



EHPU MC Newsletter

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The President Says.



It is an honour to introduce this edition of the EHPU newsletter as your President, and I thank my predecessor Miroslav Fejt from the Czech Republic, and the Management Committee, for their warm welcome.

EHPU is a complex organisation, and a great deal of good work goes on behind the scenes so that we can all keep practising the sport we love.

Above all, it connects our sport across national borders and brings our work together as one. I am genuinely looking forward to my year as President and excited about what we can achieve together.

There is good news to share. Associate Membership of EHPU, for free flight organisations outside Europe, is now open. In this edition, you will find an update on the work of Working Group 6, and I am grateful to Sanne Both for her section on the ESTC.

I am especially proud that the next AGM will be held in Denmark on Saturday 6th February 2027. It will be a pleasure to welcome delegates to my home country, and I hope we will find time to fly together. Until then, many safe flights.

Jesper Eybye - EHPU President 2026.

From the General Secretary's Desk.



The EHPU Annual General Meeting was held in Prague on 31st January 2026, with delegates and guests attending both in person and online. The AGM also saw Denmark accept the EHPU Presidency for the coming year.

This newsletter was held back deliberately so that we could include several important developments following the AGM. In particular, thanks to the tireless

work of our DHV colleagues, the new incident and accident database, called "FIDA", is now live. EHPU Associate Membership for free flight associations outside Europe can now move forward in practical terms, and Working Group 6 has made significant progress on the revision of the EN 1651 harness standard.

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The AGM also discussed cross-border flying and the guidance available to visiting pilots. We are aware that important differences in national legal requirements exist. For example, some European countries do not require third-party insurance for non-commercial flying, while other countries have their own particular requirements. For instance, Switzerland may require foreign pilots to display identification numbers on their gliders.

For pilots visiting other European countries with the intention of flying, please click on the flag links on the EHPU website to find the advice for visiting pilots.

The EHPU Management Committee (MC) continues to be very active. Its online meetings, held every two months, are chaired by Marc Asquith and attended by Antonio Fernandes, Rodolfo Saccani, Jean-Yves Squifflet, Sanne Both (as Chairwoman of the European Safety and Training Committee) and our 2026 President Jesper Eybye.

For EHPU delegates, may I remind you that notes and minutes are available on the EHPU "Internal" database using your personal login details (which you will have received from me). If there is anything you would like to contribute for future newsletters, please do not hesitate to get in touch with me at ehpu@ehpu.org

It is unusual for me to include something personal in this newsletter, but I want to mention a recent experience of my own because it is relevant to many of us who enjoy being outdoors. I was bitten by a tick and suffered severe exhaustion and other symptoms. Lyme disease was considered highly likely, and I was treated with a three-week course of antibiotics. As pilots, we are often outside in long grass, woodland, landing fields and beautiful flying sites, and it is easy to be distracted by the scenery, the weather and the flying itself. I learnt that it is better to be ultra-cautious: take precautions, remove ticks promptly and carefully, and check yourself regularly if you have been outside.

My thanks to all contributors to this newsletter, and to the EHPU Officers whose enthusiasm and tireless work bring so much value to EHPU membership.

Mark Shaw - EHPU General Secretary.

EHPU Events.

[Announcement of the 2027 EHPU Annual General Meeting.](#)

The next AGM will take place on Saturday 6th February 2027 in Denmark. There will be social activities on the Friday night and during Sunday before delegates travel back home. We hope that we will be joined by representatives from Europe Air Sports (EAS), whose participation in recent AGMs has been so valuable.

EHPU Membership – Associate Membership of EHPU.

[We would like to invite national hang gliding and paragliding associations from countries outside Europe to apply for Associate Membership of EHPU.](#)

EHPU's Management Committee is very pleased to announce that it can now accept applications for Associate Membership from national hang gliding and paragliding bodies outside Europe.

This is an important development. Many of the issues facing hang gliding and paragliding are not limited by geography. Safety reporting, pilot training, equipment standards, airspace, electronic conspicuity, site access, insurance, cross-border flying and emerging disciplines all benefit from cooperation between national associations.

Associate Membership is intended to support cooperation, information sharing and participation in EHPU's wider safety and training work. It gives national HG and PG bodies outside Europe a formal route to engage with EHPU. Associate Members may attend EHPU AGMs in a non-voting participatory role, nominate Safety Officers to take part in EHPU's European Safety and Training Committee, and subscribe to EHPU's new incident and accident database, FIDA (although voting rights remain reserved for full EHPU member associations).

There will be no annual charge for EHPU Associate Membership. The only cost for Associate Members will be the cost of subscribing to FIDA. This has now been confirmed as a one-time fee of €400 for non-European organisations joining FIDA. Associate Members attending AGMs in person will, however, be asked to pay their delegates' costs associated with attendance, such as meals, social activities and other local arrangements.

With FIDA now live, Associate Membership becomes a practical way for national associations outside Europe to contribute to shared safety work, benefit from wider analysis, and take part in discussions with other national bodies facing similar issues.

