

Minutes of the Annual Congress of the IWWF Confederation E&A

**Hotel AQUATIS, Lausanne, Switzerland,
Saturday 28 January 2017, commencing at 09.00 hrs**

1. Welcome by the Acting President of the E&A Confederation

Depy Papadimitriou welcomes everybody to this 70th edition of the E&A Congress, here in Lausanne, Switzerland, where it all started 70 years ago. She explains that we haven't seen her for some time due to some health problems and the loss of her husband. She invites Fred Dupanloup, the vice president of the Swiss Waterski and Wakeboarding Federation, to say a few words.

Fred Dupanloup welcomes everybody on behalf of the Swiss Federation and wishes us a nice congress and meetings here. He thanks Florian Butty for organising everything, and says to contact him if there are any problems!

2. Verification of attendances and voting powers

Sid Adriaensen announces that we lost two persons last year: Lord Snowden (GBR), an important patron member of the British Federation, and Victor Melnik (BLR), merited coach, former champion and record holder of Soviet Union and Belarus in tricks.

Our special guests here today are Kuno Ritschard, Gill Hill and David Skillen, who are respectively IWWF president, secretary-general and treasurer. We also have Paul Fong, the IWWF executive director, Uwe Goldstein, the chairman of the IWWF Cableway Development Committee, Des Burke-Kennedy, the chairman of the IWWF Media Commission and of the IWWF Hall of Fame Committee, and Bruno Rixen, patron member of E&A.

Several honorary members are also in attendance: Kuno Ritschard, Gill Hill, Andy Harris, Franz Kuhn, Louis Polome, Franz Kirsch, Juergen Pitz and Chantal Amade-Escot.

Written apologies were received from Aubrey Sheena and Paul Jensch, as well as by Jean-Michel Cau, Thea Klarenbeek and Franz Hebenstreit, who cannot attend because of illness.

Sid Adriaensen then reads out the list of countries represented here today and asks if there are any remarks (*none*).

3. Appointment of Congress Chairperson

Depy Papadimitriou announces that the Admincom once more proposes Andy Harris as the Congress chairperson. Accepted by acclamation.

Andy says that he is honoured to have been asked, and welcomes everyone here in Lausanne. He then announces the house rules and the arrangements for the day and jokes that because of Brexit the fine for any cell phone that rings is now 20 euro instead of 10!

4. Appointment of scrutineers

Andy Harris announces that Juergen Pitz, Gill Hill and Franz Kuhn have been designated to act as scrutineers if a vote is needed.

5. Opening of Congress by Chairperson and confirmation properly convened in accordance with Statutes Art 16

Andy Harris confirms that this Congress is properly convened.

6. Approval of Minutes of 2016 Annual Congress (Castelldefels, Spain)

The minutes are unanimously accepted by show of cards.

7. Discussion and approval of Reports

Andy Harris suggests voting for the approval of all reports en block, which is accepted by Congress.

7.1. The President

Depy Papadimitriou has no comments to her report and there are no questions.

7.2. The Secretary General

Sid Adriaensen explains that the official E&A website contains all information regarding the 2017 congress under the item Office Mailings - Congress 2017. The website also contains useful information such as the Guidelines for Bulletins.

Important news on world level is that Kuno Ritschard will retire in September 2017.

Some candidates for the IWWF presidency are here today and will present themselves to the Congress.

Also, a vote will be held at the World Congress to decide on reducing the number of Executive Board (EB) members by eliminating the vice presidents from the five Confederations. E&A hopes this proposal will pass.

Furthermore, we will have to adhere to the IWWF constitution and split up the confederations for Europe and Africa. For this we have prepared a memorandum of understanding and we will need the approval of congress of our draft.

7.3. The President of the Barefoot Council

Rob Molenkamp is not present because the Barefoot Council choose not to meet here in Lausanne. Rob asked Andy Harris to take any questions on the report.

Steffi Kirsch wonders why Rob wrote in his report that there was a problem with the judges at the 2016 World Championships in the USA. The skiers had no info about this and Franz Kirsch, who was team captain, thought that the event went very well, so what was the problem? Andy Harris replies that there were some issues re. the way the officials were assigned to their duties. Some officials complained that they had too much work and others that they didn't have enough. This was an internal problem and it has been solved. Steffi Kirsch thinks it were very good championships and regrets that the gold medals won by region E&A are not mentioned in the report. Andy Harris agrees and adds that the world champion was again from our Confederation.

7.4. The President of the Cableski Council

Marie-Anne Persoons has no comments to her report and there are no questions.

7.5. The President of the Council for Disabled

Paul Airey has no comments to his report and there are no questions.

7.6. The President of the Racing Council

Mike Waterman has no comments to his report and there are no questions.

7.7. The President of the Tournament Council

Candido Moz explains that the total of 185 homologated events in 2016 represents the biggest number up to now. He thanks and congratulates all federations who helped realise this.

Yesterday the Tournament Council approved a new European slalom record by Manon Costard (FRA).

From this year on, the intention to enter can no longer be submitted without paying the corresponding fee, according to the rule book. The same goes for the entry forms.

Aleco Keusseoglou (MON) wonders if it would be possible to pay immediately the full amount instead of paying two times? Candido Moz confirms that they will make it possible.

7.8. The President of the Wakeboard Boat Council

Florian Butty shows a video which resumes the Wakeboard Boat activities of last year. There are no questions.

7.9. The President of the Wakeboard Cable Council

Simoni Sivieri is not here today. Aaron Armborst announces that the Wakeboard Cable Council co-opted Roy Ben Natan (ISR) yesterday, subject to approval by his Federation.

There are no questions.

8. Financial Report

Andy Harris comments that a lot of work goes into making this report. Dominique Lakens Douwes thanks Sid, Sven and Brit for their help. A lot of notes were added to the report to help explain.

The good news is that the over 100.000 euro in open debts on the balance sheet of 30th November now have been reduced to only 35.000 euro, so we are really up to date. Nearly all older invoices have also been paid, so now the outstanding debts concern mostly very recent invoices.

