

— 2025 Autumn —

# CIA Newsletter



**WITH  
CONTRIBUTIONS  
FROM**

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Sanne HAARHUIS  
Debbie SPAETH  
Claude WEBER

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- Next CIA plenary in AlUla, Saudi Arabia
- Webinar for Jury and Officials
- Schedule of the e-meetings
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- Hall of Fame and Awards  
and more



## The President's column

It is a true honour and a great pleasure to serve as President of the FAI Ballooning Commission (CIA). Being part of this passionate and forward-looking community, and witnessing the dedication of so many people around the world who work tirelessly to develop and promote our sport, is deeply inspiring.

Over the past few years, the CIA's Public and Media Relations (PMR) Subcommittee has made remarkable progress in enhancing the visibility of our sport and its major events. Through regular updates on social media and in-depth articles on the FAI website, our community and the wider public are now able to follow ballooning more closely than ever before. The plenary's decision to invest in this initiative has clearly paid off – it has created real momentum and a wealth of engaging content that showcases the beauty, precision, and spirit of our sport. My sincere thanks go to everyone in the PMR Subcommittee for their dedication, creativity, and commitment to bringing ballooning to a broader audience.

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The success of Gordon Bennett TV has served as an inspiring model for this evolution. Today, it is hard to imagine a Coupe Aéronautique Gordon Bennett without the GBTV team. Their pre-event features, live coverage, interviews from the basket, and daily recap shows have become an integral part of the event experience. They not only capture the excitement of the competition but also highlight the teamwork, endurance, and human stories behind each flight.

As we look ahead, it is essential to continue building on this success. Expanding the coverage of our hot air ballooning events remains a priority, and the CIA will continue to give its full support to PMR. We also look forward to aligning our communication efforts even more closely with the broader FAI media strategy, ensuring that ballooning has its well-deserved place within the global air sports community.

Another encouraging development is the growing international interest in our sport. Chile has recently joined our community, marking an exciting new chapter for ballooning in South America. Saudi Arabia and India have both declared their intention to host future World Championships – Saudi Arabia demonstrating remarkable enthusiasm with already submitted bids, and India, a long-standing member of the CIA family, renewing its commitment to bringing a Worlds to its skies. Each of these countries holds tremendous potential, and we are eager to see balloons filling their skies in the years to come. The CIA's Events Development Service (EDS) and our wider community stand ready to provide support, guidance, and partnership in building these new opportunities.

At the same time, discussions on the World Ranking List and the CAT1/CAT2 event schemes have been initiated at the last plenary. Over the past two years, we have witnessed a remarkable rise in the number of organizers hosting CAT2 events – a clear sign of growing engagement worldwide. Today, around 100 events already use our WatchMeFly-platform for competition management and scoring. With the new concepts under development, we see significant potential to increase the number of CIA-sanctioned events even further, providing more opportunities for pilots and nations to participate in our sport at every level. The future looks bright, and I look forward to shaping it together with all of you – because it is our community that truly makes ballooning so strong.

Finally, I would like to extend a warm thank you to Saudi Arabia for hosting our next CIA Plenary Meeting in February 2026. This will be a wonderful occasion for all of us to experience the hospitality and enthusiasm of this new and dynamic member of our ballooning family. I warmly invite all delegates and friends of ballooning to join us in for what promises to be a memorable and inspiring meeting.

Together, through collaboration, innovation, and shared passion, we continue to elevate the sport of ballooning – both in the air and in the eyes of the world.

Claude WEBER  
President FAI Ballooning Commission (CIA)

*It is our community that truly makes ballooning so strong.*

# Bureau decisions 2025



Please find the 2025 bureau decisions in the attachment or on the CIA documents [website](#).

## CIA Plenary Meeting 2026

*February 4-7 2026 in AlUla, Saudi Arabia*

The CIA Bureau is pleased to announce that the CIA Plenary Meeting 2026 will be hosted in AlUla, Saudi Arabia, instead of Riyadh as initially planned. The decision to change the venue was taken by the Bureau on 21 October 2025, following a presentation of the revised bid by the Saudi Ballooning Federation.

Due to institutional and partnership considerations, the host had to relocate the event to AlUla, a destination of outstanding natural beauty and cultural significance, which is also proposed to host the FAI Women's World Hot Air Balloon Championship 2027 and the FAI World Hot Air Balloon Championship 2028. The host is thrilled to invite all delegates, subcommittee and working group members, as well as observers. Rooms are limited but expected to accommodate approximately the same number of participants as in most previous CIA Plenary meetings.

The host will generously cover accommodation, local transportation from arrival in AlUla, and social events (see below for more details). We thank the host as well as all partners and sponsors to make this plenary in AlUla possible.

