

RESPONSIBILITIES OF PILOTS

Introduction

Lasham Gliding Society (LGS) endeavours to provide a safe and efficient environment for its members, but the greatest contribution to safety and efficiency is by the members themselves. This section sets out some of the responsibilities of members but a complete list cannot be given. However the application of common sense at all times should cover the majority of the remaining gaps. In addition to the mandatory responsibilities, additional courtesies are expected to ensure that Lasham remains a pleasant place to fly.

Fitness to fly

Every pilot is responsible for ensuring that he/she is fit to fly from Lasham. This includes being:

- In current flying practice
- Competent and qualified to undertake the flight
- In good health (as certified by a doctor)
- In a mental and physical state suitable for flying
- A member of Lasham Gliding Society
- Authorised by the owners of the glider, including payment of subscriptions
- Insured according to the requirements of the British Gliding Association
- Satisfied that the glider is airworthy and has a current Certificate of Airworthiness

The following paragraphs amplify some of these points.

Currency

It is every pilot's responsibility to maintain their flying currency at a level commensurate with their experience. Before every take off the commander of the aircraft should be satisfied he/she has had adequate training and information to carry out the planned flight. A check-flight is suggested if the following times have elapsed since the last flight:

Up to Red Card or with less than 50 hours	3 weeks
Red and Yellow Card Pilots or with less than 100 hours	6 weeks
Blue Card pilots with more than 100 hours	3 months

However these guidelines assume that the pilot was in good practice before the inactive period. For example a Blue Card pilot who only flew every 12 weeks would not be in current flying practice. If a pilot averages ten hours a year as P1, regardless of how much flying has been done in the previous few days, he/she may not be in a position to handle a difficult situation. In order to develop the necessary skills, you should aim to fly at a minimum of 30-40 hours per year. Less than that you should regard yourself as a novice and fly accordingly, however long you have been flying. Seek a briefing and regular check-flights.

Currency also includes recent experience with the type of flight planned. Consequently if a long period of times has elapsed since being in command of an aerotow or a winch-launch, the pilot is not in current practice. If a field landing has not occurred recently, the pilot should consider having a practice session in a motor glider. Similarly aerobatics or cloud-flying should only be attempted if the manoeuvres have been practised recently. Defining 'recently' is difficult to put

into a formula but the application of common sense should indicate when to practise with an instructor. If you have doubts about your level of currency, discuss this with an instructor.

You should keep a log book so that you can check your currency. It is mandatory for all pilots up to Silver Badge and for all instructors to prove their renewal requirements have been met. However, if you are beyond Silver Badge and not an instructor, the information from your log book will be needed by Lasham for your Annual Flying Return.

Medicals

It is the pilot's responsibility to maintain their medical currency as stated in the BGA publication "Laws and Rules for Glider Pilots". This is available from the Lasham Office. Each pilot must file a copy of a valid medical declaration with the Lasham Office.

The current BGA requirements may be summarised as follows but the definitive statement of the requirements are available from the BGA or their web-site

<http://www.gliding.co.uk/bgainfo/medical.htm>

Before your first flight with an instructor you should have signed a form that simply declared you were fit enough for a dual flight. However to fly solo, the self-declaration form has to be endorsed by the pilot's doctor (DVLA Group 1). This self-declaration remains valid until age 45, at which time a new self-declaration must be made and endorsed by the pilot's doctor. Self-declarations must then be renewed (with a doctor's endorsement) at ages 50, 55, 60, and 65, then annually. It is recommended that the self-declarations are made in the month that they expire. If you have had a serious illness, a new declaration is required. See *Instructors'* section for their medical standards.

It is the responsibility of the pilot (not LGS's) to check that his/her medical is in date.

If your driving licence has been revoked on medical grounds, you automatically become unfit to fly gliders solo.

Age

A degree of maturity is needed to fly in a glider. In particular a trainee should be able to receive and comply with instructions. There is no legal lower limit but considerations about ballast often put the lower limit for flying dual around 12 years old. The minimum age for solo flight is 16.

There is no maximum age for flying a glider, but some pilots may show reduced mental and physical fitness as they grow older. They should adjust the level of their flying to take account of this. It is now impossible, because of the lack of insurance cover, for anyone aged 75 or older to fly without a safety pilot in any of LGS's aircraft. The safety pilot must be capable of landing the glider should the other pilot become incapacitated.

Your physical well-being

There can be several reasons why you could be feeling "below par". Each of these can significantly reduce your ability to fly a glider. These reasons include:

- Illness (see the *Health & Safety on the Airfield* chapter)
- Medication (see the *Health & Safety on the Airfield* chapter)
- Stress
- Alcohol (see also the *Health & Safety on the Airfield* chapter)

- Fatigue
- Flying currency
- Eating

The initial letters of these factors spell out (rather badly) I'M SAFE. Some of these topics are covered in the *Health & Safety on the Airfield* chapter. This section provides additional guidance to pilots in charge.

