

Sanctioning Manual



USHPA[®]

**UNITED STATES HANG GLIDING
& PARAGLIDING ASSOCIATION**

The United States Hang Gliding and Paragliding Association, Inc.

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The United States Hang Gliding and Paragliding Association, Inc.

1. Introduction

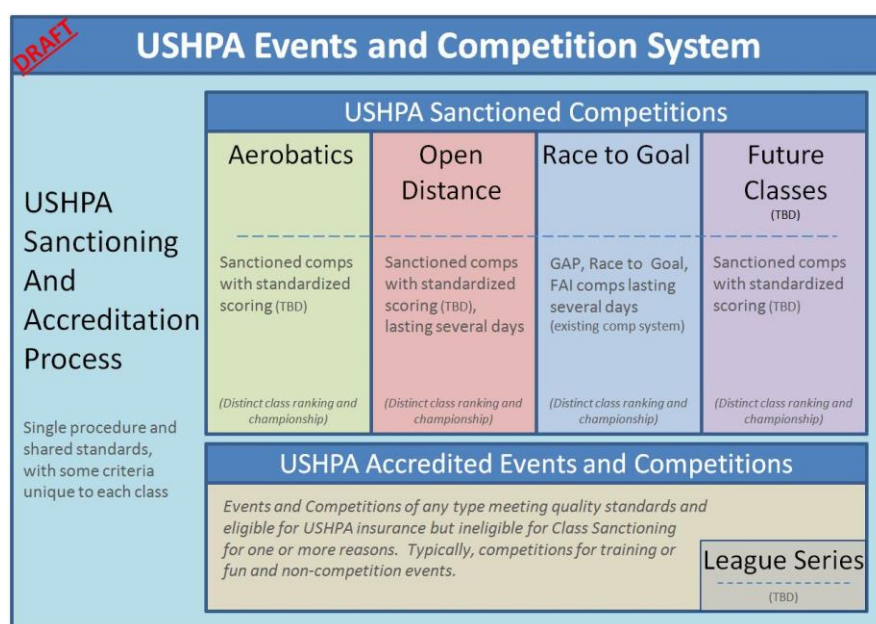
The USHPA recognizes the many benefits of hang gliding and paragliding competitions in the United States. These include community and public relations, site retention, an added opportunity to market our sports, camaraderie among pilots, advancement of pilot skills, as well as a means to select a US Team to compete internationally and the simple enjoyment by USHPA's members.

"Sanctioning" is the process and brand USHPA uses to qualify and select those meets meeting certain basic standards for quality, safety and fairness. Further, USHPA maintains a pilot ranking system that is used to select the US national team, and only the results from sanctioned competitions may be applied in this ranking system. This manual is designed to describe the rules and regulations for USHPA sanctioning.

The Federation Aéronautique Internationale (FAI) is the worldwide governing body for all aviation. The Commission Internationale de Vol Libre (CIVL) is the division of the FAI that represents hang gliding and paragliding around the world. The National Aeronautic Association (NAA) is the United States representative of the FAI. The United States Hang Gliding and Paragliding Association (USHPA) is the only authorized affiliate of the NAA that represents the sport of hang gliding and paragliding in the United States. The USHPA is authorized by the FAI to formulate and establish official competition rules and to sanction hang gliding and paragliding competitions in the United States.

Questions regarding the USHPA Sanctioning process may be sent to USHPA's Executive Director or the Competition Committee Chair.

2. USHPA Competition Structure



2.1 Sanctioned Competitions

Each category of sanctioned event shall have its own distinct standardized scoring system, national ranking system, and national team selection system (currently available to Race to Goal, Open Distance, Accuracy, and Aerobatics). Sanctioned competitions are eligible to receive USHPA insurance and corporate sponsorship (when available).

- Race to Goal and Open Distance competitions may be held at the same time, at the same location.