Colin Hart (GBR) asks what the funding by ARISF and IOC is, and why is it going down. Dominique Lakens Douwes explains that the IOC is an organisation that asks to send a plan, based on which they decide whether they want to spend money on us, and how much, so it's never clear how much it's going to be each year. IWWF gets the money and then transfers our part.

Gill Hill confirms that this IOC and ARISF money is project driven, so it will fluctuate, and that it is correct that E&A has to submit a project. Sometimes the project chosen will mainly be in Africa, sometimes PANAM and Asia, or an anti-doping project which doesn't go the confederations at all, etc.

8.1. Presentation of the Accounts up to 30.11.2016

Dominique Lakens Douwes has no further comments. There are no questions at this point.

8.2. Honorary Auditor's Report

Franz Kuhn has no comments to his report and there are no questions.

8.3. Appointment of Honorary Auditor

Andy Harris announces that the Admincom has asked Franz Kuhn to act once more as Honorary Auditor for 2017, and that he has accepted. Andy Harris then asks for a round of applause for the finance team for doing a good job, resulting in almost no questions!

9. Admission of new members and resignation of members

Sid Adriaensen announces that Lithuania now is an associate member. This is the only change in the European confederation. Due to financial problems Sudan and Nigera were given the chance to become associate members, but they did not pay their subscription fee,

so they are now considered as lapsed. Morocco is a new associate member for the African confederation.

Louis Polome comments that the new membership of Morocco is good news regarding the development of water skiing in Africa, and that the Moroccan federation is very keen, they already sent skiers to the tournament junior world championships. The Zimbabwe federation was very active in the past but had to face political problems. They are now again having training sessions with more than 25 persons, and they would like to sign up as an associate member.

Egypt on the other hand is a very active member.

There are no questions.

10. Election of the E&A President

Andy Harris explains that regrettably Alain Amade had to step back urgently, last year, due to personal reasons. Andy is happy to see him here with us today. He thanks our then Vice-President, Depy Papadimitriou, for taking his place. But we need now a permanent replacement. Our statutes dictate that we must have an election for the remaining years of the four year term. Florian Butty and Depy put their names forward, but Florian has had to withdraw his candidacy. Depy agreed to be put forward as a candidate, so she will run unopposed. Andy Harris asks the Congress if there can be a vote by acclamation, and the congress responds with a big applause and a standing ovation.

Depy Papadimitrou expresses her gratitude, and says she is moved by the fact that nobody even asked for a vote by secret ballot.

Andy Harris asks if there are any questions at this point - there are none.

11. Other reports and/or presentations

11.1. Co-opted Admincom Member

Andy Harris explains that Peter Frei was another Admincom member that had to step back last year. Morten Froulund, who was co-opted as replacement, introduces himself to the Congress. He is from Denmark and started waterskiing as a teenager. He has been an international judge for many years, and is now also vice president of the Danish federation. He looks forward to joining the Admincom, and to contribute to the good work already being done.

Andy Harris explains that the Admincom did have a succession plan in place, which had to be invoked last year. He thinks Sid Adriaensen, Dominique Lakens Douwes and Depy Papadimitrou are quite relieved that we managed to get through a difficult situation, and were able to fill the positions. This shows that we are robust and that we are able to continue when faced with problems, because of the depth of ability that we have.

11.2. Wake Surfing

Nuno D'Eca (Wakeboard Boat Council) shows a presentation of this discipline, which the IWWF wants to develop, and which will be quite important in the future. At the last EB meeting it was discussed that we should develop this as much as possible on a global level. A survey was taken, to which 30 countries responded. Nuno D'Eca thanks all these countries, because this survey helps understanding how the federations see Wake Surfing. Many want to be involved in Wake Surfing once it is properly presented. There is an interest to send teams to titled events. Environment is an issue, but according to Nuno D'Eca wake surfing creates less erosive waves than some other disciplines. The biggest concern for the federations appeared to be the lack of knowledge and of funding. So we have to train people to make them understand and do it properly. Judging and coaching seminars are very important to teach people correctly

from the beginning and to get them organised. Wake Surfing is not so complicated and the rules are very similar to Wakeboard.

Nuno D'Eca thanks Paul Fong for having had many talks with CWSA, which whom they would like to collaborate and help them organise events. Nuno D'Eca realises that they have organised some events not sanctioned by the Federations. He thinks we have to be flexible about this, and talk to these people to have proper events.

His council wants to distribute rules and guidelines to help federations, and to organise World Wake Surf Championships. He thinks we should use what works to attract people, if that's girls in bikinis then use that.

11.3. Drones

Louis Polome (RSA) comments to his report that drones are more and more present in our events. There is no doubt that this presents a different view, and that we need to use this to give a better presentation of our sport. But we need to be aware of the legal implications for using drones.

Every country has its own rules, we must be very aware of them. The event organiser is responsible for the SAFE use of a drone – not the chief judge! The official term is “remotely powered aircraft”. The organiser has to ask the permission of the civil aviation and there has to be a qualified pilot who knows the regulations. It is important that a drone should not be disruptive to the participants or the public

The document with this info is on the E&A page as a guideline (*see Congress 2017 point 9*).

Louis Polome offers his assistance with this matter when needed.

Dimos Alexopoulos (GRE) thanks Louis Polome for the work he did, and asks if this is an Admincom guideline, which Louis Polome confirms.

Andy Harris comments that the authorities in the UK are tightening up on regulations about drones. You may see them flying around everywhere, but that's not allowed; and when someone gets hurt there will be a serious problem. Properly used, they are a very valuable asset to our sport with amazing pictures.

11.4. The Event Management System

Andy Harris comments that there is no update of the subject at this point.

11.5. Medical commission

Lorenzo Benassa reads out his report regarding concussion, which is a serious problem in waterskiing and wakeboarding.

Andy Harris thinks we have to remember our responsibility for first aid, as at some competitions these facilities are lacking, while others have even too much. The big problem is the cost.