الهيئة الملكية لمحافظة العلا  
ROYAL COMMISSION FOR ALULA



نادي الطيران السعودي  
Saudi Aviation Club



الاتحاد السعودي للمنطاد  
Saudi Ballooning Federation





## MEETING LOCATION

Cloud 7 Residence AlUla,  
AlUla 43552, Saudi Arabia

## GENERAL INFORMATION

Organiser: Saudi Ballooning Federation;

Strategic Partner: The Royal Commission For Alula;

Event President: Hussain Mohammed Makkawi Ashri, [h.makkawi@saudiballooning.sa](mailto:h.makkawi@saudiballooning.sa)

Deputy Event President: Abdulaziz Ghasan I. Al-Mannaa, [a.mannaa@saudiballooning.sa](mailto:a.mannaa@saudiballooning.sa)

## ACCOMODATION DETAILS

Each FAI member country is entitled to one complimentary room for its Delegate or Alternate Delegate. This offer, made possible through the generous support of the Saudi Arabian Hot Air Ballooning Federation, covers accommodation, food and activities as per official programme for one delegate per country; travel costs are borne by FAI members. Chairs of CIA Subcommittees and Working Groups, not already allocated a room as delegate or alternate above, are also entitled to one complimentary room.

Additional complementary rooms will be allocated (subject to availability) to all other participants (prioritized for SC & WG members, then other observers). FAI will confirm availability after the registration deadline, no later than 15 December.

Although the number of complimentary rooms is limited, we are confident that there will be enough rooms to accommodate the usual number of participants at the plenary.

Registrations for this offer must be received by 10 December.

## REGISTRATION

Registration open from 10 November to 10 December (inclusive) 2025.

Please register by filling the following online form:

<https://surveys.fai.org/index.php/661859>



## FLIGHT BOOKING

Airlines flying to AlUla International Airport (ULH):

- Saudia Airlines operates direct flights to ULH through Riyadh and Jeddah, Saudi Arabia;
- FlyNas operates direct flights to ULH through Riyadh and Jeddah, Saudi Arabia;
- FlyDubai operates direct flights to ULH through Dubai, United Arab Emirates;
- Qatar Airways operates direct flights to ULH through Doha, Qatar.

ULH is located approximately 25 km (about a 21-minutes drive) from Cloud 7 Residence AlUla. A Driver will greet you in the airport's arrivals terminal and you will be transported free of charge to the hotel by busses.

## VISA

Saudi Visa will cost around SAR 500

All information about your options can be found on the following website:

<https://www.saudia.com/en-SA/explore/visit-saudi-arabia/visas>

- **Option 1** – eVisa (immediate)  
Saudi Arabia tourist visa. Through the fast and easy-to-use online portal, international visitors from 66 eligible countries can apply for an eVisa. Eligible country list and application website: <https://visa.visitsaudi.com/Registration/Verify>.
- **Option 2** – Visa on Arrival (20-40 minutes processing time)  
For people eligible for option 1, plus any holder of US, Schengen, or United Kingdom visa (valid visa)
- **Option 3** – Consulate (3-4 weeks processing time)  
When your country is not in the list of 66 eligible countries contact us on [info@saudiballooning.sa](mailto:info@saudiballooning.sa) and use the following steps
  - a. Email subject (Saudi Visa – Plenary 2026 – Your Federation name)
  - b. A copy of your valid passport photo page (PDF or JPG)
  - c. A recent profile photo (200x200 JPG)

Attendees will be responsible for the Visa process and fees, the organiser will assist with visas as required.

## PRACTICAL INFORMATION

- Decorum: Respectful, polite and punctual;
- Language: main language is Arabic (however many locals speak English);
- Climate: 23°C / 73°F daytime and 4°C / 39°F nighttime;
- Dress code: Respectful loose-fitting clothing. Business casual attire throughout meetings and formal attire for gala dinner



## EVENING EXCURSIONS



### **The Old Town of AlUla**

Located approximately 15 minutes by car from Cloud 7 Residence AlUla and comprises of over 900 historic mudbrick buildings dating back to the 10th Century and reflect the lifestyle of its past inhabitants. Visitors can explore its history, local culture and experiences such as local markets, museums and restaurants and cafés.

### **Hegra**

Saudi Arabia's first UNESCO World Heritage Site and includes the landmarks of the Nabataean civilization. Visitors will discover rock-carved tombs and intricate inscriptions at the entrances to the Diwan halls, each stop offers a unique experience to reflect on the architectural mastery and artistry of this ancient civilization.

### **Stargazing**

Local astronomy experts guide visitors through endless night skies on an unforgettable after-dark desert stargazing tour, during which they will learn about constellations while hearing tales of how Bedouins have used the stars as navigation tools for centuries.

## AGENDA ITEMS

All items for inclusion in the agenda for the 2026 Plenary Meeting must reach the CIA President and the CIA Secretary **not later than 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2025.**

These will then be included in the agenda, which will be mailed on 23 December 2026.

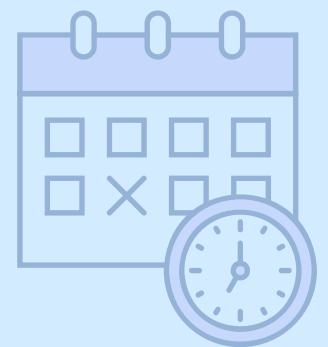
Agenda items should include any supporting documentation and position papers, all of which will be included with the agenda.

