

AGENDA ITEM 7.5

REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

**25TH World Aerobatic Championships
19-29 August 2009**



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Personnel

We had one person heading up the SMS/IT (same person for whole contest period), with an assistant (two people covered this role).

We had another company managing the wireless networking who had also someone on site for support for the whole contest period.

Responsibilities

- Ground Radios - charging, distribution
- Airband Radios - charging, distribution, setup of base-station
- Wireless Network for laptops on site - management
- Contest Mobile Phones - address book programming, broadcasting SMS texts, adding credit
- Twitter - setup
- Webcam - setup
- Printers, Photocopiers, Laptops - setup, distributing consumables
- Freestyle - collecting and playing music for flights
- Closing Ceremony - TV screen setup, Main screen presentation with anthems
- IT Support - organisation and pilots

Preparing the mobile phones

We obtained a group of around 40 Pay As You Go mobile phones for as good a price as possible. We took out all of the SIM cards and noted the mobile numbers against the people who they were assigned to.

A SIM card programmer was used to write the full list of contacts to each SIM card.



The SMS broadcast system

A mobile phone company in the UK (T-mobile) has a web-text system where contacts can be arranged in groups.

While we could have used Skype or a number of other services, the T-mobile web-text system meant that messages could be seen to come from a particular number and known to be authentic. They also offer a call tariff that gave us unlimited texts for a reasonable fee for a month period.

These were combined to a system where I (and others) could log in and send texts to different groups of people (eg. Jury, Team Managers, Flight Line, All). We found in practice that the system was most useful for broadcasting a message to all and soon decided to just use that group.

The messages were all sent by the same person (myself) which gave some consistency and ease of use for the organisation.

The Twitter addition

After a few days, more pilots and members in the organisation who did not have the mobile phones were asking for their personal mobiles to be added to the broadcast list. The group texting system we used happened to have a limit of 50 contacts per group, so this became full.

In discussion with the Contest Director, we decided that as the information was of an open nature, it could be broadcast without restriction. The twitter system is such a broadcast system, and by setting up an account - WAC2009SMS - we could then text to the given account number which would also send a message for twitter to broadcast.

People could then subscribe to the WAC2009SMS twitter feed and receive the updates. This could, in theory, be used instead of the web-text service, but can be slower and less reliable, so provides a useful addition.

It does also have the advantage that previous messages are available:

<http://twitter.com/WAC2009SMS> .

Wireless access

This was a less visible success, but there was free, open wireless internet access across the whole area of the site used. This was made possible by bringing in a specialist company.



They used high quality wireless kit made by Ruckus which although expensive to buy does work significantly better than the alternatives. It is also easier to set up as it uses mesh networking between access points (we had 4) rather than cabling.

Laptops, Printers, Photocopiers

There was a specific requirement for a collating photocopier for the Scoring Office which was sourced from a local supplier.

Printers were loaned to us from HP on evaluation.

Laptops were loaned to us by a local IT support company in return for displaying some banners.

Websites

A number of websites carried information on WAC 2009.

Results: <http://www.civa-results.com/2009/WAC09/indexpage.htm>

SMS updates: <http://twitter.com/WAC2009SMS>

CD updates: <http://wac2009.blogspot.com>

FAI updates : <http://www.fai.org/aerobatics/PresidentPage>

General Information: <http://www.wac2009.com> and <http://www.wac2009admin.com>

Flying Aces Live Broadcast: <http://www.airports.tv/worldaerobaticchampionshiplive.asp>

Live Broadcast Schedule: <http://wac2009.com/schedule.html>

Highlights:

<http://www.airports.tv/index.asp?bcpid=4552242001&bclid=1321242208&bctid=35471579001>

Webcam: <http://www.wac2009webcam.com>

Others (Google Picassa - general WAC photography)

<http://picasaweb.google.com/radishism/WAC2009#>

<http://picasaweb.google.com/nigelbutler30/WorldAerobaticsChampionshipAndAirshow#>

<http://picasaweb.google.com/Redsnapperimages/WorldAerobaticChampionshipsAugust2009#>