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3. Sanctioning Requirements

- A sanction application must be submitted in accordance with the sanctioning procedures in Section 9 - Sanction Procedure.
- Organizers must provide proof of appropriate event insurance coverage from a recognized carrier. Insurance coverage must include any practice days. Event insurance is available through USHPA; application for USHPA event insurance should be made on the USHPA Sanctioned Event Application. You must have your notice of issuance of insurance from USHPA prior to the event; notice will be sent once the premium has been paid.
- Proposed exceptions or modifications to the USHPA Rulebooks for a particular event must be approved by the Competition Committee. If exceptions or modifications to the USHPA Rulebooks become necessary after sanction is granted, the organizer must obtain approval from the Competition Committee prior to amending such rules.
- All sanctioned USHPA competitions are encouraged to apply for CIVL sanctioning so pilots attending the meets can earn WPRS points. The event organizer is responsible for all applications, fees, and requirements associated with CIVL sanctioning. US National Championship events must be sanctioned by CIVL as either FAI Category 2 or FAI Category 1 event, if such sanctioning exists.
- USHPA offers one free one-quarter-page size ad (as a Public Service Announcement) in *Hang Gliding & Paragliding Magazine* for all sanctioned competitions. Organizer must supply camera-ready artwork and copy to the magazine two months prior to the desired publication date to qualify for this benefit. In addition, ad buttons provided by the meet organizer (150 x150 pixels) will be put in rotation on the USHPA web site.
- Pilot registrations may not be accepted any earlier than 15 days after first posting of the competition announcement in the Calendar of Events on the USHPA website. The announcement will also appear in the next available issue of the magazine.
- Application for pilot registration shall not be accumulated on a waiting list before the opening of registration for the competition.
- All competitors should be registered on a first-come, first-served basis except during the first 30 days of registration, where 30% of the available places may be held for the top 20 NTSS and top 30 WPRS ranked pilots.
- Meet Organizers are required to keep registration records including the date of registration for each pilot. The Competition Committee Chair or his/her designee has the right to review registration records and other competition records for compliance.
- Sport Classes are encouraged at sanctioned events.
- Meet Directors and Meet Organizers are encouraged to apprentice new Meet Directors and Meet Organizers whenever possible.
- Completion of all obligations in the sanctioning application is required under penalty of loss of pilot and instructor ratings.

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4. Standards for Sanctioned Competitions

USHPA sanctioned competitions must meet the operational and minimum quality standards as detailed in this section.

4.1 Operational Standards

- All meet officials (meet director, safety director, score keeper, launch directors) must be current USHPA members or have a current 30-day membership at the time of the event.
- All competitors, staff, volunteers and persons involved with the running of the meet are required to sign a current USHPA Competition Waiver, available at <https://www.usHPA.org/member/forms> prior to assisting with, or participating in, any meet activities. Anyone under 18 must also have the signed consent of a legal guardian on the waiver. ***Waivers must be original paper copies, signed in ink, and returned to USHPA within 30 days of the end of the competition.***
- Organizations/sponsors/land owners who desire additional waivers to be signed may do so only where the additional waivers do not conflict with the USHPA competition/event waiver. A single (unsigned) copy of any additional waivers must be sent to the USHPA headquarters prior to the event.
- Pilots must be current USHPA members and possess all ratings and special skills required for the site being flown.
- Foreign pilots must present an International Pilot Proficiency Identification (IPPI) card in conjunction with a corresponding pilot identification card from a foreign pilot association.
- All meet officials, including Meet Director, Meet Organizer and scorekeeper must follow the current USHPA Rulebook for that type of competition (e.g. the USHPA Race to Goal Rulebook for all such competitions).
- The USHPA competition Rulebook, meet-specific rules, and FAR Part 103 must be available in print or on-line to any competitor in the contest.
- Local rules must be made available on the official competition website prior to the start of meet registration and must be readily available (printed or electronic) to all competitors at meet headquarters.
- If subsequent changes to the local rules become necessary, Meet Director must post changes in a location readily accessible to all competitors and notify all participants of the change in a timely manner.
- The Meet Organizer must offer a site briefing to all participants prior to the event.
- The Meet Organizer must have a protest process in place with fair and impartial procedures to deal with complaints and protests filed by competitors.
- EMT / First Aid arrangements and an emergency medical plan must be in place.
- A Safety Director/committee is required.
- Proper permits and permissions for all activities at all locations must be ensured.
- Meet Director shall ensure their competition is in compliance with all federal, state and local laws, including legal operations under FAA, Sport pilot, etc.
- Maps must be made available for competitors and support crews. Airspace and geographic maps are to be displayed at meet headquarters and on launch. Individual maps must be made available to each competitor and support crews.