**Remember that the CIA Plenary Meeting cannot make final decisions on items that do not appear on the agenda.**

## MEETING MATERIALS

All meeting materials will be published in the FAI cloud:

<https://cloud.fai.org/s/TffimANFWJ2n6k8>



# (preliminary) TIMETABLE

## Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> February 2026

Room	1	2	3
08:45 - 10:30	SC/WG Chairs meeting with CIA Bureau		
10:30 - 11:00	Coffee break		
11:00 - 12:45	AX	Officials	AA
12:45 - 14:00	Lunch break		
14:00 - 15:45	AX	Jury	Records
15:45 - 16:15	Coffee break		
16:15 - 17:45	Competitors	PMR	NTSC
18:00 - 19:00	Dinner		
19:00 - 22:00	Excursion to AlUla Old Town		

## Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> February 2026

Room	1	2	3
08:45 - 10:20	Competitors	PMR	Scoring
10:20 - 10:40	Coffee break		
10:40 - 12:15	<u>EDS</u>	<u>Hall of Fame</u>	Scoring
12:15 - 13:30	Lunch break		
13:30 - 15:05	EDS	SC01	BA/BX
15:05 - 15:25	Coffee break		
15:25 - 17:00	Safety	Rules	
17:00 - 18:00	SC/WG Chairs meeting with CIA Bureau		
18:00 - 19:00	Dinner		
19:00 - 22:00	Excursion to Hegra		

## Friday 6<sup>th</sup> February 2026

Room	Main room
09:00 - 18:00	Plenary meeting
19:00 - 23:00	Gala Dinner

## Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> February 2026

Room	Main room
09:00 - 18:00	Plenary meeting
18:00 - 19:00	Dinner
19:00 - 23:00	Excursion to Mountain Valley in AlUla

Note: Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner are served at the hotel.



# e-Meetings

## for Subcommittee and Working groups

In the past years we have given all subcommittees and working groups the opportunity to hold one or more working sessions online prior to the plenary week.

These online e-meetings are NOT intended to replace the meetings scheduled the 2 days before the plenary, but they are additional sessions to prepare and start the work in the subcommittees or working groups. The weeks up to the plenary can then be used to do some homework and prepare for shorter and more efficient on-site meetings just before the plenary.



### REGISTRATION AND LINK DISTRIBUTION

To attend the online meetings, you must register using the registration link below before the day before the date of the meeting you want to attend. This registration is only for the online meetings, not the face-to-face meetings nor the plenary in February 2026.

[Link to the registration form](#)

You will receive a link to the zoom meeting the day before the meeting is held.

Once you received the link, do not share the link with others. For reasons of security the Zoom session login details **must not** be communicated, distributed or published in any way at any time, especially via social media. This is essential to prevent unauthorised persons from joining and potentially disrupting the session. If this does occur the chairpersons will abandon the session immediately and circulate fresh details to people who have registered to initiate a new session.

# Schedule of e-Meetings

Dates might change if the commission wishes to meet at another moment and some commissions decided not to have an online meeting.

Updates will be in the registration link and will be sent to people who registered for that meeting.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Session details</b>
Thursday 27 Nov 2025	13:00-15:30 UTC	EDS
Tuesday 2 Dec 2025	13:00-15:30 UTC	PMR
Thursday 4 Dec 2025	17:00-19:30 UTC	Records
Thursday 11 Dec 2025	13:00-15:30 UTC	AA/AM WG
Tuesday 16 Dec 2025	13:00-15:30 UTC	AX WG
Thursday 18 Dec 2025	13:00-15:30 UTC	Competitors SC
Thursday 30 Dec 2025	13:00-15:30 UTC	Hall of Fame
Tuesday 6 Jan 2026	13:00-15:30 UTC	Scoring WG
Thursday 8 Jan 2026	13:00-15:30 UTC	Statutes, By-Laws & Sporting Code WG
Tuesday 13 Jan 2026	09:00-11:00 UTC	New Technology SC
Thursday 15 Jan 2026	13:00-15:30 UTC	Safety and education
Tuesday 20 Jan 2026	13:00-15:30 UTC	SC/WG Chairs and Bureau meeting

# WEBINAR

## Be Prepared for your next competition

The FAI Ballooning Commission (CIA) Jury Board and Officials Subcommittee invite you to join the upcoming webinar:

**BE PREPARED FOR YOUR NEXT COMPETITION – BEST PRACTICES FOR JURY & OFFICIALS**

on **Saturday 22 November 2025 at 12:00 UTC** (duration up to 2.5 hours)

### OVERVIEW

This session will help Jury Members, Officials, Competitors, and Event Organizers prepare for CIA-sanctioned competitions. It will cover key documents, handling of protests and hearings, and related updates from the CASI 2025 Plenary.

### PROGRAMME

Documents to Know: FAI & CIA Rules & Regulations

with Garry Lockyer, Member, CIA Jury Board

Questions, Complaints & Protests

with Debbie Spaeth, Member, CIA Jury Board

Protest Procedures & Hearing – Best Practices

with Jean-Claude Weber, Chair, CIA Jury Board

2025 CASI Update(s): FAI Sporting Code General Section –

with Markus Haggene, FAI Secretary General

Q&A

with moderator Steve Ireland, Chair, CIA Officials Subcommittee

### WHO SHOULD ATTEND

CIA Jurors, Event Organizers, Competition Officials, Competitors, and all interested parties



## Registration

Follow [this link](#) and enter your name and email. The link for the Zoom meeting will later be sent to you by email.