Lorenzo Benassa says that this problem may also arise during training sessions. Andy Harris agrees that often the ambulances etc will be present at the competitions, but not for training sessions.

Börje Bröstrom (SWE) asks Doctor Benassa what the next step is after an athlete has been diagnosed with a possible concussion. Doctor Benassa explains that over the next days the medical staff at the hospital will study the signs to understand if the danger is gone or not. It is not easy to demonstrate a concussion with (medical) imaging, so we have to look at biochemical signs.

There are four grades of concussion: after the 1 and 2 grade, we must wait only a few days, but with grade 3 and 4 we must wait a few months. It is important that the athlete has medical confirmation that he can return to the competition. Doctor Benassa adds that all this is in his report.

Colin Hart thanks for this report, which is interesting for judges also. He wonders if such a diagnose is the responsibility of the medical people at the event. Doctor Benassa replies that the competition doctor is responsible if present. If a concussion occurs during training, the coach or trainer would be responsible.

Andy McGuiggan (IRL) remembers that once a Korean girl fell on a trick and took a hard slap. The people in the rescue boat asked her if she knew where she was etc. So do the judges in the boat then make the initial assessment? So it could be any of us, having to make this assessment? He thinks maybe this should be incorporated in the instructions given to judges and people in rescue boats. You can't rely on it when the athletes say they're ok, as they will be eager to continue.

Des Burke Kennedy (IRL) adds that concussion is a huge issue in other sports also, like rugby, making it necessary to review the rules. He suggests laminating the guidelines and the test questions, and to put them in all boats. He thinks we have to sensibilize everybody about this. It is no laughing matter when a person doesn't know where he is after an impact.

Andy Harris thinks we all need to know what could be a possible concussion and send the person to be checked out by a professional. He reminds Congress to think about the possibility of delayed concussion and the liability involved.

Gill Hill replies that Lorenzo Benassa has prepared a document, a print ready version that can be laminated. This document will be sent to all Federations so that they can send it to all their clubs.

11.6. Uwe Goldstein, Chairman World Cable Wakeboard Commission

IWWF plans to have new international education and training centres to help countries develop Cable Wakeboard and water ski sports. They want to educate international judges and have a regional base to host international judge seminars. That way they want to be able to instruct national teams, to improve their skills and performance level, and prepare athletes for international competitions and give safety instructions to athletes and judges.

The advantages for IWWF are better competence levels, and that we can bring countries up to an international level and ensure more safety. It will also generate advertising for IWWF and the sport, and an added income for IWWF through a yearly fee with a 5 or 10 year contract. The contract partner has the advantage of having a base and advertising possibilities. The base will be a well acknowledged international competition site, putting the region on the map and create interest for international sponsors. Planned regions: China for South/East Asia. Jordan for Middle East/Europe and possibly Mexico (to be confirmed) for PANAM.

Patrice Martin (FRA) wonders who decided where these sites would be set up, because he didn't know anything about this. Uwe Goldstein replies that this was duly discussed with Paul Fong and Kuno Richards and the EB before anything was signed.

Approval of the reports by show of cards (none against, no abstentions).

Approval of the financial report by show of cards. (none against, no abstentions).

12. List of meetings

Sid Adriaensen reads out the list of meetings 2017 that were communicated to him (see *E&A website under Calendar*).

Patrice Martin (FRA) announces that the November meeting will be held in Monaco. The date of 11-12 November for the Councils and 12-14 November for the Admincom has been set and the hotel will be in Monte Carlo bay. Aleco Kusseoglu (MON) will circulate the details.

Patrice Martin is very pleased to announce an agreement was reached about the Roquebrunes site: Monaco can now co-organise any competition there, together with France. It was a big issue, but both parties now want to show that they are willing to work together. Aleco Kusseoglou thanks Peter Frei for mediating, and also the Swiss Philippe Verhaeghe, who is a professional mediator that helped them reach an agreement. He also thanks Patrice Martin for his constructive attitude.

13. Statutes changes – as circulated

Art. 6 - Languages

Sid Adriaensen explains that the old text said that the official languages are English, French and Spanish. But in reality the only language used and commonly understood in all correspondence, phone calls, etc. is English. So the proposal is to simply state that the official language is English.

Art 14 – Powers (of Congress)

The wording “*Active Members*” should be replaced with “*full or associate members*”.

Art 17 - Voting

Since a Federation can now have up to 22 votes, the Admincom proposes to change the “*with a total voting power of at least 10 votes*” to “*with a total voting power of at least 25% of the votes for general business*”.

Art 16 – Convening of meetings - Agenda

In the old text, it says that the Agenda and Reports are to be sent out to Member Federations at least 30 days before Congress. This is between Christmas and New Year - an impossible period for the office. One weekend later would make it not only easier for the office, but also for the people dealing with the finances. So we would like to have the first weekend of February as the preferred date for Congress, and reports and other documents related to a Congress are to be published on the official E&A website at least five days before Congress in order to be taken into consideration at the Congress.

Also, the wording “*Active Members*” has to be replaced by “*Full Members*”.

Donal Connolly (IRL) wonders if the date of submission of reports should be the date, and not the publication on the website, because the person who submits the document has no control over the actual publication on the E&A website. Andy Harris agrees that the wording should be changed. Cristianna Mamali (GRE) thinks it should be “*submitted at least 5 days before*” instead of “*published 5 days before*”. Marie-Anne Persoons thinks the point is that you submit a document because you would like it to be discussed, and people need time to read it, so maybe two dead lines would be in order. Louis Polome (RSA) suggests putting a deadline of 10 days for submitting and a deadline for publication of 5 days before Congress. Peter Frei (SUI) thinks that the office should confirm that they received it. Gill Hill (GBR) suggests taking out the words “*in order to be taken into consideration*” to make everything easier and to have the Congress decide what to do in case a problem should pose itself. Dimos Alexopoulos (GRE) suggests finding the correct wording and letting us vote after lunch, this is a Statute change after all.

