



Brisbane's Largest Lifestyle Magazine

# Australian National Gliding Championships

49th Multi-Class Championships

Dalby Aerodrome

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## Safety information

### Introduction

At the start of every competition we all say "safety is our first priority", and I'm sure we all mean it when we say it. The big question is what are we, each and every one of us, prepared to do to make this competition safer. What are we prepared to change in what we do, to make this competition safer?

### Recent Nationals

We have received safety reports from 3 recent national competitions. Those reports document a long list of incidents that occur regularly at competitions. I am sure that sitting reading this list before the competition begins we can all say "I would never do that", yet nationals pilots have done these things. Here is the list:

- not attending the morning briefing
- conducting an unsafe engine run-up
- thermalling left in the start zone
- landing back on the airfield for a relight in the opposing direction to the launch
- engaging in aggressive and dangerous thermalling
- descending below 50ft and beating up the pie cart
- flying across the preferred landing circuit
- flying right hand circuits when left hand circuits were called for
- landing towards stationary gliders and needing to brake harshly
- landing in the opposing direction to other gliders
- landing over the top of and close to a stationary glider
- landing short for convenience rather than following the land long procedure
- landing for convenience near the tie down area
- landing and taxiing in front of another landing aircraft
- leaving the glider on the strip after landing
- crossing the strip with a car in front of gliders landing

Imagine for a moment how much safer the competition would be if none of these incidents were repeated?

These incidents are concentrated in two areas of our operations:

- Launching, and
- Landing.

### **Launching**

- We will designate a tow out pattern and drop zone for each day's operations.
- Before take off, each pilot should visualise the tow out path and drop zone and consider their release options.
- Note the registration of the tug towing you before takeoff.
- The tug will normally tow straight out to 1000' and then turn.
- Pilots releasing low in the tow out area or drop zone assume responsibility for maintaining separation from launching aircraft.
- Pilots who wish to release early need to consider the safety of others and the increased risk posed by circling in the tow out area.
- Safety should be the primary consideration in releasing early.
- Gliders are far more manoeuvrable than a tug glider combination and should move clear of the expected flight path of other tug glider combinations.
- If you see another aircraft that may pose a risk to the glider tug combination radio the tug pilot immediately.
- If there is no response and the risk remains, release immediately.
- The consequences of an out landing are significantly less the consequence of a mid air.
- Only release in the tow out area when it is safe to do so for all pilots, not just when it is personally convenient.
- Depart the tow out path and drop zone as soon as possible.

### **Landing**

- Read and understand the rules and procedures that apply on any given day.
- Know the airfield and where you can land safely.
- Be conscious of the safety of others not just yourself.
- Remember that we all share responsibility for the safety of all our fellow pilots.
- Maintain high levels of airmanship and lookout in the circuit area.
- Don't be so overloaded, stressed, pressured that you don't have the time or mental space to think about what's safe.
- Don't allow personal convenience to increase the risk for others.
- Plan your approach well in advance and have safe alternatives available.

### **Landing in wet paddocks**

If you have to land in a wet paddock, land wheel down.

## **Incident reporting**

It is important that all incidents are reported, to the safety committee, the Safety Officer, or the Contest Director. If we know about an incident we can do something about, do something to stop it happening again, and possibly becoming an accident.

We have a poor record of incident reporting at competitions. If we want to make our competition safer we have to report and discuss incidents.

My simple definition of what is an incident is “anything that you would not want to have repeated, and that other pilots could learn from.”

There is no shame in reporting incidents. To not report an incident and let it be repeated is unsafe.

Pilots should note rule 21.5 of the general rules “The Pilot Safety Committee should where possible handle complaints without the involvement of the Organisers.”

We consider this rule to be antiquated and inconsistent with contemporary safety management. We tried to have it changed but were unsuccessful.

As organisers, we will actively work with the safety committee to deal with any safety issues that may arise.

## **Oxygen**

There is an addition to the general rules recommending the use of oxygen.

CASA Civil Aviation Regulation 20.4 requires the carriage and use of oxygen for flight above 10,000ft QNH.

We strongly encourage the use of oxygen and remind pilots of the competitive advantage that can be gained by using oxygen even at altitudes below 10,000ft.

If a functioning oxygen system is not fitted, flight above 10,000ft will be monitored and dealt with as a safety matter.

## **Summary**

All pilots need to accept responsibility for the safety of each other.

We cannot afford to jeopardise safety in the interests of the personal preferences of individual pilots.

Pilots who are unable or unwilling to follow standard procedures must accept that they are making the sky unsafe for others, regardless of how safe they may think they are.