

ESTC 10th June 2017. Minutes

Present at the meeting:

Rodolfo (Italy), László (Hungary), Ewald (Austria), Beni and Martin (Switzerland), Marion (France), Arne (Norway), Miroslav (Czech Republic), Dave (UK).

Apologies from Andre (Netherland), Kansil (Sweden), Trond (Norway), Jens (Denmark), Karl (Germany).

The meeting began with an introduction from Laszlo. It was then agreed that non-attendees could nominate a delegate to represent their interests.

EHPU Anti-midair-collision campaign, status:

The first item on the agenda was the DHV anti-collision diagrams. The diagrams had been presented as a possible example for all federations to use, giving uniformity across the federations. Dave pointed out that some of the diagrams were unclear and that in their current form the BHPA could not use them. The issue of who has right of way when higher or lower was discussed with some delegates stating that the lower pilot in a thermal should have right of way. There was strong disagreement from other delegates. Beni and Dave pointed out that this issue had been discussed and agreed at a previous meeting and that we agreed that it was the duty of ALL pilots in a thermal to avoid each other. This was agreed.

The individual diagrams were considered and it was agreed that there was enough potential confusion to merit further work.

Action: Dave to Liaise with Karl to discuss and clarify diagrams.

European database, current status, contributions, findings:

The committee discussed issues with data collection. It was pointed out that the BHPA and FFVL had reporting rates of approximately 2% whereas others such as the FIVL, DHV and SHV were in the region of 0.2-0.3%. The differences in reporting rates made comparative data analysis almost impossible at the moment. Rodolfo pointed out that there was a culture of non-reporting in Italy among pilots, professionals and schools fear of recrimination from the authorities. Laszlo said that the Hungarians had been trying to get the Euro-database sorted out but had continually not received responses from Karl and the Evival team. Marion said the FFVL had recently improved the quality and quantity of the French data on the Euro system. It was agreed that this was the case but the FFVL as still using their own data collection system then manually inputting the data onto the Euro database. It was pointed out that this was a waste of time and Marion agreed. However, Marion's knowledge of computers and IT is such that he felt unable to resolve the issue. Marion requested assistance in order to help with a resolution.

Dave reported that recent bugs that had meant a lot of reports contained missing data fields had now been fixed. Dave said the database was now working well (notwithstanding the differing report rates) and showed an example of a recent BHPA incident analysis report.

Action: Dave to Liaise with Karl to discuss how to get the FFVL to use the Euro database.

WG6 financing recap and follow-up to 2017 EHPU decision:

Arne gave a presentation on the current situation involving WG6 funding. Arne outlined

the detail of the new contract. There were no objections from ESTC.

Regarding European Norms, Marion explained that the French were currently having problems with harness back protectors. The official test house (CRIT?) in France have decided that harness back protectors are PPI and therefore subject to certain standards and regulation. The FFVL are in the process of fighting this.

There was a proposal from Rodolfo to standardise the EN966 helmet standard with other suitable standards. In particular snow sport and possibly mountain bike helmets. The aim would be to utilise the same standard so that manufacturers would not have to pay for two lots of testing. This would mean more choice and possibly cheaper helmets for pilots.

There then followed a discussion about the EN standard for paraglider testing and in particular EN-B class gliders. Marion said he was happy with the current situation and gave a brief explanation. There was then some discussion about the philosophy of testing. Beni suggested that the A, B, C, D classification could be removed in favour of a system where the Manufacturer states who the particular glider is designed for. At the actual situation, the system has failed and mainly serves for the manufacturer as liability release. Eliminating the A,B,C,D's would at least avoid this eyewash and give back some responsibility to the manufacturer. The glider would still be subject to the test flights as usual and the results (pitch angle, rate of turn, etc) published. It was agreed that, while this was an interesting idea, it was not currently practical to follow up.

Rodolfo suggested that one of the main problems was being able to accurately measure pitch angles during certification testing. Things like the location of the ground-based camera could have a major impact on the ability to determine the appropriate angles. It was agreed that an effort should be made to look for alternative methods and/or technology in order to make the measuring process as accurate as possible. It was also agreed that for reasons of clarity the test flight videos should be made public. Beni insisted that the alternative measuring methods and publishing of test videos is all nice and idealistic. But it depends if this is done with the bad or the good testflights. Most of the testhouses depend financially on the manufacturers and will certainly publish the good videos and diagrams. If the result is limit, they will certainly find a way to produce a whole test that fits. Finally the manufacturer gets his "B" again. That's why eliminating the A,B,C,D's is at least less deceptive.

Action: Rodolfo to ask WG6 to consider adopting another suitable standard for air-sport helmets.

Action: Rodolfo to recommend that WG6 consider looking at alternative methods and/or technology to ensure the measuring of test flight angles are as accurate as possible.

Recommendation: The ESTC recommends, on the basis of transparency and consumer rights, that the EN test flight videos be made available to the public.

Update on Austrian guest flight rules:

Ewald gave an update on the situation for foreign pilots wishing to fly in Austria. Most of the EU federations now had permission to fly in Austria though some, such as Spain, did not. For those that did not have permission on the basis of having a comparable host system, they would be able to fly by contacting an Austrian flight school and getting a temporary licence on passing flight test.

Marion suggested that the rules for visiting pilots should be very clear (and possibly all use the same recognisable format) on the first page of each federation web site. At present some of the information was difficult to find. It was agreed that this information should be accessible with one click from the home page.

Action: Everyone to ensure the rules for visiting pilots should be easily accessible from the host home page.

German online examination system:

Karl could not to attend so this item was not discussed.

Airbag permeability issue:

Beni reported an issue with airbag harnesses. The SHV had discovered that some airbags had become porous resulting in limited ability to absorb an impact. This was found in harnesses that were not very old (3-5 years) and appeared to be in good condition with no kinking or folding. The SHV had produced a safety notice and were monitoring the problem.

Presentation of the flyland.ch service, how to find data about obstacles, airspaces and protected zones. Live demonstration:

Martin and Beni then gave a demonstration of the flyland.ch service. This site gives detailed maps including airspace, obstacles and has the useful function of allowing the data to be uploaded to flight instruments. AND IT IS FREE!!

Quick-lock failure yet to be investigated:

Rodolfo gave an example of where Charly Quick Out karabiners had failed due to a combination of factors. Apparently the red sleeve, when pushed into the 'safe' position, actually held the release pin in the 'release' position rather than the 'safe' position. The karabiners will be delivered to DHV by Ewald for analysis.

Any other business:

Arne presented a letter from Bojan Z asking about support for his recommendations concerning beginners. They were that beginners should display a red streamer, that beginners be restricted to EN –A gliders and that at times of high thermic activity, beginners be restricted to fly before 12 noon and 5pm.

The ESTC felt it was not able to support the recommendation regarding EN-A gliders on the grounds that that some EN-B gliders were also suitable. Nor could we support restricting the time the beginners could or couldn't fly. This was on the basis that instructors should/were already making this judgement and also because it was impossible to predict when it would start to be "too" thermic and when it would stop. There were too many variables for a simple 'time' restriction to be effective. It would also be impossible to monitor and police.

The ESTC did give full support for the recommendation regarding the displaying of a red ribbon/streamer for beginner pilots. Dave stated that this system had been in operation in the BHPA for over 30 years and there had been no issues. In the UK the pilots must display the red streamer until they have 10 hours after qualification.

Date and venue of next meeting:

The 2018 ESTC meeting will be held in Nice on the 9th of June.