

# British Gliding Association Annual Report 2013



*Reflecting on 2013*

It seems just a few minutes ago that the many BGA committees were putting their 2012 reports together for the 2013 AGM. We're collectively indebted to these many volunteers who serve us so well - often giving up copious volumes of their time and invariably with great modesty. We honour many at the AGM, but remain grateful to so many more. Thank you all for your efforts in what was another challenging year for gliding in the UK, during which we continued to see significant change in our operating environment - regulatory, financial and meteorologically.

Changes brought on, and planned, by EASA are now part of our normal lexicon, but we've witnessed a substantial restructuring within our own CAA this year, after the merger of the Safety Regulation Group (SRG) and CAA Directorate of Airspace Policy (DAP) to form the Safety and Airspace Regulation Group (SARG), under the leadership of Mark Swan.

As our immediate regulator, our relationship with the CAA is fundamental to our operation. We are fortunate that the CAA has kept its doors open to us and our GA brothers throughout the EASA-led changes we continue to enjoy. At all levels, we are witnessing an increasing momentum for a lighter touch to GA regulation. Indeed, the CAA has appointed a GA unit to provide policy and technical liaison and, hopefully, continue to allow responsible bodies like ourselves to deliver much of the inevitably increased regulatory burden in an appropriate, professional and value for money fashion. This momentum continues with the Government-led Red Tape Challenge which has invited GA to input on ways to reduce unnecessary red tape. The BGA, led by our CEO Pete Stratten, is closely linked in with the GA Alliance (GAA) to deliver our input directly into the Government. The links across the GA community are vital, allowing us to cover the many areas of consultation.

It's good to see the Royal Aero Club (RAeC), under my predecessor Patrick Naegeli, increasingly active and supportive, since it represents the whole of the UK light aviation sector. It's often pretty dry stuff, but it's only by working together that we, almost totally volunteers, can challenge the professional policy and regulation makers with their seemingly unlimited funds. It may be corny to state

'change is continuous', but when the rate of change is as frenetic as currently across all our operational sectors, it's essential our voice is heard clearly, coherently and in the right places. We may not be successful in obtaining the regulatory outcomes that are as minimal as we would like, or feel appropriate, but overall it could be considerably worse. It rather depends on whether your glass is half full, or half empty.

Even if your glass is half empty, the EASA cloud flying rating should be a good thing for us and we're already receiving positive feedback from some recipients of the new EASA glider licence that French gliding clubs are beginning to accept them without further paperwork. The French opted out of the EASA licensing regulation Part-FCL until 2015 when they will be obliged to accept our European licences. However, our own EASA dynamo David Roberts (another previous BGA chairman) continues to walk the corridors at EASA and we hope that continued good relations with the French regulator will ease the bureaucratic burden for visiting British glider pilots.

Another fundamental of our operation continues to be our approach to risk management, now underpinned by a formal SMS - Safety Management System - with BGA CEO Pete Stratten as accountable manager. We all want to mitigate gliding risks and this system is intended to capture data, provide correlation, and output objective information, so that appropriate changes can be made and resources applied. With so many 14 year olds taking up the solo challenge, it's never been so important.

On the subject of youngsters, our congratulations go to 15-year old Robbie Rizk who was awarded the first ever FAI Breitling Youngster Award, having finished 9th in the 2013 World Advanced Gliding Aerobatic Championships.

Juniors are an increasing focus for the BGA. It's one of our few growth areas, with junior numbers increasing for the last two years. There are a plethora of junior grants and scholarships available from fine organisations like GAPAN, the RAeC Trust, the Air League (check out the London Gliding Club for the coverage of their Air League /Boeing day - flying inner city youngsters around) and our 'own' Philip Wills Memorial Fund. We thank PWMF chair Dick Dixon who has stepped down and to Stephen Lynn for taking over

as chair. The team have sorted some governance issues, brought things up to date and are now making grants available to younger pilots with a superb new scheme.

Many clubs too, have cadet schemes and ever more innovative ways of attracting and retaining the next generation. Nene Valley Gliding Club in particular demonstrated a creative approach, teaming up with the local mayor to offer scholarships. Who's going to approach Boris in London?