# 68th Coupe Aéronautique Gordon Bennett 2025

The Coupe Aéronautique Gordon Bennett was hosted in Metz, France this year. The 68th edition of the race began on Friday 5 September, with take-off from Metz, France. After three challenging nights in the air, Frieden and Witprächtiger landed on the banks of the Danube in Romania, having flown the furthest distance from the launch site. Their winning flight covered 1,359.09 km in 2 days, 19 hours and 30 minutes.



## Congratulations to

1. Frieden / Witprächtiger (SUI)
2. Munz / Schlegel (GER)
3. Decellières / Havret (FRA)





## Behind the scenes – by Nils Boelmann

Since 2017, the Coupe Aéronautique Gordon Bennett has featured its own dedicated media production under the name Gordon Bennett TV. What began as a spontaneous phone recording has developed into a full-scale TV production and an integral part of the event. Each edition offers extensive live coverage of the world's oldest gas balloon race, combining livestreams, interviews and innovative camera perspectives. The aim is to share the fascination of gas ballooning with a wider audience and to present the sport in an engaging and accessible way. Beyond the competition, the broadcasts convey the atmosphere at the launch site, the teamwork behind the scenes and the challenges of long-distance flights, strengthening the community and raising awareness for this unique discipline in international aviation.

### Members and partners



#### **Marc André - Producer - (SUI)**

As producer, Marc André coordinates all aspects of Gordon Bennett TV. From planning to execution, he ensures that the live coverage runs smoothly and that all elements come together into one coherent broadcast. His organizational skills are the backbone of the production.



#### **Regan Tetlow - MC Airsport Presenter (UK)**

Known across the airsports community, Regan Tetlow brings energy and expertise to the broadcast as presenter. With his live commentary and interviews, he creates the connection between the audience and the unique world of gas ballooning.



#### **René Bühlmann - Technician (SUI)**

René Bühlmann contributes behind the scenes with valuable production support. His role is essential to the technical setup and to ensuring that the coverage delivers reliable, high-quality results year after year.



#### **Florian Michel - Editor (GER)**

As director, Florian Michel manages the creative flow of the broadcast. From switching cameras to guiding the on-air moments, he ensures that the story of the race is told clearly and engagingly for viewers worldwide.



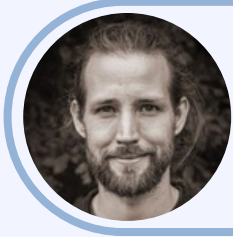
#### **Christian Michel - Backend Support / YB-Tracking (GER)**

Christian manages the race trackers, including preparation, distribution, and monitoring during flight. His work ensures that every balloon remains visible on the live tracking system. By maintaining reliable data flow, he provides the technical foundation for accurate and engaging race coverage.



### **Lars Stockmann-Olsen - Cameraman (GER)**

As cameraman, Lars Stockmann-Olsen captures the key moments on site. In addition, he is responsible for editing content in cooperation with QuattroMedia, ensuring that highlights are efficiently prepared and distributed across media channels.



### **Nils Boelmann / (ehem. Ronald Kraffert) - Researcher (GER)**

Responsible for background information and live data, Nils Boelmann prepares the content that underpins the commentary. By supplying facts, figures, and updates in real time, he helps the presenters keep the audience informed throughout the race.

Gordon Bennett TV is produced by a small and passionate team of volunteers from Switzerland, the United Kingdom and Germany. Together they contribute expertise in presenting, producing, directing, camera work, research and technical operations, united by a shared enthusiasm for ballooning. Although the production takes place only once a year and is organised entirely on a voluntary basis, it has achieved a level of professionalism comparable to established sports broadcasts. Each member brings valuable experience from their professional background, combining their skills on site to create a seamless live production. Preparations begin with coordination and pre-interviews in the weeks leading up to the event, but the real intensity starts once the race is underway. From that moment, the team works in full concentration to capture the beauty, drama and unpredictability of the competition as it unfolds in real time.

In cooperation with Quattro Media, Gordon Bennett TV ensures professional editing and worldwide distribution of selected content, extending the reach far beyond the ballooning community. What drives this achievement is not commercial interest but dedication and passion.



## Media, Outreach & Technology

Over the years, Gordon Bennett TV has become a key element of the Coupe Aéronautique Gordon Bennett's international presence. What began as a small initiative has grown into a professional, multi-platform media production that connects pilots, crews and audiences worldwide. The broadcasts combine live transmissions, social media updates and editorial highlights, turning each race into a shared global experience. At the heart of the operation is a mobile production setup rebuilt from scratch for every edition. The workflow includes a studio for interviews and commentary, coverage of the Opening Ceremony, a full relocation to the launch field for the live transmission of the take-off and a swift return to the studio for continuous updates. Each transition demands precise coordination as equipment, crew and data connections must perform flawlessly under dynamic conditions. Professional lighting, graphics, live switching and drone footage together create the distinctive visual signature of Gordon Bennett TV. A major step forward has been the introduction of live connections from the balloon baskets, made possible through Starlink technology. This provides real-time insights from the pilots' perspective and allows the team to adapt the program while on air, capturing spontaneous and captivating moments as they happen.