Mental stress and other distractions

Mental stress can arise from many causes and will reduce your concentration greatly. It could be from an argument, difficulty at work, debt, general depression, illness in the family, being late to launch, annoyance with inefficiency at the launch point, being hurried up before you launch, or any sudden shock. Be aware that you are wound up. Do not fly until you have calmed down.

Do not allow anyone to hurry you up before a launch. If you are not ready, pull out of line. Be particularly aware of the higher stress levels before an attempted badge flight or competition flight. The additional tasks such as briefings and declarations can leave the pilot in an excitable state.

Check lists, recent flying experience, mnemonics and a general systematic approach to gliding reduce work-load and free up brain-power for the non-routine aspects and help to overcome distractions. It is also better to write information down for use in flight rather than using your memory.

Your decisions will be far quicker if you have mentally rehearsed emergencies. Cable breaks are the most common emergency to anticipate, but have you also thought about which straps you would unbuckle, and which knobs you would pull to bale out?

Be aware that some controls can be confused at times of stress. The most common confusions are between the flaps, air-brakes and/or undercarriage. Re-familiarise yourself with all controls before you take-off and before you need to use them in a hurry.

Being too busy can have serious consequences when preparing an aircraft for flight. In particular, a distraction while rigging can mean your controls are not connected. If interrupted on a DI, start again. Always get a positive control check for manually connected control surfaces, and do a proper daily inspection.

Women are affected by their menstrual cycle to differing degrees, and individually must decide when they are fit to fly.

Alcohol

The subject is also covered in the *Health & Safety on the Airfield* chapter, but additional information is given here for pilots in charge.

The limit set by the Railways and Transport Safety Act to anyone involved in flying operations, even a wing-tip holder. Note that the effects of alcohol are doubled at 10,000 feet.

It takes about an hour to eliminate 1 unit of alcohol from the blood. (Half a pint of bitter is one unit.) Consequently on the morning after a binge, some motorists have even failed a police breath test.

The quantity of food that you eat at the same time as drinking has little effect on the rate at which you absorb alcohol. Exercise, sleep and coffee have no effect on the rate at which you eliminate alcohol.

You will also find that you sleep better if you have not drunk alcohol, so that you will be more alert when you fly the next day. You will also not start the day dehydrated if you have abstained (see later).

You must not fly with another person who has significant level of alcohol in his/her blood, even if you are sober and P1.

Fatigue

Getting a good night's sleep before flying is essential. If you have not slept well, do not fly. Any significant jet-lag should also ground you.

Fatigue can also arise from excessive flying. You may have had a long struggle to stay airborne or you may have had many launches on that day already. Be aware that your concentration is beginning to wander. Stop flying, if fatigued. (Some pilots have even taken the courageous decision to withdraw part way through a competition because of fatigue.)

Boredom can also induce fatigue. In particular, pilots are often not concentrating well throughout an attempted Silver duration flight. Every flight should have a purpose, so do not fly aimlessly. For example, try setting some local triangles, and then timing your speed on each circuit.

Eating

Diabetics will already be aware of the need to maintain blood sugar levels. Non-diabetics may not be aware that a reduction in your blood sugar levels will cause you not only to feel hungry, but will seriously reduce your alertness. Hunger and fatigue are a particularly dangerous combination.

Getting comfortable

An uncomfortable pilot will not be able to concentrate. It is therefore worth spending time and money to ensure that you can stay comfortable for hours.

If you accept a seating position that is too low in the cockpit, the landing area under the nose of the glider will not be visible. Proper support should therefore be installed.

Do not use soft cushions to improve your comfort. These are positively dangerous. Firstly, they will compress in high g, and so you will be forced lower in your seat, and possibly out of reach of the controls. Secondly, in an accident they will not offer any resistance to the impact. You will hit the seat as if you had been suspended a few inches above it. This may produce worse injuries than if you had been firmly in contact with the seat.

You are recommended to fit cushions made of an energy absorbing material such as *Dynafoam*®. These should be well secured to the glider to stop it slipping in flight. If the cushion were to slip forward, it would restrict the backward movement of the stick.

A short pilot may need to be moved forward in the cockpit to enable him to exert full control movements. If so, firm packing should be placed behind the pilot's back. This is particularly

important in the first stages of a winch-launch. K13s have wooden seat-back inserts to improve the seating position of smaller pilots.

Urination

The lower temperatures, stress and the water that you already should be drinking will make you produce urine while flying. You will not be able to concentrate properly with a full bladder, so be sure to take your chosen method to urinate in flight. This activity should not require so much attention that your look-out suffers.

Personal attitude

Many varied personalities fly safely, but you should be aware of your emotional tendencies. The US Federal Aviation Administration has identified the following traits as causing problems:

- Macho (tries to impress and takes chances)
- Anti-authority (breaks rules)
- Invulnerable (thinks it will not happen to him/her)
- Impulsive (acts then thinks)
- Resigned (fatalist, so does not act when necessary)

With these characteristics, you can still glide safely, PROVIDED that you are aware of your tendencies and compensate.