And so from the young to the vintage: 'Vintage Revival' will be our theme for the 2014 conference in March. Last summer saw the start of the Gliding Heritage Centre at Lasham, with the opening of the Chris Wills Memorial Hangar. We wish this new 'old' venture the very best. Whilst we're at Lasham, I'm pleased to note that Lasham are leading a bid for the 2017 European Gliding Championships for the flapped classes. We hope to hear the outcome of the bid later this year.

So, it's been another year of activity on and off the airfield. In the sky, we continue to challenge outrageous airspace grabs, like those from Farnborough and Southend which are seeking similar sky volumes for their operations as Gatwick. Whilst we challenge, the worm is turning. This year we're teaming up with the GA Alliance to commence our own ACP - Airspace Change Proposal - to (attempt to) pull some unused airspace back to class G for us all to use again.

There will always be challenges, but we've been most fortunate that superb quality volunteers have stepped up to the plate to lead and deliver our message to protect British gliding. If you can help, please let us know.

Safe landings.

Peter

**Peter Harvey**  
Chairman, BGA

## Chief Executive's Report

After an extended period of poor weather, some long spells of good soaring conditions throughout 2013 were very welcome. And we made the most of it. Achievements, launches and hours flown are all up on the previous period. Those opportunities had a positive impact on overall membership numbers too.

Although the long-term drop in overall membership numbers has flattened out, 2013 was a year when it became clear that there is widespread acceptance that growing participation at our clubs must always be a high priority issue that we cannot afford to ignore. Understanding how we can achieve and sustain an increase in participation is a significant challenge that will undoubtedly continue to require engagement and innovation at every level. If you want to contribute, please drop me a line.

The Junior Gliding strategy has continued to facilitate effective support to young pilots throughout 2013 and we are very grateful for the generous support of a number of organisations, including the Air League, the Royal Aeronautical Society, the Royal Aero Club, GAPAN, the Caroline Trust and the Philip Wills Memorial Fund. Gliding has also been used by a number of people who are facing their own particular challenges, including inner-city disadvantaged youth. Their supporters have identified that gliding provides a fantastic personal development tool, and we're grateful to Boeing and Aerobility for their involvement. I'd like to single out Andy Perkins, BGA Vice-Chairman, for his leadership and drive across the whole area of participation development. During 2013, the Executive Committee agreed to 'bridge' the various un-coordinated BGA groups involved with membership-related work. They are now linked-up within a 'Participation Group' led by Andy. We believe that this will be helpful in supporting our participation growth aspirations.

So there is quite a lot of good news. However, the dead hand of regulation is never far away. As previously reported, the Part M airworthiness changes are now part of our routine operations. EASA pilot licensing, medical and training requirements will apply from 8th April 2015. The BGA-facilitated conversion from BGA gliding certificates into EASA pilot licences is underway and is expected to ramp up throughout 2014, resulting in a storm of paperwork next autumn. There is no doubt that most pilots abhor bureaucracy. It would be a tragedy to lose members because of form filling difficulties. The BGA will continue to help people through the conversion

administration process and clubs are encouraged to go the extra mile if their members need it.

Under EASA rules, the Light Aircraft Pilot Licence medical certificate replaces the tried and tested self-declaration with GP endorsement and presents a significant change to many. Myths abound. The reality is that GPs do not need to receive training or pre-register with the CAA; that although initial issue requires a medical assessment very similar to the NPPL medical HGV driver standard, subsequent LAPL medical certificates can be issued based on medical records; and that the medical periodicity for older pilots is two years rather than the one year under current BGA or CAA Class 2 medical requirements. GP practices are commercially aware and in some cases overloaded. So although the fee varies, the result can be that an initial LAPL medical costs the same as a medical examination by an Aero Medical Examiner. There is lots of well-informed guidance on the BGA website. We are fortunate in having Dr Frank Voeten on board as a LAPL medical advisor.

