

Cotswold Gliding Club Safety Briefing

These notes were taken at the safety briefing given at Aston Down on 24th May 2003. The briefing was presented by Paul Gentil, Hugh Woodsend, Simon Lucas and Peter Ward.

Operational Matters

Safety Officer

Peter Ward is the club's new Health and Safety Officer and has the authority to deal with any safety related issues, including those to do with flying operations.

Operations Manual

The operations manual has been in existence for more than a year. It must be read and signed by all members. Anyone who has not read the manual should consider themselves grounded until they have done so.

Accident procedure.

A document has been prepared that contains the procedure to be adopted in the case of an accident. Copies of this document will be available on the bus, on the notice board in the tower and in the office. Please have a look at the document to familiarise yourself with its contents. The same documents are available on the BGA website. (Go to 'information for members and clubs', and then select 'safety' from the menu.)

Cross-Country Book

Each pilot who intends to fly cross-country must complete the cross-country book. This is used to make sure that everyone has returned from their flight. If someone is missing it then gives a clue as to where they might be. Please remember to record your return in the book and the flight log. The book is kept with the flight log on the bus. A useful indication that you are away from the site that is used at Lasham is to leave part of your glider trailer open.

First Aid

A spinal board is to be purchased and kept on the bus. This is to be used in the most exceptional circumstances only. Normally it is much safer to leave a casualty where they are and wait for the experts. However, if the casualty is in immediate danger then it may be necessary to move them. The only situation we can think of where this may occur is in a tug or motor glider crash and where there is a significant risk of fire.

Towing out

When towing out you must:

- Have a rope longer than one wing of the glider. If the glider rotates while you are towing the wing tip will then miss the towing vehicle.
- Have a person holding the up-wind wingtip. Gliders will blow over if caught by a gust, even in apparently benign conditions.
- When towing to the south end after flying has started, you must go via the track on the western edge of the airfield to the end of the cross runway. From there you should go along the runway and hold short of the intersection while waiting for an opportunity to go to the launch point. The same rules apply to motor gliders.
- The track on the western edge must not be used when driving to the south end unless you are towing a glider

Cables

After an accident at another gliding site involving a motor glider picking up winch cables it has been decided that the cables are not to be crossed by any vehicle or glider. If there is no alternative route avoiding the cables, then the ends of the cables should be pulled back to make space.

Operations at the south end

When landing at the south end the crop to the west of the launch point is not to be used as an overshoot. This has been decided because: the area is narrow, the overshoot is likely to damage a glider, and pedestrians use the tarmac between the runway and the perimeter track. Gliders are to be rigged on the western edge of the south field and cars parked on the grass outside the perimeter track. Please don't block the entrance track to the nearby hangar with parked cars

Parachutes

We are still finding parachutes left in gliders or the bus. They must be returned to the parachute store and put back in their bags to prevent them getting damp. A damp parachute is unreliable.

Daily Inspections

There has been some concern recently about the standard of daily inspections. All daily inspectors must be trained to do the job and have this signed in their logbook. This training is type specific so someone trained to inspect a K13 is not qualified to inspect an Astir. We hope to create a list of pilots who can do this training, but until then you should approach an instructor or BGA inspector.

The duties and responsibilities of a daily inspector are described in the front of the DI book, which everyone should read.

Particular points raised are:

- Each rig and de-rig of the glider should be entered in the book.
- The daily inspector is only required to do a visual inspection. If there is any doubt about any aspect of the glider then the advice of a BGA inspector should be sought.
- Minor faults, including those noticed while flying the glider, should be recorded in the book. This will help the glider maintenance team fix problems promptly.
- Private gliders must have a DI book and it must be completed each day the glider is flown.

Flying Matters

Aerotow operations.

Hugh Woodsend has been pleased with the progress made with his training of a team of tug pilots. The tug has been performing well despite having only a 160hp engine.

An aerotow combination will always take off from the runway to get airborne as soon as possible. This also has the benefit of being close to the winch launch point, making the whole operation easier to control.

The tug will be taxiing to the front of the line. Extreme care must be taken at the launch point to avoid the tug propellor. If you need to speak to the tug pilot then you must approach from behind the wing. If you are unable to get the pilot's attention then manually moving the rudder will make the pilot aware of your presence.

The tug will fly circuits that are separate from glider circuits and those flown by any visiting aircraft.