The 2025 edition reached a global audience with more than 2,100 TV airings on 217 channels, over 61 hours of airtime and coverage on 35 international platforms including ZDF, ORF, ABC, MSN and Yahoo. The highlight show aired on FAST channels such as Rakuten and SportWorld, reaching more than 200 million households. Short clips on 26,000 public screens in Germany, Switzerland and Austria generated around 288 million contacts. Across digital platforms, Gordon Bennett TV recorded over one million views and nearly 30,000 interactions, while the live tracking website reached 68,000 unique visitors and more than 11,000 app downloads during the event. Today the participating teams actively provide high-quality footage, enriching the broadcast with authentic stories from the field. The show is carefully planned yet flexible enough to evolve in real time. During the latest edition, the production team established live contact with the Swiss team during their landing, integrating a basket feed on the spot while new videos arrived and were seamlessly added to the program.

Delivering this level of responsiveness and storytelling requires outstanding teamwork, technical precision and creative dedication. Together these elements have turned Gordon Bennett TV into a bridge between the pilots in the sky, the teams on the ground and audiences around the world. Through its coverage, Gordon Bennett TV continues to share the fascination, camaraderie and spirit of gas ballooning with the global aviation community.

# 23<sup>rd</sup> FAI European Hot Air Balloon Championship

Wieselburg – Austria



Speaking at the Award Ceremony which closed the event, 43-year-old Zeberli commented on the “*perfect weather conditions*” that the pilots had enjoyed during the championship event, and said “*I feel very proud of my team, we had a wonderful week... I can't put it in words, I feel very emotional to have the trophy at home once again.*”

## The youngest participants' experience – by Maarten Deleersnijder

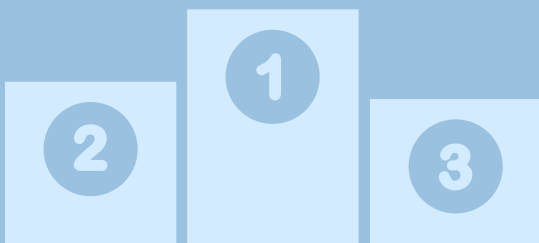
Competing at the European Championship in Wieselburg, Austria, was truly an unforgettable experience. As the youngest participant in the field, I am proud to have finished 5th, securing a place in the top 10 among the very best pilots in Europe.

The region around Wieselburg was stunning, with its beautiful landscapes – and also quite challenging due to the tricky and unpredictable winds. These conditions made every flight both demanding and exciting, while also testing our ability to adapt quickly in the air. Another decisive factor throughout the competition was fuel management. Some of the flights lasted close to three hours, which required careful planning to make it through the tasks efficiently.

I want to congratulate all the pilots on their performances, and especially Stefan Zeberli on winning his 6th European title – an incredible achievement! A big thank you as well to the organizers for the excellent setup of the event, and in particular to Martin Wegner as event director and his team for their outstanding work. Their efforts made this championship run smoothly and at the highest standard. It was a privilege to be part of this championship, and I look forward to what's next.

## Congratulations to

1. **Stefan Zeberli (SUI)**
2. **Dominic Bareford (GBR)**
3. **David Strasmann (SUI)**





# Results of the 2025 CIA Sporting events (CAT2)

## **2025 Hungarian and Slovenian National Hot Air Balloon Championship**

*Kaposvár, Hungary*

1. Helmut PÖTTLER (AUT)
2. Stefan ZEBERLI (SUI)
3. Peter MOLNAR (HUN)

## **Open Lower Austrian Championship and 2. Bandlkramer Balloncup**

*Groß-Siegharts, Austria*

1. Helmut PÖTTLER (AUT)
2. Thomas KINDERMANN-SCHÖN (AUT)
3. Werner SCHRANK (AUT)

## **Croatia Hot Air Balloon Open Championship**

*Prelog, Croatia*

1. Helmut PÖTTLER (AUT)
2. Jan OUDENAMPSEN (NED)
3. Edoardo BARBIERI (ITA)

## **Aeronautica Militare Balloon Cup**

*San Damiano, Piacenza, Italy*

1. Pascal KREINS (GER)
2. Nicolas PHILIPPE (FRA)
3. Sven GOEHLER (GER)

**To have your event sanctioned as a CAT 2 event  
fill out the sanction application on [WatchMeFly.net](https://www.watchmefly.net).**

This has to be submitted at least 60 days before the start of the event. The CIA bureau will decide on the sanction.

# Upcoming events

2026

69th Coupe Aéronautique  
Gordon Bennett

The bureau accepted the Sanction Application from Austria to host the 69<sup>th</sup> Coupe Aéronautique Gordon Bennett in Filzmoos, Austria.

The event will be held from 27 to 31 August 2026.



26th FAI World Hot Air  
Balloon Championships

The next World Championships will be held in Krosno, Poland from 19 to 25 September 2026. More information can be found on the website

<https://www.krosno2026.com>

The invitation process will start in the beginning of December 2025.



# Upcoming events and bids

The Event Development Service (EDS) invites and encourages all NAC's and Delegates to review the Championship Calendar and consider what competitions they might consider hosting in their country. If your country has never run a major International event you may consider that a smaller event such as a CIA Sporting Event (CAT2) or a Junior or Women's championship would be a good entry level. If you would like further advice on what is required to host and event or on completing the sanction application form, please check the following website: <https://watchmefly.net/faievents/>

Championships to be sanctioned at the 2026 plenary

## 2027

At this moment the following events are not sanctioned but EDS has received sanction applications before the deadline and the bureau has approved to vote on these during the 2026 plenary meeting.

