

SHROPSHIRE SOARING GROUP - PASSENGER CARRYING NOTES

The following notes are intended to act as a guide to the individual pilot who plans to carry a passenger in a glider from Sleaford. Carrying a “non flying” passenger should involve increased safety margins from what the individual pilot may consider acceptable in their own personal flying.

Don't fly if there is any doubt over the ability for the flight to be conducted in a safe and enjoyable manner.

1. FLIGHT PLANNING

Dual Flying Table

Shropshire Soaring Groups website flying notes section contains a table for the conduct of all two seater flights. Any passenger flight should be conducted in accordance with this.

Weather conditions

As a guide weather less than the VFR minimums for powered aircraft should not be used for passenger flights. Ensure the weather will remain outside of these minimums for the entire flight and that there is no approaching adverse weather. Wind conditions should be within both aircraft and pilot limitations.

NOTAMS

Ensure there are no relevant NOTAMS affecting the proposed flight.

Membership forms

All passengers must be temporary members of SSG and a temporary membership form should be filled in prior to flying.

2. AIRCRAFT

Insurance

The second seat must be appropriately insured for the carriage of passengers and the pilot insured to fly the glider.

ARC / BGA Inspections

Ensure the appropriate ARC / BGA inspections have been carried out on the glider and are all current. Recent changes to the airworthiness requirements could mean that you are un-insured. Keep up to date with latest developments in this area but if in doubt – check!

3. PILOT

Currency

Ensure you are in current gliding practice and also current in the glider to be flown. The minimum currency requirements are set out in the flying notes. These are absolute minimums and ideally for passenger flying these minimums should be increased.

Front or back seat?

Do not fly from a seat which you are not used to. Your ability to cope with emergencies and field landings might be compromised. There is also reduced visibility from the back seat which can affect your look out and circuit planning. It is essential to have had some prior training / familiarisation in operating the glider from the back seat before taking a passenger.

Despite what you might think putting a passenger in the back seat won't spoil the experience for them. In fact if they are a little nervous being able to see you in front might even be reassuring.

Qualified

Impending changes to the pilot licensing requirements could mean in future you might not be licensed even if you are not doing anything different. Keep up to date with latest developments in this area but if in doubt – check!

Medical

Ensure your medical is current and has the correct level of endorsement on it to allow flight with passengers. Also consider your fitness to fly in relation to the acronym IM SAFE:

I - Illness

M – Medication

S – Stress

A – Alcohol

F – Fatigue

E - Eating

Personal limitations

Only you know what your personal limitations to various factors are. They may be higher than the recommended minimums. Whatever they are know and respect them. Do not expose a passenger to any situation where there are increased risks which are outside of your comfort zone or abilities.

4. GENERAL FLYING

Maintain safe margins

Maintain safe margins at all times during the flight. Allow enough height for not only a standard return to the airfield but also to accommodate any unforeseen circumstances such as a change of runway. Consider what the individual passenger wants and whether the additional risk of a cross country flight will actually add anything to the experience.

Current in field landing practice

The aim of the flight is for it not to end in a field landing. However, be comfortable that if the need should arise (rope break / excessive sink) you have the ability to do it. Identify the fact that a field landing will be necessary early on to allow a better selection of fields and a properly planned and executed circuit and approach to be flown.

Familiar with Sleep a/f ops

Ensure you are familiar with airfield operations at Sleep. This should include not only the active runway but all the possible runways that could be in use. Listen out on 122.455 prior to returning to the airfield to determine if the runway has changed. Plan ahead to ensure your arrival is in line with the established traffic pattern.

Distractions

Do not allow the fact there is another person in the glider to distract you from flying the glider. If the workload becomes too high then providing a running commentary of the flight is not a priority.

5. PASSENGER CARE

In power aircraft it is a legal requirement to ensure passengers have had a safety brief before flying. A flight in a glider is no different and a safety brief must include:

Parachute – fitting and deployment

Canopy – Normal use and emergency operation

Straps – How to tighten and release them

Also, make the experience more enjoyable and cover the following:

Welfare – position of sick bags and airvents Instruments – Briefly what they are and what they show

The glider – basic controls and how it works

The flight – Where you are going and to what height

Final comments to the passenger should be a simple rundown of how to evacuate the glider in an emergency – KEEP IT SIMPLE!!!

6. EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Aviate – Navigate – Communicate.....In that order!!!

Rope break options

Know what your options are for the runway in use and each stage of the tow. Review the off site landing options constantly as you would on any other flight. Review at what height a return to the airfield can be safely made and whether conditions (traffic / weather) allow for alternative landing options other than the current runway in use.

Running out of height

Unexpected sink in the circuit can mean even the best planned and executed flight could end up running out of height. As with any other flight avoid manoeuvring low down and turn in early and land long. Do not worry that it may be a long walk back to the launch point or that airfield operations may be temporarily delayed. If a return to the field is in doubt recognise this early and accept that a field landing is necessary.

Tug signals

Ensure you are familiar with the following emergency signals:

Wave Off

Check Airbrakes

Also remember if the tug is taking you to a position that could lead to a marginal return to the airfield then call on the radio. Don't release until you are comfortable with your position and height for returning to the field.

Above all remember that somebody will not forget a dangerous flight or experience whereas a short delay to a better day won't spoil their enjoyment of it in the long run.