

CFI message October 2009

Dear all

Friends and Family clearance (F/F) – renewal

You may recall from previous emails (13/09/08 & 16/05/09) that for the annual renewal of the F/F clearance you needed the following:

To maintain your clearance you need to meet the following criteria by the *30th September* each year:

- Minimum of 20 hours and 20 launches as P1 (solo and dual)
- An Annual check flight (with any instructor) in the seat and glider that you are cleared in

I know you have done an Annual Flight Review but what I need are your total hours and launches as P1 for the period 01 Oct 08 – 30 Sept 09. I'd appreciate receiving these by the end of November after which I'll assume you no longer want the clearance.

R/T licence

There will be an opportunity next year for you to do your R/T licence.

Although not compulsory having an R/T licence and knowing what to say on the radio is an invaluable skill. Who knows what officialdom will be imposed on us in the future especially around airspace so having an R/T licence can only help.

In the past you will have needed to attend a flying school at one of the local airfields such as Shobden. However, thanks to the efforts of Jennie Lyons (who is an R/T examiner and wife to Steve Moss) we are likely to be approved by the CAA to do the training at BMGC. In addition Jennie has offered to train our own team of 'R/T trainers' allowing the training to be completed in house.

There will also I believe be opportunities for training on line as well.

When ready, Jennie will then come over and complete the examination (oral & theory exam).

This is a great opportunity; one which I would suggest is too good to pass over.

There will be some cost to the individual mainly around the exam it self

However to get this going we need an idea of how many of you would be interested.

So far we know of 6 members including my self and Gordon. Therefore if you would be interested and want to know more please contact either me, Gordon Dennis or Liz in the office

martin2zc@yahoo.co.uk

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Aerotow - 'Tug upsets'

Please see the attached BGA safety flash as there have been several recent near misses with tug upsets at other clubs.

A tug upset is where the glider gets too high causing the tug to have un-commanded pitch nose down. It can happen very rapidly and if this occurs, especially with in the first 1000'+ above ground, it could have very serious consequences as the tug pilot might not have sufficient height to react and subsequently recover.

For us, 1000'+ above ground level could mean the whole launch as we often tow towards rising ground. It is therefore very important that you maintain the correct tow position and certainly **do not get too high**.

If you ever loose sight of the tug must release every time.

Note on the news flash the combinations that are more likely to induce an 'upset'.

Out of the six, three or more are considered to be un-acceptable.
Notice that we regularly experience two of them. Short rope and turbulence – consider this before you launch.

The last BMGC tug upset I know of was at least 20 years ago. None of us want a repeat
So as a reminder to find and maintain the correct tow position:

- Just as the rope goes tight note the position in the canopy of the tug – that will give you your initial tow position.
- Once airborne maintain a safe height above the ground with careful use of the elevator until the tug is airborne.
- Do not allow the glider to get any more than about 6 -10' above the ground or about the height of GAZPA's fin
- Once the combination is at a safe height 'recalibrate' by going down on to the tug slipstream and then gently bring the glider back up into the smooth air. Maintain that position with the elevator.
- Note the position of the tug in the canopy. That is the correct tow position.
- Remember to re-trim

Do that each time you launch. It works for any combination for glider, tug and tow rope length. If you have never practiced this technique then one of the instructors would be only too pleased to demonstrate it to you.

In addition watch our Aerotow training video as a reminder.

http://www.blackmountainsgliding.co.uk/vid_aerotow.php

Winter flying

We are now into winter flying (if you have not already noticed). The following are areas to think about

Clean the canopy

- The canopies must be cleaned at the beginning of each day as part of the DI. Flying with an unclean canopy must be avoided. This is particularly the case during the winter where the sun is lower and/or the canopy is more likely to mist up.
- If you use the club canopy cleaning kit please return it. If cleaning fluid/clean cloths have run out please tell the Duty Instructor or a member of the committee.

Late landing – low setting sun

- If you are flying in westerly conditions consider landing West instead of South West if landing late in the day towards the setting sun. The change in landing run makes a big difference in your ability to see the landing area clearly

NW ridge – flying west into sun

- Be aware when flying west late in the afternoon along the NW ridge as gliders disappear when below ridge top height which is in shadow. Gliders heading in the opposite direction become very difficult to spot.
- This is significant as you, with the ridge on your left have to give way.
- Likewise if you are flying in the opposite direction, down sun with the ridge on your right, do not assume that the glider flying in the opposite direction has seen you.
- This is made worse with an un-clean canopy

High in Wave – late in the day

- As a reminder it will get dark on the ground first so allow plenty of time to return and avoid landing when it is too dark to be safe

Canopy mist up

- Do not launch if you cannot keep the canopy clear. Assuming the canopy will demist as you launch is ok if you can see enough but do consider what you would require if you then had a launch failure
- If you leave the canopy open until the last moment on the launch – do ensure it is closed and locked and re-confirm that your brakes are closed and locked. At that stage of the launch it is very easy to get distracted
- If the canopy does mist up do not wipe it with anything other than a soft, clean material.

Changing weather

- The weather during the winter can change significantly. Be alert to any changing conditions.
- Do not be tempted into a launch if you think the conditions are then going to deteriorate. You are better off waiting for a clearance in the weather
- If you are airborne and the weather is deteriorating make a decision to return early. Do not leave it to the last minute. Not only could the conditions be changing rapidly (surface wind direction/strength, reducing visibility etc) but other pilots might also be doing the same which congests the circuit and landing area increasing your work load

Soft/bogy ground

- Be aware when launching on soft ground especially in heavier gliders. The acceleration on launch and subsequent ground run can be severely effected.
- If you are not accelerating sufficiently abandon the launch in good time before the tug pilot does. Leaving it late could leave you little room to stop

Wrap up warm / dehydration

- As we all know it can get very cold in a glider so do wear adequate clothing. Try and keep your feet dry if possible as these will get very cold quickly. However what is less obvious is dehydration. Just because it is not hot doesn't mean to say you would not get dehydrated. Make sure you still take plenty of liquid on board.

Flying close to cloud base

You are more likely to find your self close to cloud base when ridge soaring. The cloud will tend to 'sit' on top of the lift and therefore you could find yourself cruising around at the top of the lift band just under the cloud. Please ensure you keep your self 100-200' clear of the cloud base if at all possible making it easy for you to see and be seen whilst maintaining adequate clearance from the ridge.

Daily Inspection of the tow vehicles/Quad bike

As part of the preparation for the day please ensure that the tow vehicles/Quad are DI'd
The minimum requirement should be

- Fuel – sufficient for the day
- Oil – ok
- Coolant – ok (if applicable)
- Tyres – ok (not too soft/not about to fall apart)

Replacement oil and coolant can be found in the hangar

U/S tow vehicles at this time of the year can be as quick at stopping the flying operation as a grounded tug. Please look after them.

Cheers

Martin
CFI