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- The Meet Organizer must provide information about emergency facilities nearest to launch. The information can be included in the registration package or posted at the meet. When the information is posted, competitors and drivers must be notified of where to find the emergency information at the pilot briefings.
- Meet Organizers must note on the sanction application and on meet announcements if food and lodging is limited near launch.
- The Meet Organizer must supply wind indicators on launch and designated landing areas if manned.
- The Meet Director may disqualify any competitor who fails to comply with the competitor responsibilities listed in section 8 of this sanctioning manual.
- No additional flying contests (spot landing, aerobatics, etc.) for the competitors shall be allowed by the Meet Director between take-off and landing of the task flight on any competition day.
- When towing, the pilot's tow bridle shall be equipped with a weak-link along with a primary and secondary means of disconnecting the towline. A properly placed weak-link may serve as the secondary release. The tow pilot shall be equipped with at least one method of completely releasing the towline from the towing device.
- Oxygen must be reasonably available when applicable.
- Radio receivers compatible with meet frequencies for all pilots are strongly recommended when a competition event involves cross-country flying.
- Meet Directors and Safety Directors may not compete in their own tasks.
- Meet Organizers are allowed to require SPOT or similar satellite tracking devices if such a requirement is set forth in their sanctioning application and notice of the requirement is included in all pre-meet information and publicity. Even when a satellite tracking device is not a competition requirement, meet organizers are encouraged to monitor satellite tracking devices to add safety for those pilots that do use the device.

4.2 Post-Comp Requirements

- **Within 7 Days – File all Incident Reports:** Meet Directors and Meet Organizers must ensure that complete, accurate reports for all incidents and accidents occurring during the event (including any practice days) are sent in through the <https://AIRS.ushpa.aero> accident reporting system within 7 days after conclusion of the competition.

In addition, all accidents and incidents must be reported using the Potential Claim Notification form (available on the AIRS "Thank You" page) within 7 days after the conclusion of the competition. Failure to report accidents/incidents may result in denial of coverage by the insurance company if a claim is filed.

Failure to meet this reporting deadline could result in forfeiture of the Performance Bond and/or requirement of a Performance Bond to approve future Sanction Applications. The Competition Committee chair will verify with USHPA legal, as deemed necessary, that organizers have submitted required reports.

- **Within 7 Days – Submit Official Results:** The Meet Director and Meet Organizer are both responsible to ensure all official meet results are sent to the USHPA NTSS Coordinator and the FAI CIVL Competition Coordinator (if applicable) within 7 days of the end of the competition.

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- **Within 15 Days – Provide Participant Contact List:** In order to implement the online survey, all meet organizers are required to provide the USHPA office an electronic list of all participants, including their email addresses and USHPA numbers, no later than 15 days after the end of the competition. This information can be provided in conjunction with results for NTSS.
- **Within 30 Days – Return Participant Waivers:** The Meet Director and Meet Organizer are both responsible to ensure all waivers (original paper copies, signed in ink) are returned to USHPA within 30 days of the end of the competition.

4.3 Minimum Quality Standards

- Adequate, well trained staff.
- Good communication with pilots (pilot meetings, rules packet, etc.).
- Emergency contact information readily available for all pilots, including insurance information and medical preconditions.
- If retrieval is provided it must be adequate for the needs of the competition.
- Weather briefings each day.
- Adequate restroom facilities.
- Adequate communication among staff (radios).
- Adequate set-up arrangements/ launch directions.
- Sanctioned competitions must provide awards for place finishers in each class according to the table below:

Paragliding	Hang Gliding
Competition Class: First-Third	Flex Wing: First-Third
C Class: First-Third ¹	Rigid Class 5: First ²
B Class: First-Third ¹	Rigid Class 2: First ²
Women: First-Third ¹	Sport Class: First-Third ¹
Identify the top 10 overall	Women: First
	Identify the top 10 overall
¹ If at least 5 competitors in class, otherwise only first place	
² If at least 2 competitors in class	

- The meet director or organizer should inform participants that they will receive an online survey from USHPA where they can comment on this and future competitions. The survey will cover topics such as:
 - Problems encountered that need to be solved for future meets.
 - Solutions to common problems that should become standard practice (for example, cloud flying, thunderstorm avoidance, crowded gaggles, limited launch access, etc.).