**Junior World Championship**  
**Womens World Championship**  
**North American Championship**

## 2028

At this moment we have received intentions to bid for the World Championships in 2028 from the following NACs.

**Kingdom of Saudi Arabia**  
**India**

Events open for sanctioning

The following events in 2028 are open for sanctioning during the coming plenary meeting in February of 2026.

**Womens European Championship**  
**Junior European Championship**

We have not received any intentions to bid for organizing this event. If you have any interest, please visit <https://watchmefly.net/faievents/>. The Sanction Application and related documents have to be send in before 8 December 2025.

Further events open for sanctioning

2029

If you are considering a bid for events in 2029, the upcoming plenary would be the moment to submit an intention to bid and start working on the sanction application on <https://watchmefly.net/faievents/>.

**European Championship**  
**Womens World Championship**  
**Junior World Championship**

2030

**World Championship**  
**Womens World Championship**  
**Junior World Championship**

2031

**European Championship**  
**Womens World Championship**  
**Junior World Championship**

2032

**World Championship**  
**Womens World Championship**  
**Junior World Championship**

Section 1 of the FAI Sporting Code states that “World Championships in the same sub-class, age or gender category shall not be held closer to each other than approximately two years” and “Continental Regional Championships in the same sub-class, age or gender category shall not be held more than once a year on the same continent”.

The FAI World Air Games is the premier, international, multi-discipline air sports event conducted under FAI rules but is included in the table for completeness.

This event calendar does not show CIA Sporting Events. The objectives of Sporting Events include: encouraging participation in international events in which pilots of all abilities can take part and facilitating fair "entry level" competition using simplified rules that apply equally to all CIA Sporting Events and participants.

Further information can be found in Section 1 of the Sporting Code particularly Section 5 and Annex - <https://www.fai.org/cia-documents>



# CIA Scholarships for Balloon Youth camps

For 2026, the FAI Ballooning Commission (CIA) will continue support of CIA Balloon Youth Camps (BYC). Balloon Youth Camps are an important part of the future of ballooning.

From past camps, an impressive number of pilots and P.U.T. have been camp attendees.

The CIA budget for BYC support is a total of CHF4000 with the funds to be distributed as follows:

1. Annual CIA Budget of CHF4000 to be shared across approved BYC applicants with a maximum payment of CHF1000 per country.
2. Each country is only eligible for one payment. Multiple camps held in any one country do not increase funds available for a particular country.
3. The application for CIA BYC Scholarship and the CIA BYC Guidelines, can be found on the CIA documents page:  
<https://fai.org/cia-documents> then scroll down to Balloon Youth Camp.

If you have any questions, please contact  
Debbie Spaeth, CIA PMR Chair, email: [CIA-media@fai.org](mailto:CIA-media@fai.org).



**DEADLINE**

**Monday 24<sup>th</sup> November 2025**

# CIA Hall of Fame



[read more about the inductees](#)

The Hall of Fame recognizes those who have made significant contributions to Aerostation, including those who have excelled in business, history, design and engineering, in addition to those better known for their contributions in flying balloons or airships of any category, in competition or records.

Inductees are elected into the CIA International Hall of Fame by the Selection Committee. Each year they will normally elect one living and one posthumous inductee from the list of nominated candidates.

In order to get inducted into the Hall of Fame someone needs to be accepted into the pool of nominees first. The nomination for the pool and the nomination for the induction has to come from the NAC.

Every year the Albuquerque Balloon Museum hosts an induction ceremony for that years' nominees. The inductees or family members are invited to come join this special ceremony where we show our gratitude for everything they have done for our sport.

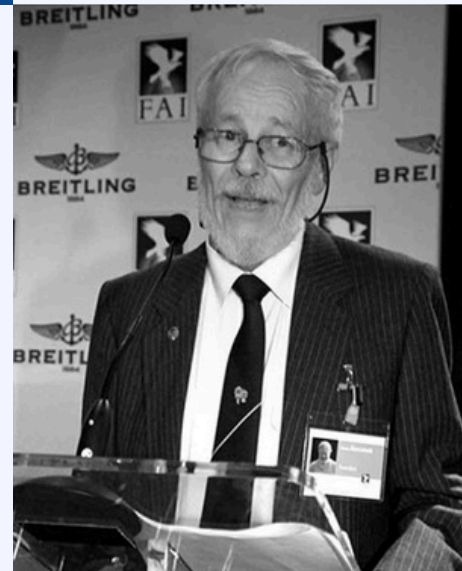
Nominations shall be made by NAC's to FAI office, so the trick is to make the NAC's aware of possible candidates.

We would like to encourage all balloon federations and balloon clubs to make use of this way of recognizing the hard working volunteers in our community. Think of people you know who are giving a contribution to the sport and how you can award them. Make your proposals to your national FAI members.

If you know someone you believe should be rewarded for their time and efforts but don't know what award to nominate them for. Please reach out to the CIA Bureau to see how we can support you.