Andy McQuiggan (IRL) thought it was about the submission date. Andy Harris confirms that is why we ask people to get things to Sid in good time. Andy McQuiggan retorts that is not what the wording reflects. Gill Hill considers this to be an administrative process, we should not put all that in the Statutes, only that we should publish those documents on time.

Börje Broström (DEN): this can go under AOB anyways. Andy Harris agrees and concludes that we just want to lay out a timetable in our Statutes and that all is on the internet now.

After the lunchbreak, Sid Adriaensen confirms that the final wording of the last sentence will be: “*Reports and other documents related to a Congress shall be published on the official E&A website at least five days before Congress.*”

The Statute changes are accepted en bloc by show of cards. All but one in favor, one against (ESP because of the removal of Spanish as an official language), no abstentions.

14. Bye-Law Changes - as circulated

S. Adriaensen reads out the changes.

Bye-Law 2.1.7. - Rights of Associated Members.

This Bye-Law needs to be updated to reflect the new IWWF rules for Associate Members.

New text: *The rights of Associate Members are determined and published by the IWWF and shall apply to the E&A Confederation.*

This rule has already been sent to the federations.

Bye-Law 3.6. – Divisional Councils – second paragraph.

We drafted a memorandum of understanding between the European and the African Confederation, and the Admincom wants to see an African representative added to all Councils during the changeover period of Africa splitting from Europe.

Andy Harris comments that the Tournament and the Cable Wakeboard Council have requested to co-opt two additional members each, to be elected at the next Congress. Sid Adriaensen: this means they will have nine elected members on those Councils, plus the Athletes Representative and the African delegate.

Bye-Law 4.5.1.1. – Bidding for Titled Events - item 7.

The proposal is to take out the requirement for a 1.000 Euro deposit.

The new text under 7) becomes:

If required by the Council a deposit may be required subject to agreement by the Bureau.

Bye-Law 4.5.1.6. Team or individual athletes not showing up.

It is felt that the text needs some clarification. *"having been entered by their Federation"* should read *"after an entry form has been submitted by their Federation"*.

Bye-Law 4.5.1.7. – Medals – Awards and restrictions.

To remove some contradictions in this text, it should be changed into *"If only a few competitors are present in any event the Council may decide the number of medals to be awarded. In which case this must be contained in their Additional Rules."*

APPENDIX C - How the yearly subscription fees are calculated

The Federations are ranked by the economic weight of the country they represent, based on the GDP Nominal = Gross Domestic Product including the cost of living.

The proposal is that the list used for an Olympic year (2016, 2020, 2024, etc.) will be used for the entire Olympic cycle (i.e. the 2020 list will also be used for 2021, 2022 and 2023).

Otherwise, changing every year makes it difficult for countries to budget this. When extreme economic changes take place, the federation concerned can ask the Admincom to be put in another group.

The limits for the groups will be reviewed at the Congress preceding the Olympic Year Congress.

A new Federation starts in Group 5 and climbs yearly one step until it reaches its real Group.

The IWWF has another system, based on the votes a Federation has at the IWWF Congress.

The IWWF contribution is fixed at 250 USD per vote. The IWWF also charges a yearly fee of 100 USD to each active Federation, "the environmental fee" which is used for its environmental and development work.

E&A has the duty to collect the IWWF contribution from its federations and then to pass this money on to the IWWF. This explains why the federations get two items on their yearly bill for the subscription, one part is E&A, the other part is IWWF.

At the November meeting we fix the exchange rate between EURO and USD, so that the Federations will know how much they will have to pay the next year.

The changes to the Bye-Laws are approved en block by show of cards.

15. Changes to the List of Obligations - as circulated

Article VII – Costs.

Sid Adriaensen: The old text mentions that *"the organizer shall be responsible for travel, board and lodging for the appointed E&A representative"*.

The Admincom feels that these travel costs should not be borne by the organizer. The E&A representative will do all the financial dealings, but sometimes the organizer will want an ambassador to come over: If so, E&A will send such a person to that competition, and the cost will be borne - for one day - by E&A central. This ambassador will be Depy Papadimitriou, if possible, but we might also send someone who lives close to the area to reduce the cost.

The relevant Council will appoint the E&A representative and will try to nominate a member of the panel of officials as such. However, when the E&A representative is not part of the panel of officials, he shall nevertheless get the same treatment as the appointed officials.

Andy Harris explains that it is a big burden on our E&A President to go to all these events, so we decided to opt for an ambassador.

Colin Hart (GBR) wonders if it is mandatory? Andy Harris: No, but it is preferable politically, to engage with the VIP's, the mayors etc, so the organizer does not have to do all of this.

Depy Papadimitrou says she cannot go to some competitions in August, but at other times it is fine.

Des Burke-Kennedy asks to please insert one extra word: for "all additional costs" instead of "all costs".

Andy McGuiggan (IRL) wonders who decides on this and who pays normally? Andy Harris: the Admincom decides who shall represent the President when she is not available.

As to the E & A representative, this person gets treated the same way if he/she were a member of the panel or not. Normally, the councils contributes to the officials travel expenses. Most of our officials travel at their own cost, some by their federation, but none by E&A. There now is an additional 20 euro levy for the officials travel towards covering these costs..

New text: *"Whenever the E&A representative is not part of the panel of officials he shall nevertheless get the same treatment as the appointed officials."*

Article XVIII – Hospitality.

Add another paragraph at the end:

When an E&A Ambassador has been appointed to an event the Organiser shall treat him as an invited VIP with free access to the VIP parking, VIP tent and amenities, final night dinner, etc.

We expect the Ambassador to be present at the event for (part of) one day, normally the final day of the event when the principal prize-giving ceremony takes place and/or when most 'political' persons are present.

In order not to burden the Organiser with major extra costs, it is however E&A Central which will pay for his travel and for his lodging (to be arranged by the organiser).

When the Organiser asks for a longer stay of the E&A Ambassador, then it is his obligation to pay for all additional costs related to this extended stay."

Approved unanimously by show of cards.

