

FOREWORD

As it was not possible to circulate the Guidelines with the recent issue of TCNews, that was very well received according to the feedback received, it is now the time to present the Guidelines to the SREV. This text is the result of a long and appassionate elaboration and has been reviewed in order to accommodate the consequences of the decision of the Congress about fiscal stamps. Before dealing with this subject, I would like to make the following points:

1. The Congress decided, as reflected in the wording of paragraph 6.2 of the SREV, that it would have been adopted immediately. The interpretation, still around, that it would have been implemented at the first FIP exhibition receiving patronage at the Madrid Congress is not appropriate.
2. At Belgica it was decide, also with my positive answer, to use the old Regulations, due to the short time frame since Madrid. In Tokyo the new SREV was used and I assume that the same will happen in any future exhibition.
3. As a Commission President I am not involved in the definition of juries or other matters concerning individual exhibitions and sometime I have to ask for the bulletins even if I should have been in the distribution list according to a specific point of the GREX. Therefore I cannot give statements on the operations at individual exhibitions. Of course have been co-operating with FIP Co-ordinators and Organising Committees any times my support has been requested.

The Seminar in Hafnia will address the major aspects of the SREV, but I can anticipate a couple of points that, in my opinion, should reduce the confusion that some misinformation has created.

It is unfortunate that there are so many steps between the Congress and the collector and that sometimes action cannot be so quick and spread around, as I would like.

Having said that, please keep in mind that:

1. The new SREV does not change the nature of evaluation (or building) thematic exhibits. It is just an elaboration of the previous one, and the points have been reshuffled in order to match, basically, those of the other classes.

In some countries each juror is asked to judge all classes and this happens very often at the small and intermediate shows, where it is impossible to invite all types of specialists, and it could happen in the new type of competitions that are growing around us.

The new SREV therefore do not change any aspect of thematic exhibits, as shown by the commonalties between the previous and the new Guidelines. Many changes have been introduced to make things more clear and to cover some aspects that needed clarification.

There are some new definitions, **but** the total of marks "theoretically" fine (?) to the philatelic and the thematic elements remain the same.

I wrote "theoretically" because I want to highlight that without certain items the thematic development is not possible, so **three there** is interdependence between the two areas that, in my opinion, respects the concept of our hobby as of philatelists collecting according to a theme. But, first of all, philatelists (as my friend Marc Dhotel used to say).

2. The thematic elements have not only plan and development but also innovation and thematic knowledge. I consider important to keep this separation, as in the past thematic exhibitors

complained about an insufficient attention to the knowledge of the theme they had achieved and shown.

3. The philatelic elements have been split into Condition and Rarity, as in all other classes. A modern material based exhibit here will have an advantage that counterbalances by the less favourable evaluation of rarity. Up to know it was quite common to give almost all points to rarity. [perhaps too strong words? It happened, but was it "quite common"]
4. Jurors are challenged to give the maximum of points with less reluctance, especially considering that it could mean "extremely good" rather than "perfect". In theory, if a jurors follows this approach, the maximum possible would be in some classes 95 (5 criteria) or even 93 (7 criteria)...

Of course any new implementation requires some adaptation, along a learning curve that will take some time. But it should not bring any major concern, due to the full continuity between the previous and the current SREV.

And now some words about revenue stamps or fiscals, ~~as you prefer~~. I would like to remind that this is not the key issue of thematic philately; if you are around you see the lack of research or of material, the ability to define a suitable plan and to create a flowing development: these are the real challenges for an exhibitor.

Revenue stamps have been always accepted as a borderline material, and at least a couple of very good exhibits have reached Gold or Large Gold as long as jurors considered their presence appropriate and balanced.

The Congress - i.e. the delegates of our Federations - have told us ~~not to forbid the use of fiscals as a general rule they we have to accept fiscals~~, leaving us the decision on the approach to be taken. The Bureau had a wide exchange of opinions, and at the end I realised that I had to make a decision respecting all opinions.

Postal revenue stamps, or fiscal used for postage, are no problem being "postal philatelic material". The area do be regulated was that of fiscal without postal usage. The conclusion I have put in the Guidelines is:

Revenue stamps for fiscal purposes are admitted in exceptional cases, when they are the only mean to describe an important thematic point.....

The use of revenue stamps for fiscal purposes should be limited to a few, significant items, mainly to enhance the thematic development in very important points of the theme that cannot be covered otherwise. These items are to be properly justified.

Therefore we are talking of possible exceptions. Nobody is requested to have these items in his/her exhibit, but if an exhibitor believes that he has identified a couple pf pieces that very important for his/her development... why not? The exhibitor takes the risk as long he has to do it "in exceptional cases" and when "very important points of the theme cannot be covered otherwise".

But please, stop the rumours that fiscals are admitted without any condition and do not make these items as the most important of the thematic arena. We have enough examples of items misinterpreted (from "private" post cards to proofs and prephilatelic cancellations) that we have to stop this detrimental game.