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- Ways USHPA can better support competition in general and the competition specifically.
- Ideas to attract more pilots to competition.

5. Meet Organizer

A Meet Organizer is a person or group who is responsible for all the organizational matters of a meet before, during, and after the meet. These matters include, but are not limited to funding, arranging officials, arranging and preparing take-off and landing sites, arranging tow systems (where applicable), arranging meeting venues, communicating with local officials and land owners, arranging transportation and food when necessary, arranging for weather information, paying sanction fees, contacting pilots, advertising the competition, arranging for appropriate insurance, etc. The Meet Organizer works to ensure a successful competition that meets the USHPA requirements set forth in the USHPA Sanction Manual and the relevant USHPA competition Rulebook (Race to Goal, Open Distance, Aerobatic, or Accuracy Spot Landing).

6. Meet Director

A Meet Director is selected by the meet organizer to administer the actual daily running of the competition and is responsible for ensuring the overall quality and operations during the competition. The Meet Director is responsible for:

- Running pilots meetings.
- Interpreting the rules, setting the daily schedule, overseeing the launch system and operation, appointing the committees, overseeing the scoring, overseeing the weather reports, organizing and directing all other officials, volunteers, and participants, ruling on disputes, etc.
- Working closely with the Meet Organizer prior to the start of the competition to ensure all organizational aspects are addressed.
- Working with the Meet Organizer during the competition to ensure a successful competition that meets the USHPA requirements set forth in the USHPA Sanctioning Manual and the relevant USHPA competition Rulebook.
- Taking the Pre-Competition Risk Assessment into consideration when fashioning the local rules and taking the Continuing Risk Assessment into consideration in running the competition as the competition progresses. (Refer to the Risk Assessment Appendix.)
- The Meet Director may be the same individual as the Meet Organizer.
- Meet Director must appoint either a separate Safety Director or Safety Committee made up of pilots.

6.1 Qualifications for Meet Director

- Shall have a minimum H2 or P2 rating.
- Must have a firm but understanding personality.
- Must be willing to listen to input from others, but also able to make a decision based on safety, fairness and the rules.
- Must be a person who believes that rules make things fair for everyone and who doesn't shy away from making tough but fair decisions.
- Must have a willingness to learn.

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- Must be able to work and remain calm under pressure.
- Must be safety-minded.
- Must be fair-minded.
- Must be respected by Competitors.
- Must be organized and be able to multi task.
- Must have knowledge of weather and local micrometeorology or willing to have a knowledgeable person to fill that role.
- Recommended experience:
 - Has run local meets
 - Has worked at a meet in some capacity other than Meet Director, such as, Safety Director, Launch Director, Scorekeeper, etc.
 - Has participated in competitions as a competitor
- Meet directors should be familiar with the following and be able to quickly reference specifics as needed:
 - USHPA Sanctioning Manual
 - USHPA competition Rulebook for the appropriate discipline (Race to Goal, Open Distance, Aerobatic, or Accuracy Spot Landing)
 - Meet-specific regulations
 - Airspace locations and Part 103 rules
 - Sport Pilot rules relating to legal tug / towing activity at tow meets
 - CIVL Section 7 Rules and regulations

6.2 Meet Director Apprenticeship Program

The USHPA Meet Director Apprenticeship Program is designed to give training to individuals who are interested in directing a competition but have no previous experience.

Apprenticeship requests are to be submitted to the Competition Committee for review. The Competition Committee will attempt to match apprentice applicants to participating competitions.

Apprentices may not serve as Meet Directors, Safety Directors or Launch Directors or be competitors in the competition for which they are apprenticing. They are expected to be helpful, present and in training for the entire competition.

7. Safety Director

The Safety Director's responsibility is to attempt to assist participants, officials, and spectators in identifying and managing risks encountered during the competition. To that end, a Safety Director will perform risk assessments (see Pre-Competition Risk Assessment and During Competition Risk Assessment in the Appendix) and make the results of those risk assessments available to all participants, officials and spectators so that they can utilize those risk assessments in managing the risks that they encounter during the competition. The Safety Director may take actions to attempt to reduce the risks identified in the risk assessment.

