

# AGC Weekly News

The weekly newsletter of the Auckland Gliding Club at Drury, Auckland

## From the CFI



A reminder that Duty Pilots need to go through the first SEVEN items in the revised *How We Do Things* Duty Pilot manual which is in the caravan.

The Item 6 to "Phone Unicom Ardmore" has apparently not been done for some time. If we want to avoid conflict with GA aircraft, we need to let them know we are operating, please.

A light read of the rest of the *How We Do Things* can be done while the instructors and students set up the gliders. If in doubt, please ask.

The weather for the weekend is not looking good for Friday but the rest of the weekend should be flyable to some degree, with the typical Easter convergency forming up the Coromandel Peninsula on Monday.

Anton Lawrence  
CFI Auckland Gliding Club  
021 280 188

## Club Insurance

Gerard Robertson, President

Member feedback is sought on the Insurance excess buyout scheme proposal.

The committee has considered a scheme adopted by other clubs, whereby members who fly club gliders can pay an annual amount - effectively an insurance premium - which would cover the excess of any insurance claim the club might make as a consequence of an incident or accident the pilot may have suffered.

There have been a couple of claims made this season to cover damage to club gliders. The club Rules (14e, to be exact) say that "The Committee may in its discretion (e) In the event of damage to Club property, direct a contribution toward the costs of repair or replacement or in the event of insurance towards the uninsured loss as the case may be providing that such contribution shall not exceed the insurance excess applicable at the time."

This rule has not been consistently applied and the committee thinks it reasonable that it should be, as it puts responsibility (not blame) on the pilot-in-command and does not spread the burden

across club members who may not fly club aircraft or are incident-free. An important exclusion is that this rule would not normally apply when the PIC is an instructor giving instruction, unless there is clear evidence of negligence or inappropriate action.

This excess-covering fund would be started and built up by contributions from club members who fly club gliders and choose to join the scheme. As such a fund would take some time to build up a reserve, the club would cover its operation until such time. The amount proposed is in the range of \$50 - \$100, lessening as the fund builds up a reserve. We understand that the Canterbury Gliding Club fund is now well-established and contributions have reduced to \$25 p.a.

The committee would like to hear from club members ([committee@glidingauckland.co.nz](mailto:committee@glidingauckland.co.nz)).



Photo by Sean Franke

Experiencing an inflight emergency or a near miss while in your glider can be a harrowing ordeal, it'll likely trigger the startle effect. The startle effect, which is also known as the startle response or the sudden onset of intense fear, can significantly impair a pilot's ability to effectively respond to the situation at hand. Understanding the startle effect and knowing how to mitigate its impact is crucial for glider pilots to ensure safe flight operations.

The startle effect is a natural physiological and psychological reaction to unexpected or sudden stimuli, such as encountering an emergency situation mid-flight. When faced with a threatening event, the body's sympathetic nervous system kicks into high gear, releasing adrenaline and cortisol, commonly known as stress hormones. These hormones prepare the body for a fight-or-flight response, increasing heart rate, dilating pupils, and heightening overall arousal levels.

## **Cognitive Tunneling**

In the context of all airborne activities, the startle effect can manifest in various ways, including cognitive tunneling, where pilots focus solely on the perceived threat while neglecting other critical tasks, and motor skill degradation, leading to a decline in manual dexterity and decision-making ability. This impairment can be particularly dangerous in glider flying, where pilots rely heavily on situational awareness and precise control inputs to navigate safely through the air.

## **Comprehensive Training**

So, how can glider pilots effectively deal with the startle effect during inflight emergencies? Firstly, comprehensive training and simulation exercises are essential to familiarise pilots with emergency procedures and cultivate the necessary skills to remain calm under pressure. By repeatedly exposing pilots to simulated emergency scenarios in a controlled environment, they can develop the mental resilience and muscle memory needed to

respond effectively when faced with a real-life crisis.

### **Situational Awareness**

Secondly, maintaining a proactive approach to situational awareness is paramount. Glider pilots should continuously scan their surroundings, anticipate potential hazards, and mentally rehearse emergency responses. By staying vigilant and mentally prepared, pilots can reduce the likelihood of being caught off guard by unexpected events, thereby minimising the impact of the startle effect.

### **Communication**

Additionally, if you're in a two-seater, establishing effective communication protocols within the cockpit can facilitate coordinated decision-making and task allocation during inflight emergencies, naturally the same can be said about radio comms from one glider to another as well. Clear and concise communication between pilots can help mitigate the disruptive effects of the startle response, enabling swift and decisive action to address the situation at hand.

### **Resilient Mindset**

Moreover, adopting a resilient mindset is crucial

for overcoming the psychological effects of the startle response. Pilots should acknowledge their emotional reactions to stressful situations while maintaining a positive outlook and focusing on problem-solving strategies. By reframing challenges as opportunities for growth and learning, we can navigate through adversity with greater confidence and composure.

