

AGC Weekly News

Weekend Roster

Saturday

Tug Pilot: John Bongrain
Instructors: Jonathan Cross, David Moody
Duty Pilot: John Robertson

Sunday

Tug Pilot: Wayne Thomas
Winch Driver: Anton
Instructors: Norm Duke, John Robertson
Duty Pilot: Jonathan Cross

Exams Tomorrow Sat 26th June

Russell Thorne

Pilots who have an outstanding need to sit the GNZ Navigation, Airmanship or Law papers at the club tomorrow Saturday 26th June at 9 am are

invited to attend. Please bring your training syllabus sheet for sign off upon successful completion.

Drone Operations at Drury

Russell Thorne

An ongoing continuation of notifications to the club is newsworthy in particular for flying operations this Saturday between 13h00- 15h00 and not above 150ft AGL.

This particular operator is based in Fitzgerald Road to the southwest of the airfield and is training to become a commercial operator.

In most cases, these requests occur during the weekdays and associated with subdivisions normally around the quarry and below 400ft AGL, but there have been similar positions notified on Red Hill and on the other side of the Motorway adjacent to Drury. Professional operators have the means to monitor VHF 134.45 and some have spotters to identify nearby aircraft.

Every notification within 4km of Drury airfield is assessed for its threat to gliding operations at Drury. Just about all are commercial in nature and operated under 400ft AGL by trained pilots under CAA approvals via Airshare. See <https://www.airshare.co.nz/rules>

While I appreciate that it is difficult to see drones or UAV while airborne, if any pilot observes a drone operating at a similar altitude as a glider, then an incident report is the means for follow-up.

You can expect drone operations to continue for the period where development is taking place nearby.

New Drury Train Station

Sent by Russell Thorne

On Friday 4 June, the Government confirmed funding for the three stations in the Drury area - Drury Central, Drury West and Paerata as part of the NZ Upgrade Programme.

As the project moves into the next phase, KiwiRail will now be responsible for the design and construction of the three stations.

The project team will continue engaging with Manawhenua and stakeholders on the design for

the stations. Discussions with directly affected property owners are ongoing while work continues on the necessary planning approvals (consents and designations).

Construction is expected to start in 2023 and be completed by 2025. Our intention is to build as much as possible in parallel to the project to electrify between Papakura to Pukekohe. <https://supportinggrowth.govt.nz/growth-areas/south/>



Situational Awareness

My Club Safety Committee spent a lot of time this week talking about "Situational Awareness" and the loss of it. But what exactly is "Situational Awareness" ("SA") anyway? How do you get it? How do you lose it? How do you know if you have lost it? How do you get it back? It is an elusive matter and one that is hard to write about. The part of our brain that helps us maintain multi-faceted awareness is different from the part of the brain that thinks and writes about ideas. And those two brain parts do not play well together.

Distracted Flying

The discussion came up in the context of educating student pilots about the dangers of aerial photography while flying close to other gliders. We had some post solo students publishing on social media aerial photos they took of other gliders in a gaggle with themselves. The students did not perceive that their focus on "getting a good photo" ended their process of looking out for other gliders who might be joining a gaggle. Now, reading this, that all seems obvious - but why didn't the students see that at the time? Understanding exactly why - and how to recognize the loss of situational awareness can be difficult. For example, you could try reading this article while you are flying next but that would

be counterproductive to the very thing we are talking about. The same is true if you are trying to be situationally aware. It is actually very hard to think - about how you are thinking. It is even harder to control what you are thinking.

What is Awareness?

Awareness, at least in the simplified way that I am trying to present it here, can be described as "a state of total observation and attention to all matters and inputs impacting the flight". That seems a pretty good definition of what we want to maintain. But the problem is that our brains are wired in a way to completely obliterate the "big picture" in favor of any tiny little thought, detail, or function that pops up - regardless of that item's actual degree of importance (or even danger) to the overall flight. Our mind works like a screen with an out-of-control "zoom in" feature. We do not ask ourselves, "Is this problem worth thinking about?" Instead, we just think about it, and it consumes the brain space that we need for full situational awareness. The world-class marksman Brian Enos explained it this way, "A quiet open mind will perceive everything that's happening and send automatic controls to your body in an endless flow. A mind that's fixed with

only one glaring thought in it cannot perceive what's happening beyond that thought."