Recognizing that the sports of hang gliding and paragliding contain inherent risk, and that competition in hang gliding and paragliding may contain even more risks, many of which no degree of caution could ever protect against, and recognizing that pilots are responsible for evaluating and determining

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the risks they are willing to take, the safety director is not tasked with ensuring the safety of the pilots, the officials, the spectators or any other participants in a Sanctioned Competition.

8. Responsibilities of Competitors

All competitors must adhere to the following requirements. Any competitor who wilfully fails to comply with these requirements may be disqualified from the competition by the Meet Director, is ineligible to receive any awards at the competition, and his or her participation in the competition may not be counted in connection with any scoring system, pilot ranking system, or team selection system.

- All competitors must sign the USHPA Competition Waiver as well as any site and individual waivers as required by the Meet Organizer. If the competitor is under 18 years of age, the USHPA Competition Waiver and any site and individual waivers must be signed by a parent (or guardian) and the signature notarized.
- Each competitor must preflight his/her own equipment prior to launch. Each competitor must perform a hang-check or harness-check prior to launch in front of launch personnel designated by the meet organizer. **WARNING:** Failure to preflight equipment or to perform hang-checks or harness-checks can, and has, resulted in serious bodily injury and death. Neither the Meet Organizer (nor its staff), nor the USHPA undertakes any duty to competitors to ensure that their equipment is properly assembled or to ensure that the competitor is properly and securely attached to their aircraft. The competitor is solely responsible for his/her own safety, including the proper set-up and connection to glider, harness and other related equipment.
- Must be a current USHPA "Pilot" or "Rogallo" member with the exception of pilots with a foreign address. Foreign pilots must purchase a 30-day USHPA membership.
- Must possess a minimum pilot proficiency rating as listed below (or foreign equivalent with IPPI card). The meet director may increase this requirement in the local rules, as long as it is specified on the sanction application.

Race to Goal	H3/P3
Open Distance	H3/P3
Accuracy Spot Landing	H3/P3
Aerobatics	H2/P3
League/developmental	H2/P2

- Must possess any special skill ratings relevant to the competition or site.
- Parental (or guardian's) written consent (notarized) must be obtained if the competitor is under 18 years of age.
- Must sign USHPA Competition Waiver as well as any site and individual waivers as required by the Meet Organizer.
- Must follow the Competitors Code of Conduct (See relevant USHPA Rulebook).
- Must understand that safety is the sole responsibility of the pilot.
- Must fly with appropriate safety equipment that shall include at a minimum helmet and a reserve parachute.
- Must use appropriate flotation devices when a water landing is probable.
- Must understand and obey all applicable airspace rules, local, state and federal laws, landowner and site restrictions.

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- Must be thoroughly familiar with all applicable competition rules.
- Are expected to attend all meetings, briefings, roll calls, etc. as requested, and are responsible for staying informed of all schedule changes, course modifications, rule amendments, etc.
- Must preflight all equipment prior to launch and perform a hang-check or harness-check prior to launch in front of qualified launch personnel (i.e., launch director or their designees). However, the pilot is solely responsible for proper set-up and connection to glider, harness and other related equipment.
- Must decline launch if they think conditions are unsafe or are too advanced for their skill level.
- Must fly within their abilities and in safe mental/physical condition and must terminate their flight if conditions on course become unsafe.
- Must follow generally accepted right of way and thermal etiquette rules.
- Must notify the Safety Director and/or Meet Director as soon as possible, when an emergency occurs.
- Must be in contact with meet officials as required in the local rules.
- Competitors wilfully violating any of the above shall be subject to penalty or disqualification.

9. Sanction Procedure

Sanction applications are to be submitted via the online sanction application form at ushpa.aero at least 15 days prior to the Fall Board of Directors meeting (or October 1st, whichever is earlier). Submitted events will be posted on a tentative calendar so that meet organizers and competitors can see which events are being considered and so the appropriate sub-committee chair can work with the competition organizers to proactively eliminate conflicts with other US and important foreign events. Competitions can be submitted after the above deadline but will not necessarily be considered for sanction if they overlap or directly conflict with events submitted prior to the above deadline, as determined by the relevant competition sub-committee working with effected meet organizers. The Competition Committee may assess a late fee of 50% of the sanction fee for requests submitted after the above deadlines.