The BGA, that is our clubs, people and processes, is constantly evolving. It has to – society doesn't stand still. Keeping up with technology and expectations is just one of many associated challenges. During 2013, we've been working on marketing priorities and in particular our web presence. The result is that in late 2013 the BGA Executive Committee approved the plan developed under the leadership of Sharon Kerby to redevelop the BGA website. By the time this is published, we will be talking in detail to suppliers. We anticipate that in due course clubs will want to link into this new 'web family' from their own sites. Use of eServices, which has been trialled successfully in one format by CFIs for a few years now, will be an increasingly utilised service.

The latter part of 2013 brought us the Government's General Aviation Red Tape Challenge. Although this was initially perceived as yet another Government sound bite, the active involvement of Grant Shapps MP, statements by HM Government, and commitment by the CAA CEO all indicate that the CAA is heading towards a new, risk-based and proportionate approach to regulating general aviation. Senior management at the CAA understand that general aviation that is responsible and capable of organising itself and managing risk to an appropriate level does not require CAA intervention.

The BGA's recently adopted Safety Management System is a good example of how an organisation can document how it manages its own risks without imposing unnecessary burdens. With EASA requirements established as law, we cannot anticipate returning to the perfectly sensible and very successful self-regulated environment that worked so well for us for many years. So, our aim is to achieve minimum regulatory requirements, maximum delegated authority and minimum involvement by the CAA. This work will continue over the coming years as the CAA refines its approach to the regulation of GA.

Elements of our organisation have on occasion spent a bit too much time on transmit and we have occasionally found ourselves being defensive when in fact open and constructive dialogue is probably the answer. I was delighted recently to read delegate feedback from the 2013 Club Management Conference that indicated that the enormous amount of work that went into improving this very important annual event paid off. There is work to do in other areas, but we're onto it and look forward to hearing from you (constructively!) if we're getting it wrong. The BGA Executive Committee is fully committed to ensuring that the needs of clubs and their members are well understood.

The needs of clubs are absolutely central to our negotiations in Europe and, in the UK, are key drivers of the strategies established by the Executive Committee and they inform the huge amount of work carried out by sub-committees, working groups, many volunteers and the small team of employed staff who support us so well. I'm fortunate in regularly experiencing the significant amount of expert work carried out by volunteers. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of them for their unstinting and highly valued efforts on behalf of all our clubs and members.

As reported in detail elsewhere, the financial position of the Association remains sound. The BGA remains financially cautious, continues to ensure that it fully understands and regularly reviews the costs of its services, and is acutely aware of the need to continue to provide value. CAA charges are a real threat to gliding and will continue to be challenged by the BGA both in formal consultation and where other opportunities arise. The CAA's willingness to delegate authority should present opportunities. If the CAA can step back from their extraordinarily expensive and often excessive administration, we can efficiently supply what is needed at a far lower cost to end users.

So 2013 was another year of change. In my report I have focussed on the rather dry background issues. Without doubt gliding is facing new and significant challenges that have their roots in both societal change and political/legal developments in Europe. Fortunately, the reality of gliding beyond the meeting rooms, bureaucracy and cost that aviation has pressed on it in increasing amounts, is a healthy outdoor sport and recreational activity that is as personally challenging as people want it to be, is hugely rewarding and is great fun. There are plenty of signs to indicate that 2014 will be another great year for our sport.

**Pete Stratten**  
Chief Executive

[pete@gliding.co.uk](mailto:pete@gliding.co.uk)

I am pleased to report a surplus of income for the year of £78,526 (2012 £26,259). From a financial point of view it has been a second satisfactory year after a recent run of deficits. The longer-term target is to match income and expenditure.

Income from membership subscriptions increased, reflecting an increase in fees which had been held static for quite a number of years. Increases of other income were also attributable to increases in fees. More encouragingly, the historic decline in the number of gliding participants is showing some signs of levelling-off with an increase in junior members.

Central office costs increased in line with inflation. However, savings were achieved in the subscriptions that we pay to other organisations and following a review of insurances.

The subcommittees were more active this year resulting in an increase in cost, mostly of mileage expenses.

We continue to spread cash deposits between a number of banks to minimise any continuing risk from the financial crisis and have achieved a modest increase in interest receivable.

