



PRESIDENT'S MUSINGS

JANUARY 2020

Dear friends, as we move into 2020 may I first express my best wishes to you all for the new year.

The General Conference is behind us now. The little time between the end of the GC and the holiday break was used as efficiently as possible to start the re-shaping of the FAI to meet the clear expectations expressed by the GC.

There have been a number of changes in the office and with the Executive Board. Susanne Schödel has, by mutual agreement, left the office and Markus Haggenev has been appointed Acting Secretary General, as advised on the 9th of December. Annick Hauser has also left the office and Greg Pyzalka, who is a contractor to FAI, has reduced his availability for event support. Jean-Claude Weber has been elected by Conference to the position of Chair of the Statutes Working Group and Mary Anne Stevens has accepted the role of Finance Director.

Two informal meetings were held during the week of the GC – one with the Commission Presidents and one with 27 representatives of NACs. The objective of both meetings was to explore the questions of whether there is a need for an international federation (called FAI), and the core business of FAI.

The outcome from the meetings aligned with the discussion that occurred during the GC:

- ☺ FAI, as an organisation, should concentrate on:
 - ✓ support for air sports with airspace, safety, antidoping
 - ✓ representing air sports to other international federations and politically
 - ✓ recognising sporting achievements (records and awards)
 - ✓ providing tools for supporting air sport activities
 - ✓ facilitating communication between stakeholders
- ☺ There is value in national bodies being linked to an International Federation (recognition and funding)
- ☹ FAI should not attempt to negotiate at the national level with governments and regulators

As a result, the EB, immediately following the GC, set the following priorities:

1. To make the FAI leaner and more effective within the urgently necessary cost cutting, while at the same time not compromising the achievement of the FAI goals as a sporting organisation.
2. To set the focus within the FAI secretariat on the main issues of Competitions, Records and Awards and the necessary management, communication and promotion of airsports vis-à-vis the NACs, Air Sport Commissions and international affiliates of the FAI.
3. To start considering operationally how to create value for the FAI to generate additional income for FAI and to limit financial risk to the core of FAI operations.

Markus Haggenev is focused on achieving the first two priorities as rapidly as possible. Wider consideration of the scope and structure of the FAI is now underway with volunteers engaged on the *FAI 2020* project.

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Implications

Assisting Members. You will note that the focus is clearly on the air sports. This is a clear direction from the GC and the members. With the downsizing of the office there is a necessary re-focusing of work priorities and this means that other work, especially around assisting members to resolve internal issues, will only be able to be undertaken when time permits and when costs are covered.

Budget. With the budget approved by the GC there is no capability for the board to undertake external activities such as boards-of-inquiry or attendance at events unless these are funded by the organisations requesting these activities.

Attendance by FAI staff and/or board members at Commission Plenaries will, likewise, be minimised to reduce costs.

Board Meetings. These will continue to be conducted via zoom. However, with the need to spend time considering the function and shape of the organisation combined with the need to create a sustainable budget, the board will meet periodically face-to-face. The next such meeting is planned for three days at the end of January.

Communications. As discussed during the GC, it is my intention to continue to improve the frequency and content of communications from the secretariat, the EB and myself to all of you. My wish is that you would do the same. Since past experience has been that these communications have generated few responses, or even acknowledgements, I implore you to contribute your thoughts and expertise to the renewal of FAI. All feedback is appreciated, even a single line to say 'we agree, stay the course' will let me know that you support the approach being taken.

In closing let me ask that we approach 2020 as a year of opportunity for all parts of FAI to work together for the good of the organisation.

Best regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bob Henderson', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Bob Henderson
President, FAI