The Competition Committee Chair shall promptly forward the meet announcements of all sanctioned/accredited competitions to the USHPA person in charge of the web site and magazine editor. The meet announcements shall be promptly placed on the USHPA web site and in the next issue of the magazine.

9.1 Sanction Fees and Performance Bond

Sanction fees and performance bonds are assessed according to the following table:

Event type	Sanction fees	Performance Bond*
ALL	\$100	The greater of \$250 or one competition entry fee.

*If organizer has run at least 2 successful comps with no sanctioning issues the bond is waived. The bond also may be waived at the discretion of the Competition Committee.

Performance bond will be returned promptly upon submission of any required Potential Claim Notification reports to Recreation RRG, and scores and accident/incident reports to USHPA. In the case of a National Championship event, fulfillment of CIVL sanctioning requirements, including submission of results for WPRS, is also required before return of any performance bond.

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9.2 Withdrawal of Sanction by USHPA

The Meet Organizer understands and agrees that the USHPA sanction for the competition may be lifted, suspended, removed or revoked at any time, before, during, or after the sanctioned period of the contest should the USHPA determine, in good faith, that the competition does not meet all of the conditions and requirements for USHPA sanction.

Complaint procedure: If a formal, written complaint is received by USHPA's Competition Committee no later than 10 days after the final day of the competition, the Competition Committee may initiate an investigation into violations. The Competition Committee will make a recommendation to the Executive Committee within 45 days. Should it be determined by the Competition Committee and approved by the Executive Committee that a sanctioned competition has violated its agreement with USHPA, the sanction may be revoked. If revoked, the Meet Organizer or Meet Director may make an appeal within 10 days of the revocation notification to USHPA's Board of Directors. The Board of Directors will make a determination no later than the next Board meeting.

If a deficiency is discovered before or during a competition that would warrant the revocation of sanctioning the Competition Committee will take all reasonable steps to help the organizer/meet director remedy the deficiency.

10. Appendix 1

10.1 Definition of Classes

The following class definitions are assumed to be in compliance with the latest CIVL class definitions (where applicable). If they are not, the latest CIVL class definitions will be used in the competition.

10.1.1 Class 1

Hang Gliders having a rigid primary structure with pilot weight shift as the sole means of control, and which are able to demonstrate consistent ability to safely take-off and land in nil-wind conditions. Subsidiary controls affecting trim and/or drag are permitted, but only if they act symmetrically.

10.1.2 Class 2

Hang gliders having a rigid primary structure with movable aerodynamic surfaces as the primary method of control, and which are able to demonstrate consistent ability to safely take off and land in nil-wind conditions.

10.1.3 Class 3

Hang Gliders having no rigid primary structure (paragliders), and which are able to demonstrate consistent ability to safely take-off and land in nil-wind conditions.

10.1.4 Class 4

Hang gliders having a rigid primary structure with movable aerodynamic surfaces as the sole method of control in the roll axis and which are able to demonstrate consistent ability to safely take off and land in nil-wind conditions. No pilot fairings are permitted. No pilot surrounding structures are permitted, apart from a harness and control frame.

10.1.5 Sport Class HG

Same as class 1 and must have a king post which is an essential part of the design and that supports the majority of the wing load when the wing is not flying; must be current HGMA, BHPA or DHV certified production model for sale to the general public or have previously been

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available for sale for at least one year; must be constructed of original parts only, except for streamlined down/base tubes supplied by the manufacturer; pitch stability devices must be within the manufacturer's stated tolerances.

10.1.6 Single Surface Class HG

Single surface hang glider that also meets the sport class definition above.

10.1.7 Class A PG

A glider that has been tested by the DHV with an LTF class of 1, or with an EN certification of A.

10.1.8 Class B PG

A glider that has been tested by the DHV with an LTF class of either 1 or 1-2, or with an EN certification of either A or B.

10.1.9 Class C PG

A glider that has been tested by the DHV with an LTF of 1, 1-2, or 2, or with an EN certification of A, B, or C.

10.1.10 Competition Class PG

A glider with any EN certification or permitted in FAI Category 1 Cross-Country events (CIVL Competition Class, aka "CCC").