The 2014-15 budget period includes income and expenditure from the latter stages of the transition of BGA Gliding Certificates to EASA sailplane pilot licences. The BGA are engaging extra staff to cope with the transition process. It is important that clubs encourage pilots to apply for their licences in good time to make the most efficient use of these staff and to avoid a rush in early 2015. A last-minute rush would incur unnecessary overtime costs, not to mention possible delays in issuing licences.

The paperwork and enhanced medical requirements of obtaining our EASA pilot licences risk a further drop-off in the number of club

members so it is important that clubs work with pilots individually to make the process as easy as it can be.

FAI badges live on after EASA so we should remember to fit in some time for flying as a break from all the regulation and compliance activities!

The global economic situation remains fragile. Faint signs of an improved outlook for business are, in great part, attributable to a sustained downward pressure on wages consequent of strong competition for jobs at all skill levels arising from the free movement of labour within the EU. Disposable incomes are likely to remain depressed by this and by the medium-term prospect of rising interest rates putting a squeeze on the disposable incomes of mortgage payers. In the face of this economic reality, clubs will need to work hard to maintain participation levels. Improved marketing is a continuing essential.

The long-promised face-lift of the BGA web site is now being tendered for. The first phase will have an emphasis on marketing and bringing together the various BGA web presences – junior gliding, BGA Ladder, Team GB, and other web resources - into one gliding portal.

The BGA is continuing to bear down on costs whilst carrying out all the essential work for the benefit of our sport. What is not in the figures are the countless hours contributed by volunteers to safeguard our sport and to keep us flying.

**Leslie Kaye**  
BGA Treasurer

It is possible that someday we will look back on 2013 and 2014 as years that marked a turning point for airspace and its impact on our freedoms and our sport.

It is also possible that current and uncommon opportunities are missed and the inexorable pressure for more and more controlled airspace (CAS) simply continues as before.

In 2013 we saw some key developments. For example we supported the CAA's proposal to introduce Radio Mandatory Zones (RMZs) which would create options for tailored, risk-related alternatives to new or existing swathes of controlled air space. We believe that such options, had they existed at the time, would have obviated decisions which were to us unfathomable and disproportionate to risk, namely the creation of new Class D airspace at Doncaster, Norwich and Glasgow.

And yet, in this very same year of 2013, we have seen other airports apparently hell-bent on creating vast areas of additional Class D CAS where a small carefully designed RMZ would appear to be a more sensible alternative (Southend, Inverness and Farnborough). At the time of writing, the latter two are still in development, while the Southend consultation has already taken place, our objections have been made, and we can now only await the CAA's decision.

We also await CAA decisions after our careful responses on Class F airspace, and on UK exemptions to new Standardised European Rules of the Air (SERA) which, if simply applied as written, would drive a final nail in our ability to fly in CAS (even when granted a clearance).

Collaboration with our colleagues in the rest of GA remains excellent and we are now embarking on a major project to improve the lot of VFR flyers as part of the CAA's Future Airspace Strategy. This has the potential to be extremely positive for us.

So is the tide turning? Right now we do not know – but imminent CAA decisions on Class F, SERA, and Southend will give us a very good indication.

As ever I am indebted to a dynamic group of experts who selflessly give of their time and expertise in the cause of maintaining or improving our freedoms.

**John Williams**  
Chairman, Airspace Committee

## Competitions and Awards Committee

The 2013 season offered good opportunities for competitors despite the usual fickle nature of UK weather. The Nationals fared best with an above-average 6 competition days per event whilst Regionals events were less lucky, averaging under 5 - somewhat below average. Pilot numbers involved in Regionals events remained static after the 10% increase in 2012. The number of pilots entering Nationals events continued to decline following a small rally in 2012. Clearly a focus on promoting event participation will need to remain a high priority.

It is, however, encouraging to note that pilots continue to participate in highly rated National and International events in Europe in ever greater numbers. Spectacular results were achieved at the Hahnweide International, with UK pilots taking the top three places and a fifth place in a strong 18m class full of national team pilots from Germany and other European nations. Likewise in the France Club Class Nationals, UK pilots remarkably took both first and second places.