16. European confederation (EC) and African confederation (AC)

Andy Harris says this a new era for E&A: it will become EC and AC.

16.1. Approval of the outline document 'restructuring of E&A'

Louis Polome provides some background to his report.

At the 2013 IWWF Congress it was decided to have five Confederations, and the African Confederation is now looking for some more independence, by running their own administration, organising their own Congress etc. Admincom and himself have drafted a memorandum of understanding, explaining how we want to go forward. This memorandum will be presented at the next Congress. In summary: there is no change for Europe, but Africa will put in place enough administrative support etc. This will take time. In the background, African skiers and riders will continue participating at EC titled events and officials will continue reporting to EC. The African Confederation will continue to rely on the EC councils until it is sufficiently developed.

When 25 percent of the competitors are from Africa, the AC will take responsibility for an event.

Having an African delegate to the EC councils is part of this process of becoming independent.

Karim Soliman (EGY) asks if the split is time related? Louis Polome replies that the proposed percentage is when 25 percent are from Africa, but this 25 percent is just a number, it can change. The idea is to have enough people to make it a realistic choice. He asks Congress to please let them know if you have any suggestions.

Sid Adriaensen refers to the document ad hoc on our Congress website "restructuring of E&A" and draws the attention to the paragraph that the AC will get 8% of the balance value of E&A at 30/11/2017, which will become into effect when this Congress approves this outline document.

Andy Harris thanks all who have been helping with this. He feels this is a big change for our Confederations, but that it is in good hands.

The general concept is approved by show of cards.

17. Report from the IWWF

17.1. The President

Andy Harris says he is honoured to have Kuno Ritschard and David Skillen here with us.

Kuno Ritschard, the IWWF President, presents his report. He thanks everyone for given the opportunity to meet Paul Fong, who has been working for 10 months with him now, taking jobs from him to make work easier for the next president. Paul Fong is becoming a very important contact for all of us.

Kuno Ritschard then adds a few words about the Olympic situation to the report of Peter Frei, the Vice-President for the European Confederation. As the rules are now, a new sport has no more chance to become a part of the Olympics. Each organiser can select a number of sports that he would like to have for his own Olympic Games. In 2024, with Paris and LA as candidates as host countries, we might have a chance, as they have well developed waterskiing. The location will be decided upon in September. We will have to work hard to present our sport then to the organizing committee.

In the Youth Olympic Games we could be added in the future. For Buenos Aires all was already decided, but some youth sports can participate as demonstration sports. We could do a demo, but this has not yet been decided.

We need to work hard to become part of multisport games such as the European Games. The next ones will be in 2019 in Belarus. The organiser can propose sports, and Belarus has already some confirmation to get Cable skiing to be accepted. Des and himself are working to have the organizing committee accept the Belarus proposal.

There will be three important World events in this Confederation in 2017: the tournament U21 in Dnipro (UKR), the World Games in Wroclaw (POL), and the Tournament Open Championships in Paris (FRA).

The World Games' problem is that, even though the IOC has strongly recommended all national OC to support the participation at the World Games, not all are following this request. Kuno Ritschard asks everyone to please speak to their national Olympic committee and try to become part of the official delegation.

Some calendar info: there is an intention to bid from Spain for the Juniors 2018, in Sesena, and for the +35 there is an intention to bid from Canada.

He announces that this is his last year as President, after 16 years, but that he will continue to be part of waterskiing.

Andy Harris thanks him for this full report and says that he is sure this year is a bitter sweet year for us and for him.

There are no questions.

17.2. The Vice-President from the European Confederation

In addition to his report, which was published on the E&A website, Peter Frei would like to emphasize his thanks to Kuno Ritschard - who is not standing for re-election - for his great achievements. Everybody on this globe knows him. He recently concluded a 10 year contract with Correct Craft, which is a major contribution of funding, that helps us employ an executive director. He thanks Kuno Ritschard for all his work for IWWF, and before that as President for Europe and as President of the Swiss Federation.

Standing ovation for Kuno Ritschard.

There are no questions to the report.

17.3. The Vice-President from the African Confederation

Louis Polome adds to his report that he thinks they are opening a new page, but it is a lot of work. Many countries in Africa have only recreational waterskiing, only a few have a structure in place with proper competitions. They look forward to the challenge. Kuno Ritschard has always been a very great support for Africa, and he has visited them several times.

There are no questions.

17.4. Restructuring of the IWWF Executive Board

Gill Hill: We will be seeking the support of all Federations at the next Congress. With a small group we looked at the structure of the EB, because it is too big. The aim of choosing IWWF Vice-Presidents was to restructure, but we ended up with more instead of less. So we propose to remove the IWWF Vice-Presidents and have the President and Secretary General of each Confederation as its representatives. No postal ballot will be needed, as this will be discussed at the next IWWF Congress in Paris. This is not just about heavy structure, it is also a financial burden.

More information will be sent out in good time to everyone, and the necessary changes to the Bye-Laws and Statutes will be prepared.

The World Congress will be held on Thursday late afternoon of the Tournament World Championships.

There are no questions.

17.5. Show skiing

Sid Adriaensen explains that it was decided at the last IWWF EB meeting that Show Skiing will have a council. The Admincom feels that E&A should not have to create its own Show Skiing council, but a commission is possible. Three World Show Skiing tournaments have been held, but Belgium was the only participant from the European Confederation. There are show teams in a few other countries only. Sid asks the

Federations who would be interested in Show Skiing on a competitive level: Only Germany and Belgium.

Franz Kirsch (GER): there are three teams in Germany, which now make one complete team that would like to compete.

17.6. Presentation of the election candidates at the 2017 IWWF Congress

Andy Harris announces that everyone is up for re-election, and that E&A will play a big part. He thanks Paul Fong and Dave Skillen for being with us today, and asks them to introduce themselves.

He then gives the floor to David Skillen who will be standing for the position of IWWF President.

