

A more precise and technical answer is reprinted below from Mark Drela in the Allegro-Lite YAHOO group, message #6005;

The importance of decalage is way overblown.

First of all, if you have an all-moving tail, then obviously "setting the decalage" has no meaning. You just set the elevator trim to whatever it has to be for your CG position and desired trimmed speed.

It turns out that for a hinged elevator, decalage should also have little effect. You can change pitch trim either by moving the elevator or moving the entire tail. There should be little or no difference in pitch stability or elevator response between the two types of changes. This assumes that the tail airfoil is reasonably good, and the elevator deflection is modest so that the tail's $cl(\alpha)$ and $cl(\text{elevator})$ curves are still linear. The only reason to change the decalage (angle of the front stabilizer) in this case is to null out the elevator trim deflection. This will give more symmetric elevator range, reduce elevator servo load at high speed, and **perhaps** reduce the tail's profile drag **very slightly**.

If there IS a difference in handling from a change of decalage, then you surely have poor airfoil flow over the tail, with some combination of dead band or hysteresis. This also indicates the presence of large separation bubbles and high profile drag. A simple slab airfoil with a semi-circular LE is very common, and is prone to these types of problems. Making the LE more elliptical rather than round should give a significant improvement.

The "red" text emphasis is mine.
Curtis Suter