The big participation success story remains the competition between pilots via the National Ladder which goes from strength to strength with 734 pilots posting 5225 flights for a combined distance of just shy of 1.25 million km during 2013. Pilots are finding ways to score ever more ladder points based on sheer speed, endeavour and clever tasking. This is record activity and reflects a doubling of pilot involvement and combined distance flown in the last 9 years. We remain particularly indebted to John Bridge who continues to manage the BGA ladder portal for the benefit of us all.

The committee continues to have responsibility for BGA trophy awards and homologation of UK records and can report that a good number of outstanding performances occurred during the year, many of which were able to be rewarded with a trophy or record. Perhaps most notably, John Williams once again won the rarely awarded 1000km trophy for a three turn-point distance at an unprecedented speed of 135kph.

The committee continues to oversee the organisation and participation of our various cross-country British teams as well as the development coaching offered to up and coming talented pilots by the Team Coaching Group which comprises a mix of current and past team members. During the year, our Junior team produced a solid,

but not spectacular, result at the Junior World Gliding Championship with all pilots gaining lots of experience which will help them to press for medals in the future. The European Championships for flapped classes in Vinon produced a first day win but the team could not capitalise on this and finally had to settle for a 4th, 9th and 11th place as the local expertise in the highly specialised arena eventually took its toll. In the European Championship for the Standard and Club Classes in Poland, although all pilots gained respectable mid table positions, it was disappointing that they were not able to secure top 10 places. Conversely, the high point came at the Women's World Championship where Ayala Truelove narrowly lost out on a gold medal by a meagre 14 points having led going into the last day. She had to settle for a well-earned silver medal while the other ladies had to accept respectable mid table positions.

Organisational focus now moves to the World Championships with the Club, Standard and 20m two-seat classes in Rayscala, Finland and the 15m, 18m and Open Classes in Leszno, Poland. Following input from the coaches, the selected team pairs have now planned targeted training opportunities in order to best prepare.

The British Team coaching group is now led by Jay Rebbeck with Brian Spreckley, who has been lead for a number of years, continuing as a support coach. Development training for the 8 pilots most likely to be in the mix for the new Junior WGC next time round together with other talented individuals has been scheduled during the coming season.

The committee continues to arrange, oversee and monitor the conduct of all UK competitions with respect to competitors and organisers, and to amend the Competition Rules and associated guidance material as required, with the intent of improving the overall quality and safety of events whilst principally adopting IGC strategy as it filters through. During the year, we have worked in a number of areas and in particular to:

- further develop and finally publish an Organisers' Handbook, sitting separately from the Rule Book. This publication brings together advice and best practice covering all aspects of running a BGA rated competition and is designed to allow even the most inexperienced organisation to be fully briefed in order to deliver a high quality and safe event.



- develop the principle of a Distance Handicapped Task (DHT) so that this may be used in Regionals events as an alternative to the classic fixed length tasks. It is hoped that this task format may encourage more pilots to try a competition for the first time and hence play a part in reversing recent decline in participant numbers.
- begin development of a long-term plan to increase participation at all levels of competition and to bridge the funding gap for ongoing development, coaching and team support programs.
- amend team selection methodology for the Junior World Gliding Championships, including initiation of a squad system to allow better targeting of development training opportunities.
- develop a plan to integrate the 20m two-seater class into the Nationals structure and amalgamate smaller size Nationals classes for the 2015 season.
- develop a recommendation to restrict flying in cloud in competitions
- consider a whole raft of ideas for change filtering through from organisers and pilots via Competition Directors' reports, forums and the web input link.

During the year, Simon Barker and Mark Davis left the committee after a number of years of valuable service whilst Liz Sparrow was drafted in to add her experience and perspective to the mix. I am pleased to confirm that Mark Holden has been confirmed as the new Chairman of the committee from the beginning of 2014 and I am absolutely sure that his fresh perspective will drive the committee forwards in handling fresh challenges and delivering on a number of new initiatives. I would like to thank all members of my committee for their dedication and support during my extended period in the chair.