Dave Skillen, current treasurer of IWWF, expresses his gratitude for being invited to the Congress of another Confederation. He thinks it is healthy that there is more than one person running for a presidency. His home country, Australia, asked him to consider the post several years ago already, and he felt honoured that they did. He wishes to pay back the great benefit himself and his family received from the sport. He had retired, but then found out that he prefers to be more busy. He explains that he has a commercial background, and that the complexities and scale of some areas make it interesting to have someone with a banking background. He knows large firms all over the world, and also different languages, differences and customs. He likes travel and knows he will have travel a lot, since he is living in Australia. He also knows about sports training etc. He wants to bring good business principles to the sport, and hopes to help remedy the big hole Kuno Ritschard will leave.

Nuno d'Eca (POR) asks what kind of projects David Skillen envisions for IWWF.

David Skillen replies that he wishes to develop the World Championships to a high level of technicality and accurate ranking etc. He thinks we should be willing to modify rules to result in a more spectacular sport, that would be more attractive to spectators and for advertisers. We have a lot of members; we are recognised by the IOC; but we could have corporate funding for our sport. We can match our demographics to their needs. The key for us is to have funding, it's good for our athletes. He wishes to increase the communication pipeline between the IWWF and the athletes, to know their views, so IWWF knows faster the feelings from the ground.

Patrice Martin (FRA): what is your vision re the Olympic Games and a way to be part of them one day?

David Skillen thinks our sport has for a long time put time and money in this. He believes we should continue to try via our links with the national Olympic committees. Paris presents a double opportunity: our World competition will run there, and the French Federation might be able to extract something there. If this doesn't come through, then he thinks we should reassess the costs and the efforts.

Louis Polome (RSA): The question I am asked often is: why should we join the IWWF? What does it have to offer? IWWF has top class competitions, but how do we attract the federations?

David Skillen: We have people who are rich enough to buy everything they need. But since we have so many cable parks, this shows a very low amount of money is needed. This helps promote the sport. Most companies like getting this bottom segment of society, not just the elite. The digital world brings people the instant access to information that they need. We need apps, sites, manuals, that is where our children go to find a solution.

Des Burke-Kennedy: One of the many legacies Kuno Ritschard will leave behind are the World Cup series. We are approaching the magical number of 50 World Stops. Your thoughts on this?

David Skillen: Many people would be surprised by this number. Right funding is key, instead of asking the potential organisers to pay straight up.

Also standing for election as World President is Alain Amade. He jokes that he is not allowed to speak French anymore. He greets everyone and congratulates Depy with being the first female president of our Confederation. He reminds Congress that IWWF is a federation of Federations.

It has to respect the Federations, and work with them. Gill Hill and Sid Adriaensen were working on a project in Chappala, Mexico. Changing the number of EB members will now change how decisions are made. Alain Amade says he will not make a revolution in the Federation. He thinks promoting the sport is very important, and that a lot of work has been done by Kuno Ritschard and by Paul Fong in Asia.

Regarding the Olympic Games, he feels that we have no chance to be an Olympic Federation, but we could be an Olympic sport. Alain Amade applied to be part of the European Games at Baku, but there is no federation and no waterskiing there, so it was difficult, since they wanted to limit the number of sports also. But Belarus is different: it is strong in water ski. We need also to help the decision of the Belarus sport committee.

As for the World Championships in Paris, Alain Amade can offer a lot of experience in waterskiing and the Olympics, since he assisted at several Olympics, and was in charge of the French house at two Olympics, where he met a lot of contacts. Kuno Ritschard was at many meetings, showing them that we insist.

As far as the Olympic Games are concerned, Spyros Capralos from the Greek Olympic Committee can also help us to get on the programme. Alain thanks Kuno for finding an Executive Director, as well as the funding to pay him. He has known Paul Fong for a long time, and is confident he can work with him. Gill Hill is also an important part of this, and so is David Skillen.

For the World Cup Alain Amade wants to make many changes. He wonders if it still works: one stop or two stops every year, the money we have to spend, the difficulty to find an organiser. Many of the sites are in the middle of nowhere, so it is difficult to bring people to such sites. So we go to sites in the city, but then it is very difficult to put a ramp and a slalom in place. Kuno and Des worked very hard for this, but the economic situation we are in now has to be considered.

Alain asked climbing and surfing clubs how they work. They have a lot of exposure because of the World Tour USA. He thinks IWWF should not organise a professional tour, it is very difficult to find a sponsor. You can get a sponsor when you have something organised that you can sell. Also, the sponsors don't know what the money is used for.

He thinks we should create a league in charge of the Pro Tour around the world. We already have the sites, very nice sites, to organise a pro competition. In surfing there are 7 or 8 different disciplines, but there is only one in the world surf league. In Tournament we must start with slalom, which is the most popular event. The problem with Wakeboarding is that many Cable Wakeboard sites are private. And there are conflicts between the Federations and the organisers, or between the IWWF and the Federation, etc. Such a league would be more independent from this, and can organise where they want.

A league is elected by the organisers, but its boss should be the president of IWWF. All skiers have to be member of their Federation. In climbing, some organisers can be member of the Federation.

Alain Amade adds that he was President of the French Federation for more than 10 years, and a chief judge at the European and World champs, and President of E&A, so he knows about organising competitions.

He thanks everyone, because he learned a lot from all our Federations, and all our languages. He learned to listen, and to try and understand what they want to say, and then to explain. He enjoyed this exchange.

He concludes with saying that if someone wants to build a wall, a sportsman just wants to climb it faster.

Karim Soliman (EGY): Surfers is a company that is in a very big war with the Surfing Federation for 25 years. It's the same with WWA. He asks Alain Amade how he wants to deal with them?

Alain Amade says that we need to take a decision. Some sites and organisers want to create their own tour, separate from IWWF, which can be a danger to our organisation. WWA are good organisers, the only problem is the membership of their riders. If we are the engine, the motor, we can be stronger; we have to initiate.

Colin Hart (GBR) does not share Alain Amade's view about the World Cup. He thinks it's the window, the pinnacle of our sport, and that we need something like this to draw people in.

