

F2D News - October 2007

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This month's column will be relatively brief, but I want to address a question that I received from one of our F2D friends in Australia. This is an important question that has also been on my mind for a while now, and I'm sure many others have been wondering about it too. What is this pressing issue that has so many of us preoccupied these days, you ask? The hot topic of concern is the impending introduction of fuel shutoffs to F2D.

By now I think most people are aware that the FAI's CIAM Control Line Subcommittee passed a resolution stating that some time in the near future all F2D models should be equipped with fuel shutoff devices to prevent flyaways. If you're like me (or perhaps the me of 1 week ago before I started researching this topic), then this is where your knowledge of the subject ends. If you're not like me, and you happen to spend a lot of time on the combat e-groups and message boards, your head may be filled with all kinds of ideas and opinions by now, which may or may not have anything to do with the reality of the situation. A third possibility is that you could be a model citizen of the F2D community like Henning Forbech of Denmark, and you could be inimitably involved with the issue by developing/testing shutoff technology and disseminating important results and information through the internet. Henning maintains a great website (<http://www.modelflyvning.dk/f2d.htm>) full of pictures, technical documents, and other shutoff-related information.

Knowing that the shutoff debate is very charged, I've tried to avoid getting in to certain types of discussions until I could see the letter of the law for myself. It's a little harder to find this information than I expected, but if you snoop around on the FAI website for a while you might eventually find a document called "Minutes of the Plenary Meeting of the FAI Aeromodelling Commission held in Lausanne, Switzerland on 23 & 24 March 2007." Then, if you make it to page 28 of this lengthy document, you will encounter the following:

F2D Combat

v) 4.4.5, 4.4.6, 4.4.12, 4.4.15

Add the following paragraph to section 4.4.5 immediately prior to "Note":

An effective engine shut-off device will be compulsory.

Amended at the F2 Technical Meeting and unanimously approved by the Plenary Meeting. Effective **01/01/09**.

Note: The F2 Sub-committee recognises the seriousness of the situation. It will conduct F2D shut-off device tests beginning July 2007 and produce recommendations to the Bureau meeting of December 2007 for inclusion on the Plenary Agenda for March 2008.

The three further rules in this proposal 4.4.6, 4.4.12, 4.4.15 were withdrawn pending these recommendations.

At the current time, this is the entire extent of the official word on shutoffs. It's fairly vacuous, though the bit about the committee conducting tests and taking the results into consideration is encouraging. I also uncovered some information regarding plans to hold a meeting to discuss shutoffs during the European Championships this past summer. However, the internet didn't turn up any information on the results of this meeting, which obviously means that the meeting couldn't have happened. My search has not been exhaustive, and I welcome any replies to this report with further information on that meeting, the F2 Subcommittee's shutoff tests, or any other developments I've missed.

I think there's not too much more for me to say on the subject right now. It looks like something important will happen at the December meeting, so I encourage everyone to read Henning's website, do some legitimate fact-finding, and then contact your Subcommittee representative to let your voice be heard.