**Russell Cheetham**

Chairman, Competitions and Awards Committee

## Development Committee

The Development Committee has been occupied for a large part of the past year with the proposed changes to the CASC (Community Amateur Sports Club) scheme, which is managed by HMRC. Registration in the scheme enables clubs to claim 80% rate relief, gift aid on donations and a number of other benefits. The proposals contained in a consultation document, issued in June, had the potential to bar many gliding clubs from continuing to participate in the scheme. As over 30 UK clubs are registered CASCs and a further 10 are applying to register, this would be a major financial problem.

Members of the committee and other volunteers prepared a vast amount of data to enable the BGA to respond in detail to the consultation. We attended several meetings at HMRC and elsewhere. We were supported by the Sport and Recreation Alliance and also by their lawyers and tax advisers, who brought together a number of sports to fight the damaging proposals. Our responses were submitted during the summer and further proposals were received from HMRC during the autumn, which proved to be even more potentially damaging than the original proposals.

Our team is therefore once again working hard to mitigate the impact of the proposals. The BGA is a member of a forum convened by HMRC, which may enable us to have some effect on the final regulations, due out in the summer of 2014. I would like to thank the many volunteers who are giving so much time to this project, as well as Alison Randle, who has been at the centre of the project throughout.

Wind turbines have continued to create work for us. We have reviewed and commented on a significant number of proposed developments, many of which do not pose any threat to gliding. A few however have been in locations which have caused concern to a club and we have supported several clubs in objecting to these proposals and negotiating with the proposed developers to try to reach some mutually acceptable arrangement.

Our team has been greatly strengthened by Louis Chicot's expertise in advising on appropriate responses to developers. In two cases a club has withdrawn objections to the turbines, in one case in exchange for an agreement to switch the turbines off in certain wind

directions and in the other with an agreement by the developer to support the club in developing a safeguarding plan. We see these negotiated settlements as a constructive way forward in many cases. There are nevertheless some ongoing planning applications which will cause severe hazard to nearby clubs and we are supporting those clubs in presenting robust objections.

Towards the end of this year we started drafting a BGA Policy and Guidelines for Clubs on Wind Turbines. This is work in progress and we hope that the finished documents will help the BGA and clubs to respond more easily and consistently to future applications.

Concentration on these two major areas of work has delayed much other important work, but we have advised clubs on application for Sports Council or other funding and also supported several clubs that have the opportunity to buy their sites. Funding advice has been provided to ten clubs and five clubs have secured substantial funding for major projects from the Inspired Facilities fund.

The BGA, with Aerobility and Walking on Air, are re-applying for Inclusive Sport funding from Sport England to create more opportunities for disabled pilots and to encourage clubs to build links with local disability organisations.

Roger Coote resigned in January due to ill health, after 20 years' service as the BGA's Development Officer. With my predecessor Max Bacon, Roger was responsible for establishing many of the working practices that we still use and for developing a number of valuable resources which form the basis of continuing work. We were delighted when he was awarded the BGA's Gold medal in recognition of his work as Development Officer as well as his contribution as a volunteer Regional Examiner and we wish him better health in retirement. Alison Randle has increased her hours to take over Roger's work and I would like to thank her and all the volunteers in the team for their hard work throughout the year.

**Diana King**  
Chairman, Development Committee

Another year has passed for the Flying Operations sub-committee.

The team has continued to provide BGA input into the various CAA/ GA committees including the Airspace Incursions Working Group and the Airmiss Working Group. To these, we have added the VFR Chart Working group and the NOTAM Working Group so, all in all, a busy year for two of our people.

The BGA Winch Launching representative has also had a busy and rewarding year with the production of the Safe Winch Launch DVD for clubs and then answering the many questions that it generated. As well as producing the DVD, he has attended meetings in France in support of the BGA Safety team and dealt with queries from 5 countries as far apart as South Africa and Japan

The Airmiss WG was reported upon in a recent edition of S&G.

Hopefully, with the formation of the CAA General Aviation Unit, our requirements will be flagged up at the beginning of any projects. The current omens in that direction are encouraging.

**Ted Norman**

Chairman, Flight Operations Committee

### Committee Activity

#### 1. Examining

A number of BGA FIE & FE seminars were completed throughout the regions as part of the conversion process to EASA licensing. The BGA Flight Examiner Handbook has been comprehensively revised into an EASA-compliant working draft.