Alain Amade agrees on this, but thinks they are very expensive, and that we do not get our money back. Every year there are less and less stops. We need more exposure for sure. If we don't do something, the private professionals will do something instead of us, especially in Cable Wakeboard.

Andy Harris wishes Alain Amade and David Skillen good luck, and may the best man win.

Gill Hill is re-standing for the position of Secretary General. She offered to stand because she knows both candidates for the presidency very well, and both asked her to stay. But she will remain on for only two of the four years, as enough is enough.

Peter Frei is standing for the position of Treasurer. David Skillen informed him that he will not run for the job of Treasurer. He presents his CV, with background in business administration and information technology for a large company. He also has experience as treasurer and president of the Swiss Federation, and experience in waterskiing since 1979. He still enjoys slalom skiing. He organised an E&A Congress, and several water ski events.

He adds that it is an advantage for us to have a treasurer from our own Confederation, and thanks for our vote in September.

Andy Harris wishes him the best of luck.

18. Items raised in writing by the federations (deadline = 45 days prior to the Congress)

18.1. Monaco - The right to organise a competition on foreign territory

Andy Harris explains that this situation has been solved meanwhile.

18.2. The Netherlands – Training of officials

Toon van der Ploeg (NED) explains that his federation started a big campaign in the Netherlands to train officials. It is very strange that nowhere on any website it explains how to start to become an official. It seems that you have to know people to get in. We all know each other, but for example a parent who wants to join doesn't know where to start. So why not have some kind of manual or guide explaining the steps to take, where to go, whom to contact?

Kuno Ritschard (IWWF): There are manuals on how to become a driver and that Toon could do something similar, he will look it up for him.

Andy Harris: the entry level of officials is the responsibility of each national Federation. They introduce their members to the world of officials in our sport.

Toon van der Ploeg: So do we want the current situation, where every Federation has its own way, or do we want a more coordinated way?

Candido Moz (Tournament): there is a lot of material in the rule book, we can provide this if you want. We take over the judges when they become international. It is up to the federation to get them to this point. In Italy, France or Great Britain there are structures for this. In the United States it is different, for example.

Andy Harris: For Barefoot, there now is a worldwide examination system, to be used by the Federations if they wish for four levels of officials. There are common standards. But the fact remains that at national level, the Federations control the officials.

Dimos Alexopoulos (GRE) does not completely agree. He thinks that we are responsible for the international officials, but it is in our goals to have new officials. If Morocco says "We want to make officials, what can you give us?" And then we have nothing to offer. We do not yet provide this for the lowest level, the newcomers, we could prepare this.

Toon van der Ploeg says material is no problem, the issue is for the newcomers to find their way. He wonders if this should be formalized somehow. Because if every Federation does this its own way, the officials will not be on the same level internationally.

Marie-Anne Persoons (BEL): A small country will have less people interested than a big country. So they will approach it differently. You have to pass the exam to get a level: how you get to pass this exam, has to be organised by the Federation.

Aaron Armborst (Cable Wakeboard Council): The main page of the Cable Wakeboard site has a topic "becoming an official", that is how we approach our riders.

Toon van der Ploeg thinks such an item should be on the website of every Federation, and also on the E&A website.

Andy Harris says these suggestions will be discussed at the next Admincom meeting in May, and thanks Toon van der Ploeg for bringing this interesting topic to Congress.

Carmen Ferrer (Disabled Council) will propose to her council to adapt this page, and recommends the other councils to do the same.

19. Calendar of Titled Events

S. Adriaensen reads out the changes to the Calendar (*see www.iwwf-ea.eu under Calendar*).

Regarding the combined tournament Youth and Under-21 Championships, Cristiana Mamali (GRE) says skiers cannot compete in six different competitions. Candido Moz explains that the U21 and U14 and U17 are three different championships. Cristianna Mamali says they will have to organise this well. You cannot ski more than 4 times in one weekend according to the IWWF rulebook.

A presentation is shown for the bid for the 2017 Cable Wake Championships by Egypt, for the Sliders facility in El Gouna, Egypt, that has been installed by Rixen.

Candido Moz (TC) requests if there are any organisers for the 2018 Tournament Championships.

Aleco Kusseogleu (MON) says his Federation would like to organise a competition in Roquebrunes in 2018 and will have news about this soon. He stresses that if it is a titled event, it will be co-organised by France and Monaco.

20. Budget 2017 = 01/12/2016 – 30/11/2017

D. Lakens Douwes explains that a copy of the budget was distributed to everyone at the entry of the Congress.

Andy Harris: Over 2015-2016 there is a surplus of about 24.000 Euro, but a 21.500 Euro loss is projected for 2017, because a lot of revenue was generated that will be spent now.

Des Burke-Kennedy wonders why we are budgeting for losses, and why the Councils' budget went up to 150.000 euro. He thinks this might be confusing. Sid Adriaensen replies that the Councils had more income last year, and this was taken into account, but on the other hand the expenses have not yet been taken into account. Dominique Lakens Douwes confirms that the Councils generated more money last year with sponsorships etc., they simply haven't had the time to spend it yet.

Andy Harris says that we could defer some of revenue generated in 2016 to 2017, but in Belgium, where our accountant is based, that is not the practice. He has to show the surplus in the previous year.

Paul Airey wonders what is up with the event management system. Andy Harris confirms that it is ongoing, and that zero expenditure was made to date. We are still waiting for the system to be rolled out, but it is ongoing and we are managing the situation.

The budget is unanimously accepted by show of cards.

21. Distribution of Certificates & Awards

21.1. By the divisional councils

Barefoot Council

Andy Harris announces that their female athlete of the year is Kimberly Smit (NED). The male athlete of the year broke the jump record in his first World Junior Championships, and got bronze in the Open: Tom Heaps (GBR).

Cable Council

Marie-Anne Persoons: two Cable jump records were broken in 2016. There was a first female over 50 meters for Hanna Straltsova (BLR). And there was a male jump record for Nikita Papakul (BLR) of 65,50 meters. The winner of the Harry de Laat U15 Overall Trophy was Valeryia Trubskaya (BLR). The athletes of the year are also Hana Straltsova and Nikita Papakul from Belarus.

