

Some felt that the simplest solution would be to request the Canadian Flying Clubs Association to extend membership in their organization to the gliding clubs, but the Association, though quite willing to do so, suggested that a separate body which might affiliate with them, would be more useful. The Gatineau Gliding Club of Ottawa then agreed to sponsor a meeting at which the many problems could be discussed. The first step was to secure factual information on gliding in Canada for presentation to the meeting, and a questionnaire was prepared and distributed.

A summary of replies to the questionnaire indicated how badly a national organization was needed, and that it would receive enthusiastic support.

Formation of the Soaring Association of Canada

The organization meeting was held in Ottawa on the 21st of April, and was very well attended. Present were representatives of a number of gliding clubs, the Department of Transport, the National Research Council Aeronautical Engineering Division, the Canadian Flying Clubs Association, and several individuals who had been active in gliding circles abroad.

The morning session of the meeting was devoted to a general discussion of the broad aspects of the problem. By the unanimous vote of those present, and with the expressed wish of many who were unable to attend, the Soaring Association of Canada was formed, and temporary officers elected. The executive officers were chosen from the Ottawa district as a matter of convenience during the formative stages; directors of the five zones into which the country was arbitrarily divided were also elected at this time. Appointments were then made to the committees which it was decided would be required. These included the regulations committee, the technical committee, membership committee, and several others.

The terms of reference of the technical committee were: "to formulate a set of airworthiness and design requirements for submission to the Department of Transport; to lay down a scheme for inspection procedure, including inspection during manufacture, after major repairs, after overhauls, and ordinary pre-flight inspection; to deal with accidents from the technical viewpoint; and to guide the development of gliders, sailplanes and associated equipment in their technical aspects." Those of the regulations committee were: "to suggest modifications to the air regulations as they affect gliders; to draw up operating regulations for gliding clubs; and to determine suitable qualifications for instructors, observers and inspectors."

One committee was instructed to discuss affiliation with the Canadian Flying Clubs Association and the Soaring Society of America.

During the afternoon session of the meeting there was a detailed discussion of the extent to which government regulation of gliding was desirable. At this time a representative of the Department under whose jurisdiction gliding clubs must operate unofficially intimated a willingness on the part of this government body to delegate certain responsibilities to the Association as long as the organization proved capable of exercising them satisfactorily. These included the drafting and enforcement of regulations governing equipment, operation, and the licensing of instructors, inspectors, observers and pilots. The advantage to the gliding movement of such an extent of self-government, and the responsibilities involved, are obvious.

Relationship with the Department of Transport

The negotiations of the young Soaring Association have been considerably facilitated by the help and consideration afforded by the Civil Aviation Branch of the Department of Transport. The serious attitude of these officials is all the more remarkable in view of the past history of gliding in Canada.

It has been agreed that the present regulation regarding instruction, that gliding operations shall be supervised by a commercially licensed power pilot, needs to be revised. This was a stop-gap ruling of 1931, designed to provide some control over the reckless activities of those days by ensuring that some reasonably responsible person was in charge. It did not provide instruction. The Association has now been asked to draw up regulations regarding the qualifications of gliding instructors. Until these can be approved, individuals whose qualifications are considered satisfactory by the Association are to be recommended to the transport department, and they may be permitted to instruct.

Airworthiness regulations and flying regulations are to be left to the Soaring Association, as is the investigation of accidents. At present the government has no intention of licensing glider pilots, but if it is decided at some future date to require licenses for cross country flying, the Association will have an opportunity to make recommendations as to the tests for these.

Plans for the Future

The responsibilities of the national body governing a sport are heavy. It has the power to control to a very great extent the lines along which that sport will develop. This is particularly true in a country which is just becoming interested in a sport, already popular elsewhere, and which shows every indication of being likely to adopt it enthusiastically.

It is well known that gliding has developed along many different lines in other countries. In Germany,