

GUIDANCE MATERIAL REGARDING CURRENCY

This information is offered as guidance material for pilots and clubs and does not replace existing UK Law, BGA Operational Regulations, BGA Recommended Practice or Club Requirements.

1.0 Background

The amount of flying required in any period of time in order for a pilot to retain a safe level of handling skill and perception will vary according to many parameters such as total gliding time, the type of gliding being done and of course the pilot himself.

A pilot may be current at floating around the circuit or on a hill but may easily not be current on winching, stalling, spinning, launch failures or landing out: in fact the main things that hurt people in gliding. For this reason when deciding on currency requirements for pilots not only should total hours and launches be considered but also launch failure, stall reinforcement and spin recognition / recovery recency should be taken into account.

Do remember that pilots learn and subsequently forget at different rates therefore how long a pilot can go without flying a glider will vary enormously. To fly safely will, to a large degree depend on the total hours and launches of that pilot and whether the pilot was current prior to their lay off. Some of the key factors that may influence the pilot's continuing ability to fly are:

- Pilot experience:
 - Hours, launches, number of types flown, number of sites etc.
- Site factors
- Weather
- Purpose of flight
- The individual pilot's well-being, both physical and mental.

It is also appreciated that many glider pilots engage in other types of flying. Great care should be taken when allowing "credit" for other types of flying. Some of the skills do carry over, but it is currency in flying gliders needs to be specifically addressed.

2.0 Out-of-currency pilots

If a pilot fails to achieve the currency or recency requirement then they should fly as P2 with a current qualified instructor and be refreshed and tested on launching, launch failures, stall symptoms, stall recoveries (nose drop, wing drop, and mush.), spin recognition and recovery, effective lookout and accurate flying.

3.0 Instructors

The BGA lays down the minimum criteria for renewing Instructors' ratings. However, an instructor who is not current should not instruct until he/she has become current again solo. An out of practice instructor is not only ineffective but is also dangerous. Instructing on its own is not a way of staying fully current and is certainly not a mechanism for regaining currency.

Suggested currency: PIC Dual Training

3 launches using the intended launch method in the previous 3 months.

Out of practice instructors should be "refreshed" by the CFI or a nominated full rated instructor.

4.0 Field Landings

It is suggested that pilots who are inexperienced at cross country flying should have as a minimum annual field landing training. With experience, the frequency of training flights can be extended and included within the routine refresher training cycle.

Here some pragmatism is required when handling very experienced pilots who have completed many successful landouts and those experienced pilots who fly self-launching and turbo gliders. A discussion session/briefing may suffice.

5.0 Passenger Carrying

Many clubs allow passenger flying and mutual flying. Particular care is needed to ensure that pilots authorised to carry passengers are in current practice, are current on the launch type to be used and are current on the type of glider to be flown. In particular, less experienced pilots who fulfil the passenger carrying minima may have very little experience of flying the two seater that they wish to use.

Suggested currency: PIC Dual Training, Trial and Passenger Flying

Pilots in command during Dual Training, Trial and Passenger flights should have flown three takeoffs and landings in the intended glider type using the intended launch method within the previous 90 days. Where this is not possible, the pilot should fly at least one solo flight or one flight under instruction in the intended glider type using the intended launch method prior to carrying out the Training/Trial/Passenger flight.

6.0 Visitors

Visitors from other clubs may be current within their own club environment, however:

Is your site particularly challenging?

- Hill or flat-site
- Big or little airfield
- Busy or quiet
- Aerotow, winch launch or auto-tow

And is your visitor going to fly his own (familiar) glider or is it a type conversion?

If a visiting pilot (regardless of experience) wishes to fly solo on the winch at an unfamiliar airfield it is suggested that they should be given launch failure training for the particular run in

use that is relevant to that airfield. If the pilot places the aircraft in a position that is safety critical then a briefing prior to a solo flight is insufficient. They must demonstrate through a subsequent flight that the fault has been rectified and can fly safely.

Irrespective of the above, a site briefing should be given before any flying is carried out. Again, there is need for a pragmatic approach to handling a cross-country pilot to lands and only wants an aerotow retrieve.

7.0 Club Currency Requirements

Each club should develop, publish and implement a set of currency requirements for all pilots including instructors. Additionally, a process for checking visitors, for handling out of practice pilots and for out of practice instructors should be clearly specified.