The startle effect poses a significant challenge for glider pilots faced with inflight emergencies. However, through proper training, situational awareness, effective communication, and a resilient mindset, pilots can mitigate its impact and safely wade through challenging situations. By equipping ourselves with the necessary skills and mindset, glider pilots can maintain the highest standards of safety and proficiency in the skies for ourselves and all around us.

*Adam Woolley was born into the gliding world, being the 3rd generation in his family. Going solo at 15, his thirst for efficiency in soaring flight & quest for a world championship title to his name has never wavered. One big passion is sharing his experiences & joy with other glider pilots all around the world. Adam is an airline pilot in Japan on the B767 & spends his off time chasing summer around the globe. He has now won 7 national Championships & represented Australia at 5 WGC's & 1 EGC.*

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## ***From last week's committee meeting***

***Gerard Robertson, President***

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Committee meetings are not generally held to be the most exciting way to spend an evening, but are the necessary means by which your club is managed, so here are some points from the most recent meeting.

Firstly, Keith Macy has now had the burden of the Treasurer's tasks (mostly) taken off his shoulders, though if anyone wants to take on part of this role, please see James Butterworth. As is his habit, Keith has given 110% to this role and the club is the better for it. If you see Keith in the bar, remind yourself that you owe him a drink.

The committee agreed to purchase the new vehicle you will be seeing on the field as a replacement for the Nissan Terrano, which has served so well for so long as the winch tow-out and cable recovery vehicle. The club was lucky enough to buy this from a friend of Hugh. It's just passed its WOF and it is intended that a front tow bar be installed for manoeuvring the winch.

This vehicle replacement pretty much completes our on-club assets for the time being (though some thought is being given to our tractors).

Over the last two or three years, we've rationalised the glider fleet (by donating the Single Astir to Youth Glide and acquiring another PW-5), expanded our training capability by the addition of QQ, disposed of the Fergie tractors and bought another LandBoss. We've also just put the Puchatek up for sale on the GNZ site. The ground vehicle replacements were spurred on by safety as much as serviceability; there were concerns about the ability of the Fergies and the Terrano to stop on request, while the carrying of passengers on the rear of the Fergies was perhaps not the best idea in these days of 'alf and safety regulations.

Which leads to the main issue facing the club: membership. We are a well-equipped club, but we need more members to ensure the club's longevity and to make gliding affordable by spreading costs over a greater number of members. This is not a committee challenge; it is a club challenge. All of us need to put some thought and effort into attracting new members, by talking up gliding to friends and acquaintances, making visitors welcome etc. If you've got some ideas about how to attract more members, please

talk to any of the committee members or just put your thoughts in an email ([committee@glidingauckland.co.nz](mailto:committee@glidingauckland.co.nz)).

A working bee will also be scheduled over the next few weeks, while over winter there will be glider polishing on offer (a great way to keep warm!). As Peter Wooley and others cleared out the workshop, we now have a suitable space to do this sort of work.

There are a number of events coming in the next few months, leading into the start of the season, including:

- the GNZ AGM, to be held in Queenstown, which Ross Gaddes will attend as the club's representative
- the AGM, prior to which the committee will share some thoughts on fees and charges
- the cross-country course at Matamata
- the South Island trip for one of the Duos, which could include the multiclass Nationals and the Springfield comp
- advance preparation for the Drury comp.

Until the start of the season, there'll also be trips to Matamata to fly the ridge. This is also a good way for prospective cross-country pilots to get a good view of the Waikato while enjoying reliable lift.

Lastly, the club trailers have mostly had their WOFs renewed thanks to a visit from Drury Autos. As there are a couple of trailers outstanding (XF and QQ, I think), I plan to ask them to visit again. This is an opportunity for private owners to have their WOFs renewed with minimum effort. Please send me a note if you're interested ([bungeeegerard@gmail.com](mailto:bungeeegerard@gmail.com)) and we'll set something up. I have in mind a row of trailers parked together to make it easy for the testers to move from one to another.

Just a reminder: it is the user's responsibility to make sure that the trailer associated with the glider they plan to use has a current WOF (and enough air in the tyres). QQ recently went out to the coast; it would have been unwarranted and thus potentially uninsured.

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## Next South Island Trip

Ross Gaddes

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Although early, I want to gauge interest for the southern trip of our Duo. This is because the Nationals are going to be held in Omarama this year. Also, we have the luxury of being able to retain a Duo at our base. I need to get an idea of who may be interested in participating in a South Island tour, starting maybe, as early as October and finishing, possibly, after our NZ Nationals.

The trip could also take in other events at Springfield and Omarama and maybe even visit Nelson lakes. There is no current plan but I want to get a feel for who would participate. This includes P1 and P2 pilots.

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## Member's Ads



**H36 Dimona** ZK-GPH for sale or syndication. Julian Elder is interested in either creating a syndicate or selling his Dimona GPH. It recently has had significant restorative work carried out. For any technical stuff contact Ian Williams (021980194 [ian@agcon.co.nz](mailto:ian@agcon.co.nz)) or sales information contact Julian 0276924114 [julian@elder.net.nz](mailto:julian@elder.net.nz)

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