

Respectful Flying score

V1.0

This document defines the system of a "respectful flying score" in hot air balloon competitions and FAI ballooning events. It presents a detailed description to be integrated in the Competition Operation Handbook, version 2024.

Why?

In 2015, a monitoring and penalty system was introduced to address near misses and collisions. The Balloon Safety Analyser (BSA) is a software designed to swiftly analyse numerous tracks, identifying near miss situations and collisions during competition flights and suggesting penalties for the safety officer or event directors to review and apply. The AXMER and Competition Operation Handbook provide explicit guidance for determining penalties in identified incidents. Over the years, the system has been refined and established a widely accepted penalty framework for such incidents in competitions.

However, the system currently lacks the capability to track penalties across multiple events, preventing the identification of pilots as "repeated offenders" in subsequent competitions.

Principle

When a pilot is penalized for an incident, he will usually receive a penalty upon a decision by the event director. The penalty is applied to his score. This is a well-defined and well-working scheme and does not need any change. The existing penalty types "task point penalty" and "competition points penalty" will also remain.

The event rules will clearly determine which penalties (by rule or upon director's decision) will be marked as "counted for respectful flying score". The attributed task or competition points will then automatically be flagged as such and later used to calculate the "Respectful Flying Score".

A pilot's "Respectful Flying Score" (RFS) will be 100% if he has received no penalties in the past 24 months. The score will decrease with each penalty and will be calculated according to the following formula:

$$RFS = 1 - \frac{\text{Total of all RFS-penalties of the past 24 months}}{1500} \text{ in \%}$$

RFS cannot be below 0%

Example: A pilot has the following RFS-flagged penalties applied to his scores in multiple events in the past 24 months¹:

Event A – task 3:	200 points under rule 10.1
Event A – task 12:	150 points under rule 10.2
Event B – task 2:	250 points under rule 10.2
Event C – task 5:	200 points under rule 10.2

¹ All CAT1 and CAT2 will be considered. National championships may also be considered upon request by the organiser prior to the event.

The total of all RFS-flagged penalties is 800 points.

The “Respectful Flying Score” for this pilot will be “ $1-800/1500 = 0.467 = 46.7\%$ ”.

The “Respectful Flying Score” will be calculated and tracked in WatchMeFly.

Results of all CAT1 and CAT2 will be considered for calculating the RFS. Any other championships may also be considered if requested by the organiser prior to the event and scored in WatchMeFly.

Any pilot with a score below 0% will be shown as 0%.

The “Respectful Flying Score” will give the pilot restrictions based on his status (color). If the “Respectful Flying Score” is:

from	50%	to 100%:	no limitation on participating in any event pilot flagged as GREEN
from	1%	to 50%:	participation in any event is still permitted pilot flagged as YELLOW
at		0%:	The participation in any CAT1 or CAT2 events is not permitted anymore. The pilot flagged as RED (at the moment of the General Briefing of the relevant event)

When deciding on a participation in an event, the “Respectful Flying Score” is calculated for the moment of the General Briefing of the relevant event.

Example: The above-mentioned pilot with a score of 46,7% will therefore be allowed to fly in an event D. Upon any additional pilot penalty bringing his RFS to 0%, the pilot will be grounded and will not be allowed to fly any further tasks in that event or any other event, until his score is above 0% again.

Penalties given before 1st April 2024 will not be considered.

Calculation and publication

WatchMeFly will keep track of every pilot’s score.

The pilot will see his own Respectful Flying Score with all relevant penalties listed in his personal dashboard on WatchMeFly.net.

The Respectful Flying Score status will not be shown to other users or public.

A RED or YELLOW warning will be shown to organisers when adding the pilot to the list. At any time, an organiser will be able to check the status of all pilots in the pilot list of an event. He will then be shown the pilots with YELLOW or RED status only.

At each publication of official scores of a task, WatchMeFly will calculate the RFS for each pilot given a new RFS-relevant penalty. If a pilot changes to RED status, a notification will be shown and the organiser/scorer will be invited to add a sentence to the penalty informing the pilot about his grounding for upcoming flights.

Implementation in software systems

Although WatchMeFly is the most common scoring software, other systems are still used and do not necessarily need modification. The 2 existing types of penalties will still be applied. Penalties given under a certain rule will then be tracked and counted in WatchMeFly toward the pilot's "Respectful Flying Score". WatchMeFly will show the "Respectful Flying Score" as indicated above.

Effect on non-FAI Ballooning events

Not all events are sanctioned by the FAI Ballooning commission as CAT1 or CAT2. Many national championships and other notable events usually base their rules on the AXMER. Any reference or application of the new restricting scheme in the AXMER will therefore likely find its way into these events too. Penalty points from those events will only count in the "Respectful Flying Score" if the event is a national championship and the organiser requests prior to the event to have the points considered if such penalties were to occur.