11. Appendix 2: Risk Assessment

11.1 Pre-Competition Risk Assessment

At a minimum should include:

1. Competition Launch Site Risks
 - a. launch setup area
 - b. launch clearance / obstructions
 - c. launch wind direction and velocity
 - d. wind indicators
2. Competition Landing Zone Risks
 - a. Location(s) of landing zone(s)
 - b. Wind indicators
 - c. Size of landing zone(s)
 - d. Identification of places along route where there are no potential landing zones
 - e. Obstructions and Dangers
 - i. Power Lines
 - ii. Controlled Airspace
 - iii. Active Airspace
3. Competition format Risks
 - a. race to goal
 - b. cross-country
 - c. spot landing
 - d. speed gliding
 - e. etc . . .
4. Air Traffic Risks – Risks of Collisions in Air

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- a. at /over launch
 - b. in route
 - c. at /over goal
- 5. Launch Procedure
 - a. Open Launch
 - b. Ordered Launch
 - c. Unobserved Launch
- 6. Weather Conditions
 - a. Typical Local Weather
 - b. Storm fronts and current conditions
- 7. Competition Route Risks
 - a. Geographic factors
 - b. Weather factors
 - c. Communication factors
 - d. Suitable Landing Areas along the competition route
 - e. Airspace factors
- 8. Skills necessary to competently fly the site
 - a. USHPA rating and special skills
 - b. Other skills not requiring a USHPA special skills sign off
- 9. Equipment Risks
 - a. Suitable gliders for conditions and tasks
 - b. Reserve parachutes
 - c. Helmets
 - d. Flight instruments
 - e. GPS
 - f. Cameras
 - g. Food and Water
 - h. Clothing
 - i. Oxygen
 - j. Wheels
 - k. Tow release
- 10. Retrieval Risks
 - a. Suitable Landing Zones along the route
 - b. Chase crew
 - c. Chase vehicle
- 11. Communications
 - a. Availability/dependability of radio frequencies and repeaters
 - b. Availability/dependability of cell phone service

11.2 During Competition Risk Assessment

At a minimum should include:

- 1. Weather Risk Assessment (Continuing assessment during competition)
 - a. Input from typical weather information sources
 - b. Input from participating pilots
 - c. Input from chase teams
 - d. Input from other meet personnel
- 2. Communications
 - a. Availability/dependability of radio frequencies and repeaters
 - b. Availability/dependability of cell service
- 3. Reported Risks
 - a. Risks reported by pilots
 - b. Risks reported by meet staff
 - c. Risks reported by spectators

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4. Competitor Decisions Relating to Risk
 - a. Identify risky behavior engaged in by participants during the competition
 - b. Penalize behavior that engenders unacceptable risk
 - c. Reward safe behavior
 - d. Publicize risky behavior as "unsafe" to field of competitors

12. Appendix 3: USHPA Emergency Response Guidelines

It is not USHPA's intent or purpose to train or ensure for all safety, rescue, medical or incident management concerns that may occur during competitions. The following general guidelines are in place to assist the Meet and Safety Directors. By adhering to the following, the Safety Director will be able to support other agencies and better manage any internal resources we might offer.

The single most important parameter in effectively managing an incident is coordination and utilization of the local resources. Keep in mind that local Fire/EMS/Law Enforcement have legal jurisdiction should an emergency incident occur (even if the Competition Organizers have provided on scene responders). It is very helpful to develop a relationship with these agencies prior to the event. Understand that any escalation of response or resources must go through their "chain of command" (example: military air support). These agencies should understand that a missing or downed pilot has a high probability of severe trauma and is not the same as an overdue hiker. It would be prudent to treat these incidents as a downed aircraft until proven otherwise.

Safety/Emergency Plan A thorough Safety/Emergency plan could include the following:

Personal Pilot Information

Emergency contact information should be readily available for all pilots, including insurance information and any pertinent medical history.

Document where a pilot is staying and who his closest friends/contacts are at the Competition. This is very helpful when someone has not checked in or if you are developing a habits/skill profile during a search.

Wing AND Reserve Parachute colors should be recorded and available.

