

Auxiliary-powered Sailplane Association

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

This has been a very busy two months since the last newsletter. The International Gliding Commission met in Brussels on March 14 and 15, 1997 and the FAA published the Final Rule on Part 61 in April. Both of these events will affect auxiliary-powered sailplane flying. First, the IGC meeting. The following information is courtesy of the SSA Homepage: <http://acro.harvard.edu/SSA/>

Twenty-eight nations were represented at the IGC meeting in Brussels and representatives from the Soaring Society of America attended the meeting. Decisions were made on record flying, hand held GPS receivers, the 18 meter class and 2-seat gliders flying in FAI class competitions with regard to pilot crew and more. (See homepage.)

Over the objections of the U.S. Delegation the council ruled that after October 1997 World Motorglider Records and two-place records will be eliminated. The use of hand-held GPS receivers connected to approved flight recorders for badges up to and including the diamond badge was approved. The GNSS FR Approval Committee (GFAC) must approve each flight recorder and handheld combination prior to use.

The IGC voted to add an 18 meter integrated class as a FAI class in the Sporting Code. The class will include pure or motorgliders with a wing span of 18 meters or less. As per IGC rules, there will be no world competition for a minimum of four years. The addition of the 18 meter class will not cause the elimination of any other class.

For FAI competitions in a 2-seat glider, the second person (co-pilot) must possess a FAI sporting license. Any pilot wishing to fly with a co-pilot(s) must submit to the organizers prior to the start of the competition a list naming the co-pilot(s) in sequence. Should the pilot elect to fly, for any reason, without a co-pilot on any day, he must fly without a co-pilot or ballast in the second seat for the remainder of the competition. Contact the SSA at 505-392-8154 for complete information on the IGC meeting.

Over one year ago the ASA worked very diligently with the SSA to develop a reply to the then existing Notice to

Proposed Rule Making for the re-write of Federal Air Regulation, Part 61, Pilot Certification. The FAA proposed to establish a class for powered gliders and a class for nonpowered gliders within the glider category for the private pilot, commercial pilot and flight instructor certificate. ASA leadership polled the membership asking whether gliders should remain as one class with some revisions or if two classes were more desirable. The ASA membership overwhelmingly responded that gliders should remain as one class with certain changes to clarify checkout procedures. The ASA and the SSA rewrote Part 61 which pertained to gliders and this was presented to the FAA in Washington. This cooperative effort was very successful and the following is a direct quote from the FAA.

FAA Response: After reviewing the comments, the FAA has decided not to create separate class ratings for nonpowered and powered gliders. Instead the FAA has decided to accept the alternative suggested by industry that would establish training and endorsement requirements for specific glider operations in lieu of placing limitations on pilot certificates as is currently required. This change will reduce the regulatory burden on the public, as well as the administrative burden for the FAA, while providing a level of safety equivalent to the current regulations. The FAA has added paragraph (k) to 61.31, which provides training and endorsement requirements for operating gliders.

I would like to thank the ASA membership, many of which provided lengthy papers to me on this subject. I would especially like to thank Larry Sanderson, Jim Short and Gene Hammond, who helped us develop our recommendations and then successfully presented them to the FAA. This is an outstanding example of how membership grass roots support can provide leadership with tools and ideas that help a government agency write rules that enhance safety as well as reduce regulatory burden. The cooperative effort by the ASA and SSA and the unified response presented to the FAA was clearly very effective. Congratulations.