Formal applications from national bodies can now be sent to the General Secretary of EHPU at the email address shown in this newsletter. Further information can be found within the EHPU statutes (<https://www.ehpu.org/about>).

The EHPU member survey.

EHPU delegates: please respond to the current membership survey. As in previous years, we are seeking to collect information on total numbers of hang glider and paraglider pilots represented by your associations and federations. It is very important that we receive your returns. These numbers are used to demonstrate to EASA and other bodies the total number of hang glider and paraglider pilots that we represent in Europe.

Flight Incident Database (FIDA) goes live.

On 23rd January 2026, FIDA went live and took over from the EHPU "Euro" incident database.

FIDA is a significant step forward for accident and incident data collection, safety analysis and the sharing of lessons across the flying community.

The value of good safety reporting is not simply that incidents are recorded. The real value comes when information can be collected consistently, compared carefully and analysed in a way that helps national associations understand what is actually happening in the sport.

The 10,000+ incidents collected by the EHPU "Euro" system, in place since 2010, are now integrated into FIDA. FIDA allows selective data sharing with member association websites through an API, making it possible for national associations to use the data in ways that support their own safety work. Some national associations use the API to publish anonymised incident data on their own websites, for the benefit of flying communities. Some examples include [SHV](#) (Switzerland) and [BHPA](#) (Great Britain).

FIDA supports better analysis of accident and incident trends, including severity, aircraft type, phase of flight, equipment issues, country data and emerging areas such as parakites.

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For EHPU and its members, FIDA represents an important move from separate national reporting systems towards a more integrated picture of safety across borders. It should help safety officers, training committees and national associations identify recurring risks, focus safety messaging and share learning more effectively.

Member associations (both European members and non-European Associate Members) are encouraged to support the use of FIDA and to promote accurate, timely reporting within their own flying communities.

Electronic Conspicuity and Drones.

Rodolfo Saccani, EHPU MC member and delegate for the Italian federation FIVL, is also Vice President of Europe Air Sports.

Sport Aviation in the New European Governance: our voice in EASA's work.

Rodolfo Saccani reported to the EHPU AGM on recent developments in European aviation, with particular attention to drones, electronic conspicuity and the need for hang gliding, paragliding and other free-flight activity to remain visible to regulators and other airspace users.

Airspace remains one of the most important long-term issues for sport aviation in Europe. The rapid growth of the drone industry brings opportunities for aviation, but it also creates increasing pressure on airspace. If free-flight activity is not clearly visible within future airspace systems, there is a risk that restrictions could increase, or that our activities may not be properly taken into account when new rules are developed.

EASA has recently changed the way it involves the aviation community in its decision-making processes through the launch of the Stakeholder Advisory Body, or SAB. This new consultation structure complements the Technical Body, which consists of representatives from Member States. Through the SAB, organisations representing pilots, operators, manufacturers and associations, including recreational and sport aviation, now have a direct voice in discussions with EASA.

This is an important step. It means that the experience and needs of those who fly regularly can be considered as part of the European rulemaking process. It also gives sport aviation a better opportunity to explain why regulation must remain proportionate and why access to airspace must be protected.

The SAB is organised into communities, each managed by a steering group. One of the most relevant for us is the Drone Community Steering Group. This group has met twice this year, first in Cologne and then in Brussels. Each meeting lasted two days and included a joint session with the UAS Technical Body. This format allows aviation stakeholders and representatives from Member States to discuss the same issues together, helping future decisions take account of both practical flying experience and institutional requirements.

A major part of this work concerns the integration of drones into European airspace, especially how they will coexist with traditional, recreational and sport aviation. Our objective is clear: the growth of drones and the development of U-space must not compromise the freedom, safety and operational simplicity that are central to hang gliding, paragliding and other forms of sport flying.

Electronic Conspicuity is therefore becoming an increasingly important subject for national associations. One of the key topics is ADS-L, or Automatic Dependent Surveillance – Light. This technology is intended to improve situational awareness and

safety in shared airspace. The technical specification for radio-based ADS-L is already available, while the specification for the mobile network version, which will support access to U-space, is expected to be published in the future.

Rodolfo suggested that free-flight bodies should consider whether wider use of conspicuity devices, including ADS-L, could help protect access to airspace and support arguments for proportionate regulation. Systems such as “SafeSky” already show how technology can help make aviation activity more visible and better understood, while also demonstrating the benefits of cooperation between the aviation community and technology providers.

There is no single answer that will suit every country. National airspace structures, legal requirements, flying sites and pilot communities differ across Europe. However, the AGM agreed that member associations should consider the implications of mandatory conspicuity and report their national positions to Rodolfo.

The integration of drones and new airspace systems will be a long and complex process. It will require continuous attention, expertise and foresight. The positive news is that sport aviation is represented at the right decision-making tables, including through EHPU’s membership of Europe Air Sports. This gives us an important opportunity to make sure that our role is recognised in the future of European aviation.