In developing a club scheme, do bear in mind the following points:

The science of pilot currency is very vague, so guidelines are just that. i.e. if a pilot goes over his time period by a small amount, it may (or it may not) be appropriate to allow some discretion.

Any required refresher flying **MUST** be useful, must be positive and must be productive. The exercise should be used as an opportunity to further the pilot's skills through effective training.

Don't saddle your club with a completely unworkable system.

Very experienced cross-country pilots who only self-launch or aerotow and who rarely land out in the course of the year probably deserve individual attention.

It may be appropriate to limit the number of instructors who are authorised to carry out some of required refresher exercises.

Do agree on an outline syllabus for the more common exercises, but change the content regularly e.g. Launch failures, stall/spinning, awkward circuits and field landings

Ensure that the training conducted in an effective manner: A clear pre-flight briefing, with a classroom session as necessary followed by the flight(s) and a proper de-briefing. (Example below, Appendix 1)

Suggestion: A 24 month refresher session should be the least restrictive requirement for the more experienced pilots

8.0 Winch Drivers & Tug Pilots

Suggested currency:

- a) Winch Launching. The winch operator should have carried out three launches operating the same type of winch within the previous 90 days.
- b) Aerotow Launching. Tug pilots should refer to the BGA's Aerotow Guidance Notes.

Appendix 1. Example 24 Month Flying/Training Check Flight Content Material (Based on Recommended Bronze Badge Flying Test) – Guidance Notes for instructors

1.0 Lookout, handling, and airmanship.

The candidate must be able to keep an effective lookout, spot approaching situations and act accordingly in order to avoid conflict with other aircraft whilst still maintaining a high standard of flying accuracy.

It is the candidate's responsibility, unless otherwise stated by the examiner, to stay within gliding range of the airfield so that they can fly a normal circuit. In exceptional circumstances a join at low key may be acceptable.

Stall and spin recognition, and recovery:

- The candidate must be able to fly the glider into the stall, recognise the point of stall and take appropriate recovery action.
- The candidate must be able to fly the glider into the stall and induce a wing drop due to yaw and take standard recovery action without any tendency to pick up the down going wing with aileron.
- The candidate must be able to fly the glider into a spin of at least ½ a turn and take standard spin recovery action without exceeding any placard limitations. If the glider spirals during this exercise then the candidate must be able to recognise this and recover accordingly.

If insufficient height is available to demonstrate the spin then several stall with wing drop recoveries should be demonstrated as well as spiral dive and recovery.

2.0 Circuits

The candidate must be able to fly a normal circuit with regard to other circuit traffic into a pre declared landing area. If this is not possible due to sink, landing area unavailability or any other circumstance outside the control of the pilot then the candidate must fly a circuit to any safe landing area. This should be pointed out to the candidate before flying.

3.0 Approach control and landing

The candidate must make a safe height (not normally below 300ft) final turn into the chosen landing area, they must fly the approach with normal use of the airbrakes maintaining speed to within the nominated values followed by a normal landing, all landings should be fully held off. The candidate must be able to identify any undershoot tendency and react accordingly should the situation arise.

The candidate should nominate approach speeds prior to joining the circuit, but it is up to the examiner to decide how much leeway is allowed dependant on the conditions.

4.0 Launching and launch failures

The candidate must be able to fly safely the launch type in use and have planned for and act to safely recover any launch failure at any height. During any launch failure the candidate must not allow the speed to drop below the stated minimum, and any turn must be balanced without tendency to over rudder.

5.0 Further handling exercises.

The candidate should be able to demonstrate any two of the following exercises:

- Bring the glider up to the point of buffet in a 30 to 40 degree banked, coordinated turn.

- A normal landing in a crosswind of no less than 5 kts 90degree component
- Fly a normal cct approach and landing without the use of the ASI
- A side slip approach with or without the use of airbrakes

Spot landing requirements.

The candidate should be able to touchdown reasonably close to their nominated touchdown area, so that they touchdown within 25 metres of their intended point.

6.0 Field Landing Training (As appropriate)

The candidate should select and fly a satisfactory circuit and approach into at least two fields. The area chosen should not be immediately adjacent to the club's site.

7.0 General

The candidate should be briefed before flying and made aware of what is expected of them during the flights.