Membership of Lasham

No pilot may fly from Lasham as P1 or P2 without being a member of Lasham Gliding Society, as a full member, social member, trial member or competitor. In each case the necessary paperwork must be completed and given to the office before any flight can occur. Visiting pilots must report to Lasham's office before flying.

Mutual flying

Before flying with any other club-member, the pilot must be authorised by the CFI. For instructors there is a course but for mutual flying with other club members and family members then each flight requires authorisation on the day. When flying with another person, the pilot in charge must have a Bronze Badge and at least 50 hours P1 in gliders. Before flying with a family member as a guest, you must ensure that a medical declaration has been signed and given to the Lasham Office before the flight.

When two members fly together, a pilot in charge must be nominated, including who will perform the take-off and landing and who will be in overall charge of the flight. The sequence of the names on the log-sheet is not relevant.

Privately owned gliders, motor gliders and any other aircraft

Anyone considering buying a share or an entire aircraft must have permission from the CFI to base the aircraft at Lasham. Generally a Red Card must have been awarded before a pilot will be permitted to own a glider or join a syndicate. The office must be notified of all the owners and which of the owners is responsible for paying costs and arranging insurance.

Daily and annual inspections

Every glider that is flown from Lasham must be inspected thoroughly before it first flies each day. Do not wait until you are the launch-point. For gliders with manually connected controls it is vital that a positive control check is done. If in doubt about any aspect of a glider, do not fly it until it has been checked by an expert.

If you sign in the DI book that the glider is unserviceable, only a BGA Authorised Inspector can declare it to be serviceable again.

If you are inspecting a glider and find that it needs to be washed, wash it. Do not write that it is dirty in the DI Book. No-one else will wash the glider, certainly not the professional staff. Do not use a hose as this may force water into the vents. Similarly minor jobs such as pumping up tyres should be within the capabilities of all members.

Canopies must be clean. Take care to wash the canopies before polishing them with a soft cloth. Polishing before the canopies are washed will result in scratches.

Every glider based at Lasham must have a valid Certificate of Airworthiness before it can be flown.

Type conversions

If at all possible first flights on a new type should be done on aerotow. The pilot should read the flight manual and be aware how to perform a daily inspection. Try to arrange a rigging/de-rigging briefing when possible. All type conversions must be supervised by an instructor.

Handing over gliders

If you leave a glider on the airfield after you have flown it, be sure that you have a firm commitment from someone to put it away after it has been used. Remember that your name will be on the flying-log as the last person to fly the glider.

If you are the last to fly a club glider on a particular day, you are responsible for putting it away in a clean and flyable state, with covers where applicable, with the parachutes stowed in the club-house, and its batteries put on charge, where applicable.

Log sheets and flying fees

Details of all flights must be recorded on a log at the launch point. No flight should occur unless the names of the pilots and the Lasham account number of one of the pilots making the flight has been given to the log-keeper. It is the pilots' responsibility to ensure that the names are entered in the log with the correct account numbers. If you have not been approached by the log-keeper, it is your responsibility to find the log and ensure your details are recorded.

It is important to maintain the logs at all times. If you are at the launch point and see a log is not being kept, please pick it up and fill it in. For club flights it is your responsibility to ensure that your landing time was logged. Failure to record a logged landing time will result in an automatic charge for two hours.

Payment of flying fees should either be made at the end of each flying day or by paying a lump sum into your account and keeping it in credit. Credit cards may be used. If the office is closed,

there is a night safe. All accounts owing money at the end of the month will be charged 2% interest for each month regardless of how long the amount has been outstanding.

Payment of subscriptions

Any member who has not paid the membership subscription by the last day of February each year no longer has the right to fly from Lasham Airfield in any capacity. Note that a guest must be signed-in by another member to be a temporary member of the club. Anyone who is no longer a member is not covered by LGS's insurance and will be personally liable for claims for damage or injury.

Stickers to show that trailerage and caravan charges have been paid should be promptly displayed to ensure that LGS has received the revenues that it is due.

Keep Lasham tidy

Do not leave litter such as plastic cups, pee-bags and wing-sealing tape on the airfield.

Trailers

Whilst it may not seem to be LGS's problem, many private owner trailers do not appear to be roadworthy. Members have a duty to other unsuspecting members to ensure that their trailers are roadworthy. A member out of generosity may come on a retrieve but may be unwittingly committing a road-traffic offence, and may endanger himself and other road-users.

All tyres perish and should be changed every five years even if there is still plenty of tread. The brakes and suspension should also be regularly serviced. Structural parts of the trailer, especially if made of wood, should be regularly checked for deterioration. Check lights before every journey and have a stock of spare bulbs.

Other laws should also be complied with such as lighting, safety cable, markings, number plates, the security of the load inside, maximum weights and weight-distribution.

If you have had little experience with a trailer, practice and read up on the law (see BGA's *Laws & Rules*).