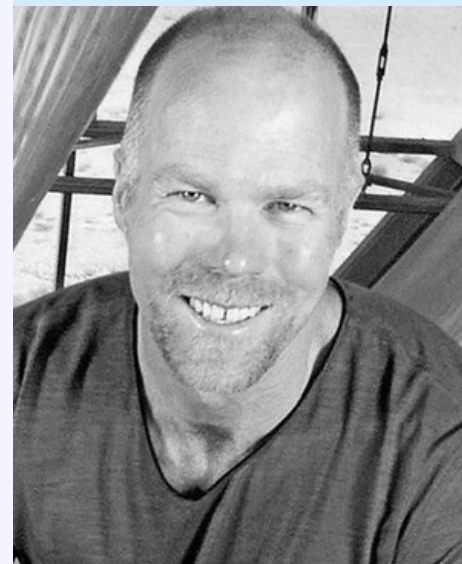
A special thank you to the to the Balloon Museum for keeping the history of our sport alive and for giving our stories a home.



Hans Akerstedt

## Inductees 2025

Richard Abruzzo



# Awards

Our sport depends a lot on the enthusiasm, work and devotion to our sport by many individuals and groups of persons. They spend a lot of time to spread and develop the sport through education, instruction, event organization or technical development. What can we do to recognize their work and to reward them? One way is to nominate them for an award.

Here are 2 great examples:

## Montgolfier Diploma

The Montgolfier Diploma is awarded

for **best performance** in

- Gas Balloons
- Hot Air Balloons
- Rozière Balloons

during the previous Montgolfier year or

for a major **contribution** to the development of ballooning in general.

Nomination forms need to be send by NAC's to FAI office latest 60 days before the CIA plenary meeting. This year the deadline for nominations is 8 December 2025.

Note: The Montgolfier year starts on November 21st and ends on November 20th the following year.



## FAI Airport Medal

The Montgolfier Diploma is awarded for outstanding services in air sport activities, training or education.

This medal was established by the FAI Council for the 100th anniversary of Lilienthal's first flights.

It may be awarded, at any time, to individuals or groups for outstanding services in connection with air sport activities like work in FAI commissions, organising World and Continental Championships, training and educating new pilots, or for promoting aviation in general, especially with regard to young people.

Order forms and further details are available at the FAI office ([members@fai.org](mailto:members@fai.org))



# All FAI and CIA Awards

Below is a summary of CIA/FAI awards and a short description of the nomination procedure.

## CIA SPORTING BADGES

Sporting Code, section 1, chapter 8.

The Sporting Badges are available in silver, gold and gold with one, two or three diamonds. Each require recognized performance in distance, duration, altitude and precision. Detailed requirements are found in the Sporting Code. Application form is available on the CIA web site, documents section. The application must be sent to FAI office.

## THE MONTGOLFIER DIPLOMA

FAI By-Laws, chapter 7.2

Awarded for best performance during the previous Montgolfier year in gas, hot air or Rozière balloons and for a major contribution to the development of ballooning in general. Nominations by NAC's to FAI office latest 60 days before the CIA plenary meeting. Note: The Montgolfier year starts on November 21st and ends on November 20th the following year.

## SANTOS-DUMONT GOLD AIRSHIP MEDAL

FAI By-Laws, chapter 7.2

Equivalent for airship pilots of the Montgolfier diploma awarded for best sporting performance during the previous Montgolfier year in airships or for a major contribution to the development of airship flying in general. Nominations by NAC's to FAI office latest 60 days before the CIA plenary meeting.

## FAI AIR SPORT MEDAL

FAI Statutes 10.7

For outstanding services in air sport activities, training or education. Any number may be awarded to individuals or groups. Order forms are available at the FAI web site, documents page. Invoice for CHF 100 will be sent from FAI office.

The following are FAI General awards available for ballooning. Applications to FAI office before 31 May and shall cover performances until 31 December the preceding year or contributions over a longer period. Citations shall not exceed 250 words. Other supporting documents may be attached. The awards will be given at the FAI General Conference to recipients present.

## **FAI GOLD AIR MEDAL**

FAI Statutes 10.2

One of the FAI's two highest awards. Given to those who have contributed greatly to the development of aeronautics by their activities, work or achievements. Since 1925, 76 Gold Medals have been awarded including 7 for ballooning and 1 for airship achievement.

## **FAI SILVER MEDAL**

FAI Statutes 10.9

For persons having occupied high office in FAI or in a national organisation and have shown exceptional leadership and influence to the benefit of the whole air sport community.

## **DE LA VAULX MEDAL**

FAI Statutes 10.5

This medal is given automatically to all holders of recognized absolute world records established during the previous year. Count Henry de la Vaulx was founder and past president of the FAI. He flew Gordon Bennett 1906.

## **SABIHA GÖKCEN MEDAL**

FAI Statutes 10.8

The Medal is reserved for the woman who performs the most outstanding achievement in any air sport in the previous year. Sabiha Götzen was Turkey's first woman pilot and in 1937 became the world's first female military pilot.

## **OUTSTANDING AIRMANSHIP DIPLOMA**

FAI Statutes 10.10

It shall be awarded to a person or a group of persons for a feat of outstanding airman-ship in sub-orbital flight during one of the previous two years which resulted in the saving of life of others or was carried out with that objective.