Disabled Council

Paul Airey announces that all four E&A and World slalom, trick and jump records are for Claire Ellis (GBR). The Eurotour winner for slalom is Christian Lanthaler (ITA). The winner in tricks, jump and overall was Philippe Turchet (FRA). Their athletes of the year are Claire Ellis (GBR) and Christian Lanthaler (ITA).

Racing Council

Mike Waterman explains that Racing has no records as such, but that they have best performances. Masters: Bas Hagenbeek (NED). Juniors: Hannah Bird (GBR). Jake Frame (GBR) for Formula 2 Men. Open Ladies: Sabine Ortlieb (AUT), who is also their female athlete of the Year. For Belgium, Lenz Everaert is the winner of the Euro-Kids A, Tommy Laeremans of the Euro-Kids B, Davina Sipido for the Formula 3 Ladies, Thaneë Ennekens for the Formula 2 Ladies, Steven Malot for the Formula 3 Men, and finally Steven Van Gaeveren is the Formula 1 Men and also the Racing athlete of the year. The Nation Trophy also goes to Belgium.

Tournament

Candido Moz announces that Frederick Winter (GBR) broke a slalom record that had been standing since 1998! Another slalom record was broken by Manon Costard (FRA). The Tournament athletes of the year are Natalia Berdnikava and Aliaksei Zharnasek, both from Belarus.

Wakeboard Boat

Florian Butty: the athletes of the year are Giorgia Gregorio (ITA) and David O’Caoimh (IRL).

Cable Wakeboard

Aaron Armorst says there are no records to be announced. The athletes of the year are Julia Rick (GER) and a young rider who won the European and World Junior Championships: Guy Firer (ISR).

21.2. Announcement of the Athlete of the year awards

Depy Papadimitriou announces that Julia Rick (GER) is the female and Alexsei Zhernasek (BLR) the male athlete of the year 2016.

21.3. Honorary members

Depy Papadimitriou announces that the Admincom voted in November to elect Alain Amade as Honorary Member, and thanks him for all he has done for water skiing. Alain Amade thanks us for this honour, and says every athlete wants a gold medal, but the goal of a volunteer is to make the sport better; it makes you feel as if you are climbing the sunny side of the mountain.

22. Future Congresses

22.1. February 3rd 2018 (open to bids)

On behalf of the DWSF Günther Kuhnt makes a bid for Halle, Germany, where the officials seminar was held two years ago. Leipzig airport is 20 minutes by train.

Bid accepted by show of cards.

22.2. February 2nd 2019 (open to bids)

Maoz Tal makes a bid for Eilat, Israel.

22.3. February 1st 2020 (open to bids)

Depy Papadimitrou says that she will speak to the board and suggests Athens as a venue.

23. A.O.B.

23.1. Dimos Alexopoulos: the Mediterranean Confederation

This Confederation is a small group of Federations, who aim to promote water ski near the sea.

The Mediterranean Games are in jeopardy, because other competitions are going on in the same area. In 2016 we organised a Youth U15 training camp for 11 skiers. We need your support to do it again, please do not forget to pay your annual subscription, to help more kids that then only have to pay a small percentage of the training camp.

There will be a general assembly of the Mediterranean Confederation tomorrow at 8.15h.

23.2. Des Burke-Kennedy: the World Cup.

Des would like to give Congress to go home on a positive note. There are quite some federations present here, so he would like to say a word about the World Cup. For 2017, there are six possible venues. There are constant questions about the cost. This is relative. A small event implies low cost. But more costs are more than repaid by a more expensive World Cup. You can measure this by the number of countries your show was distributed to. We can hire experts for this, and this generates real value. In Mandurah we generated 400.000 dollar and 1.2 million eye ball value. So the return on invest is that much higher. He would love to share this info with Paul Fong.

23.3. Kuno Ritschard – anniversary of IWWF and E&A

IWWF was founded in July 1946 in Geneva, at the same time as the E&A Federation. Some of the federations here present were there. We could have a celebration for the 70th or 75th anniversary.

The USA Water Ski Foundation will have a new HQ and new museum, with a cable park and a water ski and wakeboard site. We might celebrate the 75th birthday there.

Andy Harris requests if there are any other items ? (*none*).

He concludes that this has been a good and busy congress.

24. Closing of the Congress

Depy Papadimitrou says it was a busy congress, it went excellent, we will see each other at several occasions before the next Congress.

Andy Harris confirms that the official Congress is now closed but asks for the attention of those who are interested in the presentation of a new trick scoring system, developed by Donal Connolly (IRL).

The basic idea is that the judges get to review the tricks on a video at 70% of the normal speed. They can stop and review any part of the video. After all judges have entered their scores into the system, this then calculates the scores. This tricks scoring system will guarantee a scoring within 90", which would be an immense improvement of the current situation, and the system is very TV friendly. Spectators would no longer have to wait for hours to get the results.

Some rules will have to be changed to put this system in place.

Patrice Martin (FRA) thinks we should use this, and wishes it would have been in place when he was a skier. So now someone can make a protest, and it will be dealt with there and then, and not after 24 hours!

Candido Moz (ITA): It will be used as the official system in the World Games. Clementine Lucine will be in Australia, and we will try it at the Masters. We want fast results and no more protests, so we are working on it.

Andy Harris (GBR): Is special equipment needed?

Donal Connolly: A standard video from the boat, streamed to the calculator and the five judges.

Fred Dupanloup (SUI): This is an excellent system, we all appreciate your work. But it should be connected to the Manu Lion's scoring program.

Donal O'Connell: This is easy to do. We now need to embark on training the officials on the software and the tricks.

Christianna Mamali (GRE): We should NOT have to review after that.

Candido Moz (GRE): We first have to get this accepted at World level. Then we can use it, but we need to change part of the rules. We cannot start now, it is against the rules. The software is free, the video for training also.