



4.0 COMMUNICATIONS

Effective communications, both on and off the airfield, are an essential aspect of safe and efficient operations and also of good team management.

It is the pilot's responsibility to be properly informed but it is the CFI's responsibility to ensure that information is available and properly promulgated to club members. The communication and updating of essential information is a continuous task and can be achieved by the following means: -

4.1 General Information

Notice Boards	CFI's Notices CAA Safety Board	Club Matters NOTAMS GASILS Safety Flashes
Reference Material	Weather Forecasts UK Air Pilot Aeronautical Information Circulars Aeronautical Charts Safety Bulletins Club Flying Orders Temporary Navigation Warnings (TNWs)	
Club Newsletters		
BGA Newsletters		
Personal Letters to Members		

4.2 Pre-Flying Briefing

A formal briefing before the commencement of flying may be a necessary aspect of the day's operations. It provides the Duty Instructor with the opportunity to communicate, discuss and explain the essential features and anticipated problems of the day's flying. Provision can be made for self-briefing if pilots miss the formal session. The following points should be covered: -

The Duty Team and Allocation of Responsibilities

- Duty Instructor.
- Assistant Instructors.
- Basic Instructors.
- Duty Pilots or Launch Point Controllers.
- Tug pilots.
- Winch drivers.
- "Club host" responsible for trial lessons and guests.

Equipment

- Gliders and ground equipment in use and unserviceable.
- Feedback from Daily Inspections, problems etc.
- Special requirements, operating restrictions etc.

Weather forecast

- Opportunities and hazards for the day.

NOTAMS

- Appraisal of relevant Temporary Navigation Warnings (TNWs) and Air Information Circulars (AICs) information.

Hazards

- Field condition, obstructions and anticipated problems.
- Anticipated weather hazards, turbulence etc.

Operations for the day

- Launch point direction and orientation.
- Tug pilot tow-out and recovery routes.
- Circuit and approach.
- Special limitations.
- Special requirements eg. radio calls, oxygen etc.
- Radio operating frequencies.
- Mass landing procedures.
- Recovery of gliders experiencing launch failures.

Special requests

- Check flights (to be given priority, if possible).

Task setting (if appropriate)

- Cross country briefing (to separate group, if required).
- Retrieve crew arrangements.
- Accounting for any missing gliders at the end of the day

Visitors and Trial Lessons

- Nominate host / hostess and hand over for separate briefing and escort to launch point.

Any Other Safety Matters

4.3 Letters of Agreement

Before flying commences, it is sometimes necessary, in order to comply with undertakings made under formal Letters of Agreement, to inform Air Traffic Controllers of local airfields of the proposed runways in use, circuit patterns, and aerotowing climb-out patterns. If airspace clearances are likely to be





required (eg. Class B or Class D airspace) then early communication by telephone is advisable, if not mandatory.

4.4 Field Communications and Signals

Standard signalling procedures are published in "Laws & Rules for Glider Pilots" as follows:-

- Op. Reg. 5.5** An adequate method of communication must exist between the person in charge of launching and the winch or tow car driver or tug pilot".
- Op. Reg. 5.6** Procedures for
One bat method.
Two bat method.
Lights signals.
- Op. Reg. 5.7** "When telephonic or radio signalling is used, means must exist for an emergency stop signal which can be received notwithstanding the noise of the engine".

Telephone Signals

A preference has already been stated for use of a field telephone system operated by landline, for passing verbal messages from the launch point to the winch driver. Insulated cable can be buried (trencher, mole plough or plough) with connecting sockets at appropriate points around the airfield perimeter. Use of telephone provides an independent means of communication which is desirable when operating two launch methods concurrently and minimises the use of dedicated VHF frequencies.

Radio Signals

VHF Frequencies

Dedicated VHF frequencies for gliding are published at para. 10.3 and at R.P. 31 in "Laws & Rules for Glider Pilots".

- **129.9 MHz** Ground to ground only, retrieve recovery, winch signals.
- **129.975 MHz** Control frequency within 10 nautical miles and up to a height of 3,000 feet at approved airfields.

Citizens' Band (CB)

Radio frequencies are approved at some sites for ground to ground communication.

Short Range Business Radio

A new development, using cheap handsets and giving coverage of about one mile radius with a wide

range of operating channels. No licence is now required.

Warning Beacons

The use of flashing beacons is advisable to indicate when a winch launch is in progress. One should be at the launch point prime signals station and operated automatically when the lights signal for "Take up Slack" is given. The other should be on the roof of the winch itself and operated automatically when the cable drum drive is put into gear.

The beacon serves as a warning to keep clear of the winch cable and to avoid confusion with the aerotow launch

Aerodrome Signals

Details of visual signal displays for ground to air communication or to people on the ground (S.I. 1991, No 2437, Section IX) are published on the front and back covers of "Laws & Rules for Glider Pilots".