EHPU will continue to follow this work and support a coordinated European approach where this can help protect hang gliding, paragliding and other free-flight activity. We will continue to argue for technological and regulatory developments that respect the values that guide recreational and sport flying: safety, proportionality and freedom to fly.

ESTC update from Sanne Both, ESTC Chairwoman.

Our European Safety and Training Committee (ESTC) will have a particular focus on parakites during 2026. Our discussions have shown that parakites are experiencing a surge in popularity across a number of national associations. However, approaches to training, regulation and integration into national systems differ considerably.

Denmark has reported growing coastal parakite activity and issues involving visiting pilots, particularly where local clubs and flying sites may be placed at risk. We acknowledge that parakites follow ridge-soaring patterns and share airspace with hang gliders and conventional paragliders. Parakite pilots therefore need to understand ridge flying rules in order to share the air safely.

Parakites are an emerging activity and may bring new participants into free flight. The challenge for national associations is to bring those pilots into appropriate training, safety systems and flying communities so that the activity can develop responsibly.

ESTC is reviewing the safety and training implications of parakites and will propose a common minimum training standard across EHPU nations.

We are also looking at training and equipment standards for aerotowing of hang gliders in order to share best practice.

ESTC’s European Pilot Identification (EPI) Tandem Card.

ESTC has completed its work on the EHPU EPI Tandem scheme, which is now operational for non-commercial tandem paragliding. Participating EHPU countries will use

the scheme to recognise national tandem qualifications for visiting pilots flying with friends or family, where no payment or payment in kind is involved. A pilot whose valid national membership card displays the EPI Tandem logo has been confirmed by their home association as holding a qualifying national tandem rating, subject to the scheme requirements, including valid third-party insurance.

The EPI Tandem logo shown here can be displayed on national membership cards to confirm that the issuing association participates in the scheme. This should help make cross-border recognition clearer and more consistent, while still allowing national associations to apply additional local requirements where needed.



Paraglider standards: Working Group 6 Update.

Angus Pinkerton, EHPU Airworthiness Officer and Convenor of WG6 writes:

Welcome to the fourth public update on the work of TC136/Working Group 6 (WG 6) - the pan-European group of paragliding experts that writes and revises our equipment standards. My aim in this report is to increase the visibility of WG6 work across the flying community. This update is a summary of the report I make every year to the EHPU AGM. EHPU is closely tied with WG6 as it funds the secretarial element of the work of WG6 (currently undertaken by AFNOR, the French standardisation institute).

Working Group 6 has been heavily involved in the revision of EN 1651, the European standard for paragliding harnesses. The revised standard is expected to be published in 2027, subject to the normal standards process.

This has been a substantial piece of work, involving many meetings, detailed preparation and contributions from respected members of the worldwide flying community. The aim has been to ensure that the revised standard reflects modern harness design and provides useful, practical safety requirements for manufacturers, test houses, pilots and national associations.

A major focus of the revision has been on impact pad testing. The group looked carefully at the most appropriate way to assess impact performance, including whether “jerk” — the rate of change of acceleration during an impact — should be used as a basis for measurement. After detailed discussion within the group and with community experts, the Spinal Injury Criterion, or SIC, was agreed as the preferred metric for the revised standard because it takes account not only of the level of acceleration but also of the duration of the impact. This gives a more useful indication of impact severity and potential spinal injury risk.

The SIC calculation is analogous to Head Injury Criterion calculation. It is a value used to assess and rank impact pad performance in terms of potential spinal injury risk, with a higher SIC value corresponding to greater injury risk.

The draft introduces a Spinal Injury Criterion calculation for impact pads, alongside revised impact pad test requirements and three tiers of classification of impact pads, with the highest class including a fully reclined ‘back-first’ test. These tiers should provide a clearer and more useful way to compare the performance of different impact damping systems for paraglider harnesses.

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The revised harness standard also incorporates a test to assess the strength of components such as pods in preventing a pilot from slipping out if the leg straps are inadvertently left unfastened. There are new requirements for emergency parachute systems, including deployment system strength, compatibility checks, user manual information and marking. These changes reflect the complexity of modern harnesses and emergency parachute installations and are designed to promote better compatibility among elements in an emergency parachute system.

With the EN 1651 revision going through the CEN administrative process at the time of writing, WG6 has now turned its attention to EN 926-2, the flight characteristics standard for paragliders. In support of this project, WG6 has published on the EHPU website a guide for pilots on the role of EN standards for free flight equipment. This can be found at the following link: <https://www.ehpu.org/standards>

AFNOR Secretariat services for WG6.

AFNOR's secretarial costs represent a minor (if significant) part of the total costs of running the Working Group and I am grateful for EHPU's assistance with meeting these costs. All the WG6 experts have their costs funded by their sponsoring organisations (pilot association, test house or manufacturer). I would like to thank the EHPU and all our Presidents for their continued support.

Finish on a high note!

The photo in this edition, provided by EHPU President Jesper Eybye, features Marjan Grunder paragliding above Jutland Heath in Denmark, sharing a thermal with a sailplane.

