies for the “new challenges” as outlined in this document.

As a consequence, it is our opinion that additional resources must be allocated to the following areas:

- Improved communication with NACs
- Improved service to NACs
- Improved representation at ICAO
- Improved promotion and recruitment activities/support

Such a change in resource allocation will necessitate either a reduced allocation in other areas, or an increase in membership fees and/or other income.

Internal FAI organizational matters – comments/questions

Although maybe considered slightly outside the STF mandate, the discussions in the group raised several important questions and issues regarding the present FAI organization, which may be of value to the Executive Board, the FAI Secretariat and the 2010 FAI General Conference. We have included these as open questions to be addressed by the Executive Board, as and when appropriate:

The role of Air Sport Commissions (10) versus Technical Commissions (5)

- Is there a need for a different organization of the commissions, perhaps giving a different structure, working methodology and name to the Technical Commissions, reflecting their role as “expert advisors”?

There seem to be an overlap of CASI and Commission Presidents Group (Permanent WG)

Is there a formal role for NAC presidents as a Group; ref. meetings arranged in Lausanne in 2009 and planned (and subsequently cancelled) for 2010?

What can be done to improve the FAI representation and standing at ICAO to the level of other observer organizations, such as IFALPA and IATA?

How is feedback from the Annual Questionnaire utilized; what activities could be undertaken to increase the number of NACs responding? (Important management tool)

Is there a definite need for a full annual General Conference?

- Keep as is
- Full GF every other year; other limited meeting alternate years.
- GF every other year; electronic approval/voting alternate years

Is the current format of the General Conference the most appropriate; does it make the best use of having all of that expertise together?

Conclusion

The FAI Strategy Task Force believes that changes are needed in the FAI in order to meet the challenges facing air sports in general and the NACs in particular, and to retain FAI as an organization seen as valuable by the NACs.

As a consequence, this report suggests a revision of the “main purpose”, a new “overall FAI goal”, a list of activities to meet the “new challenges”, in addition to the suggested strategies in the 7 areas covered. And – most importantly – the STF gives recommendations for priorities, which is a fundamental requirement for effective strategy implementation. Such priorities must then be reflected in the organization, and in its allocation of resources.

We want to point out that this is not an attack on the present structure of the FAI, and in particular its air sports commissions, but rather an expression of an honest opinion that unless the FAI examines its position and adjusts its direction, it may encounter serious difficulties in the near future. This report does not advocate abandoning the valuable work of the FAI in the areas of competition or record setting.

We believe, however, that there is an urgent need to establish a clear focus on some very important and real challenges to air sports and address these forcefully, while maintaining the heritage and competition activities.

On behalf of the FAI Strategy Task Force:

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