## PAUL TISSANDIER DIPLOMA

FAI Statutes 10.11

May be awarded to those who have served the cause of aviation in general and sporting aviation in particular, up to three diplomas per FAI Member, depending on their class of membership, may be awarded. Paul Tissandier was a balloonist and Secretary General of FAI from 1919 to 1945.

## FAI GROUP DIPLOMA OF HONOUR

FAI Statutes 10.13

A FAI Group Diploma of Honour may be awarded to a group (design offices, scientific bodies, aeronautical publications, etc.) that has contributed significantly to the progress of Aeronautics or Astronautics during the previous year or years.

## H.R.H. PRINCE ALVARO de ORLEANS-BORBON GRANT

To Persons or institutions who have devoted themselves to create and/or promote technical developments and innovation in sport aviation. Additional consideration will be given to projects. Nominations should be received in writing by the FAI Head Office latest 30 June (using the Prince Alvaro de Orleans-Borbon Grant Nomination Form available on FAI website)

## IOC Women and Sport trophies

Awarded annually to promote the advancement of women in sport. They recognize outstanding achievement and contributions made to develop encourage and strengthen the participation of women and girls at all levels in the sports world. There is annually one trophy worldwide and one each for the continents. Nomination forms will be posted to national Olympic committees.

## FAI RECOMMENDED MUSEUM recognition

FAI By-Laws 10.1

For outstanding services in air sport activities, training or education. Any number may be awarded to individuals or groups. Order forms are available at the FAI web site, documents page. Invoice for CHF 100 will be sent from FAI office.

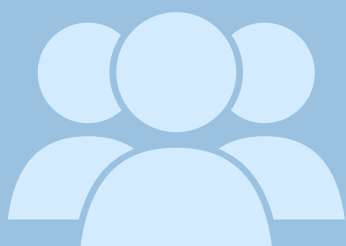
# The FAI Ballooning commission (CIA)

## CIA Bureau 2025/2026

Country	Title	Name	Email
Luxembourg	President	Mr. Claude WEBER	claudio.weber@mac.com
Germany	1st Vice-President	Mr. Uwe SCHNEIDER	uwe.cia@dfsv.de
Switzerland	2nd Vice-President	Mr. Marc ANDRE	marc.andre@netline.ch
USA	3rd Vice-President	Mr. Andrew BAIRD	baird@cameronballoons.com
The Netherlands	Secretary	Ms. Sanne HAARHUIS	sanne@sannehaarhuis.nl

## Representatives to other commissions

Representative to CASI	Mr. Claude WEBER (LUX)
Representative to EnvC	Mr. Steve IRELAND (AUS)
Representative to CIEA	Mr. Branko AMBROZIC (SLO)
Representative to CIMP	Dr. David BAREFORD (GBR)
Europe Air Sports	Bureau will appoint if necessary



A most current list of the Delegates of the FAI Ballooning Commission (CIA) is available online.

<http://www.fai.org/page/cia-delegates>

# More ...

## FAI Cloud



In 2024, the CIA approved a motion “to migrate all relevant documents to the FAI cloud by May 1st, 2024, and to work exclusively with this new document storage from that date onward.”

To support this transition, we have purchased 50 Mountain Duck licenses, allowing easy synchronization with the FAI cloud—similar to how Dropbox works.

The purpose of using the FAI cloud is to ensure long-term preservation of all working documents and to guarantee that access remains intact in case of leadership or membership changes within your WG/SC.

However, several working groups still have few or no files stored in the cloud. We kindly remind all groups to complete the upload of all relevant documents by the end of this year. The “[CIA Cloud Guidelines](#)” document provides detailed instructions and best practices for using the FAI cloud.

If you need assistance accessing the cloud, please contact your WG/SC Chair.

Chairs who have not yet received their credentials may contact Marc André at [marc.andre@netline.ch](mailto:marc.andre@netline.ch).

If you would like to use Mountain Duck and have not yet requested a license, please complete the [form here](#).

**Important:** Our licenses cover only Mountain Duck version 4.x. Please ensure you download the latest 4.x release (not version 5.x). Download and changelog: <https://mountainduck.io/changelog/>

Thank you for your cooperation and for helping ensure a smooth transition to our centralized document storage.

# More ...

## Donations to CIA

Donations to the CIA are possible by bank transfer only. When sending the donation, use the reference "CIA donation" to ensure proper allocation.

**Beneficiary:**

Fédération Aéronautique Internationale  
Av. de Rhodanie 54  
1017 Lausanne, Switzerland

**Bank:**

UBS Switzerland AG  
Rue due Lion d'Or 5/7  
1003 Lausanne, Switzerland

**IBAN:**

CH65 0483 5045 7968 3100 0

**Account number:**

457968-31

**BIC/SWIFT:**

CRESCHZZ80A

**Clearing number**

4835

## Statistics and Delegate reports

We would like to encourage every Delegate to send in a report of ballooning activity in his country before January 30<sup>th</sup> 2025. Don't hesitate to attach photos or videos to your report that can be shown during the plenary meeting or the coffee breaks.

## Newsletter contributions

Thank you to everybody who submitted articles and photos. Further contributions are welcome and should be sent to the CIA Secretary.