The CAA nominated Mark Young, one of their Flight Examiners, to work with us. Mark has done some gliding previously but spent a week at Lasham to re-familiarise himself with our ways. Since then, Mark has been assisting in our training to become EASA/CAA Examiners. Our first Senior Examiners' seminar was run at Bicester during October

Further training was organised, leading to a successful Assessment of Competence (AoC) by Mark, allowing an initial three candidates to become Senior Examiners. The next step in this transition is to train and assess several more individuals as Senior Examiners.

In 2014 further training sessions and seminars will be organised for a number of existing BGA FIEs and FEs to prepare them for their

#### 2. Cloud Flying Endorsement

A training plan covering the theoretical knowledge, pre-flight briefing and flying exercises necessary to obtain a BGA Cloud Flying Endorsement was developed. The BGA CFE is a necessary step in preparing for the EASA Sailplane Cloud Flying Rating (SCFR)

3. Close liaison with the Safety Committee on the development of the safe aerotowing initiative.

### Instructor Training

Under the leadership of Mike Fox, the BGA's Training Standards Manager:

1. The BGA's approved coaching system provided instructor training for 44 candidates at sites around the country. Of the courses, three were delivered to the revised EASA-compliant syllabus.

2. The incorporation of soft skills training (Teaching & Learning and Threat & Error Management) into our EASA-compliant instructors' course continues to be developed, along with the organisational difficulties of incorporating a new system into instructor training.

3. Further refinement to the EASA-compliant instructor's course is on-going. To fit the additional material into an acceptable timeframe, there may well have to be a soaring and cross-country module that is delivered separately from the main course.

4. The 'output' of these new courses were examined by existing BGA instructor examiners, who fed back comments. Overall though, those candidates who completed the new style training passed the instructing test with no exceptions so far.

5. Mike Fox continues to work with CAA staff to get the BGA Bronze Theoretical Knowledge exams adopted for the forthcoming EASA licence theoretical knowledge tests. Due to the work carried out previously to rearrange and bring these theoretical tests into line with EASA FCL, this should not constitute a large amount of work.

### Motor Glider Instructors

Motor glider instructors have continued to support pure gliding within the BGA.

A course for the CAA's FI(SLMG) qualification will have been run at Bicester at the end of January. Demand has been high for this, perhaps the last ever such course, with 15 attending.

The principal focus during the year has been planning the adaption of current BGA MG qualifications and procedures to those required under EASA. It is unfortunate that motor glider licensing represents perhaps the most complex aspect of the regulations.

Two of the qualifications on offer, however, will prove particularly attractive to licensed glider pilots: self-launching in gliders like the Janus CM and DG500M, and flying TMGs such as the Falke and Grob 109b.

A new position of Training Standards Manager (Motor Gliders) will be undertaken by Paul Whitehead. The Association is fortunate to have a volunteer with such superb training qualifications.

### **Don Irving**

Chairman, Instructors' Committee

2013 was the fourth year of a formal strategy being applied to the sport of gliding for junior pilots (under 26). It saw development across all areas of Junior Gliding with an associated positive benefit realised. Participation in this area of the sport has seen growth which has resulted in around 900 pilots under the age of 26 actively taking part.

There is a challenge on the horizon to keep these young people in the sport as they age.

Junior Gliding Centres (JGC) were the initial focus of the strategy and we now have 25 JGCs spread across member clubs, with still more in the early setup stages. Being a JGC means the club involved has a dedicated structure in place for junior pilots and, as more time progresses, the benefits of JGC accreditation are being realised. These include:

### Internal

- Ensuring standards of excellence for training and facilities
- Creation of effective links with other youth flying organisations (ATC, the Air League, GAPAN...etc..)
- Funding opportunities (SportEngland etc.)
- Structured approach to interaction with junior pilots
- Commonality for juniors to make it easier for them to remain gliding when they move during education / early career
- Access to specific scholarship opportunities

### External

- Consistent standards of excellence
- Focused approach to encourage junior glider pilots
- Established Junior Liaison Officers
- National opportunities through JGC network
- Risk assessments and insurance in line with LEA requirements
- Collaboration with third party organisations

JGC accreditation is viewed favourably by third party organisations. Having a formalised accreditation system allows them to more easily recommend gliding as an activity for their members. Having clearly identifiable parameters of conduct for the supervision and support of young people that apply at multiple sites facilitates access to the sport, with one review by the third party applying to all JGCs. This allows third parties to focus their attention on facilitating

going gliding instead of having to spend time reviewing procedures at individual clubs so closely. This has been attractive to several corporate supporters. Potential expansion of such schemes is being explored.

