

What the GNZ Operations Team is Talking About . . .

A summary of key items discussed at the Operations Team on-line meeting on 17 August 2022. David Moody (North), David Hirst (Central), Wal Bethwaite (South) and Martyn Cook (NOO).

1. Incident Reports for July - August 2022

- self-launch single seat glider - tail dolly left on for flight after repositioning for takeoff
- glider lost avionic power during take-off in controlled airspace, no radio, restored on landing
- screwdriver found in front of right rudder pedal during Daily Inspection after maintenance
- tail of glider clipped fence during an outlanding, attributed to undershoot, paint scratched
- instructor made an instructional flight when airfield had been closed due to wet conditions
- solo flight authorised without pilot disclosing ongoing use of analgesic drugs after injury
- dual cross-country training flight continued into deteriorating weather, frightened the trainee

Commentary on Selected Incident Reports

Loss of Battery Power in Controlled Airspace: This is a serious event because the use of controlled airspace demands continuous radio communications with the pilot, and any equipment malfunction reflects poorly on our glider inspection and maintenance standards. Glider batteries are often removed for charging, so the connectors, flexible leads and securing brackets associated with batteries can be subject to considerable wear and tear. In this case the vibration of the takeoff and landing roll respectively seemed to interrupt and then restore the power connection. Loose or corroded connections can also create problems, so include these items in your DI.

Medical Fitness for Solo Flight: There are a number of conditions which need to be met by a pilot before an instructor can authorise a solo flight. These include a valid medical declaration signed by a doctor, which should be obtained in advance of the day when a solo flight is likely, particularly the first solo. In this case the pilot was taking pain-killing medication but did not disclose this to the gliding instructor. The instructor did not know about the medications (although the CFI did) and did not ask specifically. The mental demands on a pilot during a first or early solo flight are considerable, and anything that could impair functioning should be a reason for not allowing the solo flight to proceed.

Instructional Flight into Deteriorating Weather: The dual instructional flight was intended to expose the trainee to cross-country ridge flying. There seemed to be adequate wind at the time of launch but the wind strength - and the usable lift - decreased during the flight. The weather conditions were reported as cloudy with passing showers, with conditions worsening with time.

The instructor elected to continue flying away from the launching airfield despite the lift being weaker than expected, and the altitude was reported as steadily decreasing with distance flown. A safe outlanding was eventually made after what amounted to an extended final glide.

Instructors have a responsibility to provide positive learning experiences for their trainees, appropriate to their level of training, and not expose them to situations that just end up scaring them, as in this instance.

2. Instructor Training Program

Work is continuing on upgrading the Instructor Training Program to meet current needs while complying with emerging CAA requirements along with some new expectations. After some guidance from CAA an Assessment Matrix for the three categories of gliding instructor (A, B and C) has been developed. It is proposed to drop the D-Cat instructor rating because it has been rarely used, and to drop the separate Instructor Trainer rating when appended to a B-Cat rating.

In future all instructor training will be undertaken by A-Cat instructors. CAA is requiring Gliding NZ to include elements of *Learning Theory* in the instructor training program. A brief introduction to learning theory as it applies to gliding has been published by Gliding Australia [here](#) (discard the first four pages as they relate to Australian conditions).

It has been identified that assessment of instructors should encompass these four areas:

- knowledge base - including pilot training program, CAA rules, glider maintenance rules
- ability to teach - with emphasis on practices that are consistent with modern learning theory
- ability to conduct airborne exercises - including briefing, debriefing and fault analysis
- management of airfield and flying operations - eg. solo pilot supervision, emergencies

There will be an upgrade path for existing B-Cat Instructor Trainers to become A-Cat Instructors. Some additional study and preparation may be required to achieve this. There is no proposal to remove or reduce existing instructor ratings or privileges.

Guidance will be issued on how to conduct Instructor Competency Reviews, which will be used to verify that the new Assessment Standards are being achieved and maintained by our instructors.

3. Teaching Alpine Flying

There is currently no rating or endorsement available to recognise instructors who are qualified and experienced to teach alpine flying and supervise pilots flying in mountainous terrain. There is resource material available in the PTP but no system of assessment has yet been published.

In the meantime, clubs and instructors that are planning Alpine Flying courses are asked to discuss their plans with their ROO well in advance of the proposed course dates.

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20 August 2022