Emergency Response

The Safety Director may choose to staff on site volunteers for rescue and/or first aid. These duties may also be delegated to the Local Authority (dialing 911 or other predetermined number). In either case it would be beneficial to identify and know how to contact any local resources. Keep in mind these resources vary greatly by location. Some agencies should be contacted prior to the event, especially if they will be your first responders. Following are some common local resources:

- Fire/EMS Departments including Air Ambulance (Helicopter) Services
- Search and Rescue (SAR)
- Law Enforcement Agencies
- Emergency Facilities (Hospitals)
- Civil Air Patrol (CAP)

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It is also helpful to identify and discuss with your Local Authority the parameters and procedures to mobilize any other resources (such as Military Air Search). Remember to tell these resources about pilot tracking devices in use.

Any action or notifications should be initiated through the Safety Director, Meet Director or their designee.

Keep in mind that in an Open Distance or Race to Goal Competition the Local Authority/First Responders may be many miles from launch!

Communications

A Safety/Task Frequency is used to maintain an open channel for task instructions and safety items. Examples are:

- Launch is open/closed.
- Task is stopped.
- A pilot needs assistance.
- Declare an emergency.

A Retrieve Frequency is used to coordinate pilots on the ground with retrieval support.

An Emergency Frequency is used to maintain uninterrupted communications for any emergency/rescue response. Ideally a pilot requesting assistance would be instructed to go to this channel but keep in mind they may be unable to do so – do not assume they are on the emergency channel. All those involved in the rescue should use this channel. This ensures an open Safety/Task channel.

A Uniform Communications Format makes radio traffic more manageable. Participants can avoid confusion and increase safety and efficiency by adhering to the following guidelines:

Think through what you want to say before you speak and use clear English.

Be brief.

Acknowledge message. Directions, coordinates, etc. should be repeated back for clarification that the message was understood.

Remember and use “the four W’s”. Say:

- Who you want
- Who you are
- Where you are
- What you want/need

These are the very basics and participants are encouraged to learn more about proper “Radio Etiquette” (available from HAM groups and other outside sources).

Pilot Accountability

Establish a mandatory check in/check out procedure.

Sanctioned paragliding competitions require a satellite tracking device, such as SPOT or Delorme InReach. Even when not a requirement, organizers are encouraged to monitor such devices to add safety for those pilots who do use them.

Incident Management The following are suggestions should an incident occur:

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Administration

The Meet and Safety Directors can quickly become overwhelmed and must be able to delegate responsibilities to competent individuals. If the Competition (Task/Retrieve) is still ongoing it is important not to neglect current duties while addressing the incident.

Even small incidents are best managed with one person directly in charge of actual operations. This may be the Safety Director, Meet Director or their designee.

Large scale or prolonged operations, especially those involving other agencies, should have a command center established. This could be at Headquarters or possibly at the Local Authority Command Post. On long term or complex incidents that require several resources consider designating these positions:

Incident Command is who is ultimately in charge of the incident. It could be the Meet or Safety Director but may be delegated to another if the Competition is ongoing.

Operations Officer oversees and assigns resources (search or rescue, advisors, etc.).

A Liaison Officer is assigned as a direct contact between the Competition Organizer/Director, USHPA, and other involved agencies (Fire/EMS). They should be at the agency's Command Post.

Accountability This is an individual or group that tracks all who participate in resolving the incident. Assignments and locations are recorded as well as check in/out times. They keep track of who, where, what and when during a search and rescue. This is of great importance, especially when trying to garner support from the local agencies. This is in addition to, and separate from, the Competition Pilot Accountability.

One person may fill multiple roles if things are not too complex but it is advisable to spread out the duties to avoid being over tasked.

Internal Resources

On site staff and volunteers may be deployed to a specific objective. This should be initiated by the Safety Director, Meet Director or their designee.

Search teams are composed of two or more people equipped with telephone, radio, GPS, and ideally a SPOT or other tracking device. They should have a specific assignment with check in and out times to ensure a thorough search and no duplication of efforts.

Pilots can be used to define and coordinate search areas, help other agencies in assessing eyewitness reports, or assigned to assist outside resources.

All internal resources should follow a strict accountability plan. Assignments should be recorded with check in/check out procedures and a process used to track progress. Record who, where, what and when during an incident to keep track of all our people.

Other Possible Considerations

One person may be assigned to the family of an injured pilot. This "Family Liaison" is the direct contact with the family. They are responsible for relaying any pertinent rescue or medical information.

A Public Information Officer (PIO) can be assigned to interact with news media or other groups.