This is important and explains what we call "tunnel vision". And the more immediate, complex, or challenging the specific thought or job is (like inflight changing a database, fixing a flight computer glitch, or, in the case of the students - framing and taking a photograph), the further back into our minds SA gets pushed. Accident databases are full of cases where a pilot's attention was hijacked by some simple problem that he focused on relentlessly - and fatally. Sadly, there are too many examples of towplane fatalities caused by the glider pilot's preoccupation on tow with a camera, an open canopy, a dropped object, or other distractions. The preoccupation persists until the glider balloons well above the tow plane - which cannot recover in time. This also explains why we should not fly in times of mental stress or after an argument or other emotional event. Our brains continue to rework, process, and re-analyze the emotional event and that takes up the peacefulness and mental space we need for full awareness. Being startled by something also has this effect. Fear and preoccupation with landing out does the same thing and can actually cause a land out that could have been avoided if the pilot escaped the tunnel vision. (Didn't you see that bird circling near you?)

Stay in the Present

So, now that we know how we lose SA, how do we get it back? There are a couple of tricks. One is to ask yourself a question frequently during your flight, "Is what I am thinking about right now helping me to fly safer or more efficiently?" If the answer to that question is "No" - then refocus your mind onto something that IS helpful for safety or efficiency. Banish the unhelpful thought. Another good question to ask yourself is "Am I thinking about something 'right here right now'?" Or are you thinking about something in another place (a problem at work or at home)? Or something in the past (a lousy start, an old argument, a competitor that passed you)? Or something in the future (will I land out? Or what will be my contest or OLC score)? SA is all about the here and now and, and if you focus on only

that, the score will take care of itself, you will pass that competitor in the next hour, and the land out will not happen. Here and now is all you can control anyway.

If a job requiring complex thinking (like checking airspace criteria, or task/waypoint setting in the computer) can be done ahead of time - do those before launch. Do not import jobs for yourself into the flight that will distract you. Stow or leave on the ground the GoPro, cameras, and other gadgets that pull your mind away from flying safely and efficiently. For God's sake, do not text, read texts, or fool with your phone or InReach during the flight. Ignore what the other pilots are saying or bragging about on the radio. Unless a transmission is imperative you should be too busy to chat. Ever notice that the best pilots do not talk much?

Looking Outside

Lastly, and especially as you get low and begin to worry - get your mind and your eyes outside of the glider. Look at the clouds - which ones are growing? Which are dying? Where are the energy lines? Are there other gliders circling or birds out there? Are there smoke plumes or dust devils? Did some birds just leave a perch? Did smoke that was traveling sideways just start to go straight up? Are there areas of sunlight on the ground that the cloud shadows do not cover? Are there areas of shade or puddles that should be avoided? Is there a paved area that will be warm now? A metal building or structure that is hot and will focus a thermal? Is there a slope to some terrain (or the wall of a quarry) that is perpendicular to the sun? Will that train, truck, or tractor kick off a thermal? Where is my safety field? How much altitude do I have to work with and how best to use it? And remember to look UP as well as out and down. There might be birds, clouds, or gliders above you. Get your head and eyes out of your instrument panel and outside of the canopy. It is what is out there that matters. There is so much to learn from just seeing and observing. Then, you are back to situational awareness, and you will see what you need to solve the problem. And you will be a safer pilot too.



Roy Bourgeois is a well known US and South African glider pilot who serves as the Chief Pilot for the Greater Boston Soaring Club. He has held several US national records, competed in many US and Canadian Nationals, and has flown over a quarter million XC kilometers in his 4200 hours of gliding. He can be reached at royb@bw.legal

Safer Winch Launching

Submitted by Gerard Robertson

Here is a video clip of a French two-seater performing a disastrous winch launch. Tim Bromhead analyses what went wrong and gives some excellent instructions which could help you make sure this does not ever happen to you.



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Av1ukmZkoi0&lc=UgzowwBWGJdylaH39K94AaABAg.9Oqdc_E8WLI9OsC4TVKkcM

Something on Bug Wipers

From Gerard Robertson



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YWfV-OdVPKY>

Auckland Gliding Club Mid-Winter Celebration

I want to invite all members, partners, and friends to a Mid-Winter Mushroom Risotto evening at our clubhouse on Saturday July 24th at 6pm.

Under Simon Gault's direction the quality food will be perfect for a cool winters evening at the AGC clubrooms

\$27 per person

This includes our prizegiving and will also include lots of fun.

Make a booking in your diary now!

When making payments to the Club Bank Account Number 03 0104 0012743 00, PLEASE ALWAYS include the Invoice Number and Your Surname.

Thanks to all those who have contributed to this edition. If there is anything you would like to share with the members via this newsletter, text or photographs, please e-mail me. I will be grateful for any contributions, whatever they may be.

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