From Runway 21 (operating from the north end)

- Right hand glider circuits are preferred. This doesn't prohibit a left hand circuit if the situation demands it.
- The tug will fly a left hand circuit with an approach offset to the east. The tug will land on the grass to the east of the runway.

From Runway 03 (operating from the south end)

- Left hand glider circuits are preferred to land in the south field.
- The overshoot area to the east of the runway is just that and shouldn't be used as a matter of course.
- The tug will fly a right hand circuit, with an approach offset to the east, to land long on the grass to the east of the runway. The tug will keep to the right of this grass, allowing room for any glider overshooting on to the left of the grass.

Take offs and tow out routes on 03 are designed to keep noise out of the valley. After takeoff the combination will track to the right of the runway and then do a left hand turn before the end of the airfield. Normally this turn will be flown inside the airfield boundary. With heavy two seat gliders the turn will be made outside the airfield boundary. Both turns avoid overflying the houses on the northern boundary.

The tugs should always follow these procedures, which will allow everyone to get used to them and leave no doubt about what the tug is going to do.

As for all power departures, the stop signal must be shown while the tug is taking off.

When the tug returns from tow the pilot needs to know whether the tug is required. Two signals have been introduced for this purpose. Crossing your arms above your head indicate that the tug is not required, pointing to a glider with one hand and into the air with the other hand indicate that the glider wants an aerotow.

Scan Cycle lookout

The BGA have recently introduced the scan cycle lookout to the instructor courses. All members will be expected to use the technique from now on.

The technique involves a fixed routine consisting of lookout, checking the attitude and then the instruments. The lookout is first done straight ahead, on the horizon, and then above and below. Then the same thing is done 45 deg to the right, 90 deg to the right and finally as far back as you can see. Then you look directly above you and then return to look ahead where the attitude and instruments are checked. This is then repeated on the left side. Each scan cycle should take about 20 seconds.

The scan cycle has been described in the April/May 2003 edition of Sailplane and Gliding and is also in the latest edition of the BGA instructor's manual. A copy of this will be posted in the tower and on the website in due course.

Harnesses

When fastening your straps in a glider the lap strap must be tightened first. The buckle should be low on the abdomen with the straps over the pelvis. The lap strap is the strap that keeps you in your seat and if the buckle is too high you may 'submarine' under the straps in an accident. After the lap straps have been tightened you can then tighten the shoulder straps.

You should remember that, when completing HASSLL or other checks, it's the lap strap that should be checked first.

The club fleet is being checked to ensure that there is enough adjustment in the straps to allow the harness to be secured properly. If you find a harness that will not adjust correctly for you, then please make a note of the fact in the DI book.

Approach Speeds

As a result of analysis of glider accidents the BGA have introduced the idea of a target speed and minimum speed for the approach. The target speed is the speed at which you intend to fly the approach. The minimum speed is the lowest acceptable approach speed. When you are flying with an instructor they will take control of the glider if you allow the speed to fall below the minimum. Where, in the past, you may have set an approach speed of 50kts, you will now have a minimum speed of 50kts and a target speed of 55kts. This will apply for normal approaches and for failed launches.

Airspace

It is vitally important that we respect airspace. Modern radar is capable of very accurate positioning and will catch you for the smallest infringement. On the other hand, it is important that we use the class D airspace (e.g. Lyneham and Birmingham) that should be made available to us on request. If we don't use it, the powers that be are likely to assume that we don't need it.

Hunter operations

There has been some discussion between Nympsfield, Kemble and us regarding the operation of the Hunter at Kemble. It has been agreed that when they depart Kemble on runway 26 they will fly out to Michaelwood services on the M5 before turning north. This will be done at a fairly low level, therefore keeping clear of gliders in the area. Gliders flying the Cotswold edge near Wootton-Under-Edge will have to keep a good lookout.

Parachute Zones

South Cerney parachute zone is very active with military use during the week and civilian use at weekends. You should be aware that in strong winds jumpers and loads will exit the aircraft some way upwind of the marked zone on the map.

PFA rally

With up to 2000 aircraft visiting Kemble during the rally it is inevitable we will have some uninvited guests. It has been decided that these aircraft will be held at Aston Down until the pilot has received a telephone briefing from Kemble. The phone number to be used will be published nearer the time.

Stephen Cook

24th May 2003