### Website and Social Media

[www.juniorgliding.co.uk](http://www.juniorgliding.co.uk) was developed back in 2010. This has been enhanced with junior gliding facebook pages, YouTube TV and Twitter. The move into social media has been led by the junior glider pilot community. The professional appearance and active nature of social media is showing signs of enhanced participation with the winter series and other events linked to these avenues gaining momentum. The website, along with other BGA sites, will be re-structured in terms of base software to allow easier maintenance and updating by key volunteers. Transfer should commence in March 2014 with all being fully operational later in 2014. This should enable more effective updating to ensure consistent, relevant and timely messages are promulgated.

### Scouts

There is on-going dialogue with the Scouts. The badge system for aviation awards was reviewed and advice on what scout groups would like to get from a gliding experience are available on [www.juniorgliding.co.uk](http://www.juniorgliding.co.uk). It has been apparent that the activity of gliding as part of an overall aviation experience is desirable.

### University Gliding

Associate membership of the BGA for university clubs was made available in 2012. This has allowed them to better demonstrate their sporting needs, showing that their clubs are an important and recognised element of the sport of gliding. This in turn is assisting development of clubs across the country. There are many changes to university funding across the board and we are keeping close links with university clubs to provide support where possible to ensure their survival. Dick Poole continues to lead this area.

### Junior Championships

The contest had a successful 2013 with 27 pilots competing over the four scoring competition days. A junior contest working group continues to strengthen and benefit from the experience of many ex-junior pilots. The development of this group is assisting with direction for the competition and establishing continuity to allow for

effective management of junior competition funds. It is hoped that this renewed focus will increase participation in the event and in turn increase the level of competition to assist with our aspirations at international level.

### Junior Working Group

Formed over the winter of 2013/14, a group consisting of Matt Davis, Steve Pozerskis, and Charlie Jordan will now oversee the Junior Gliding initiative. As the successes have built, it is appropriate to spread the workload and, importantly, to ensure that this element of the sport is represented by people who are, or have recently been, junior pilots.

### Winter Series

Clubs across the UK have hosted juniors for a weekend, enabling pilots to remain current, increase their experience level and to have fun! These events have been well received by all and social media is ensuring awareness and continued development.

### Aim Higher

Through support from Marsh Insurance, the Aim Higher events saw dedicated tuition for junior pilots as well as the opportunity to gain funding to progress personal ambitions. Take-up was encouraging and plans to further this scheme led by Training Standards Manager, Mike Fox, are underway for 2014.

### Third Party Support

Junior pilots have been supported by a number of third parties and we are very grateful for this assistance. The increasing cost of studying means that junior pilots are typically finding that they have less disposable income for sporting activities. The support provided by scholarships from third parties have enabled many to develop their gliding skills and go further in the sport and in aviation more generally than would have otherwise been possible.

Scholarships were provided by the Caroline Trust, the Air League Educational Trust, the Royal Aero Club Trust, the Royal Aeronautical Society Centennial Fund, the Guild of Air Pilots and Navigators, and the RAF Association. 2014 sees support being offered by the above organisations and, in addition, some further 15 inner-city scholarships and 20 Philip Wills Memorial Fund Scholarships will be available.

This support in addition to initiatives generated by clubs has been invaluable in assisting the sport of gliding as well as encouraging young people more widely to get involved in aviation.

### Objectives 2011 – 2015

- Establish a gliding academy for the development of junior pilots (this could be a virtual academy or, if financial support is available, a specific operation)
- Identify sponsorship opportunities and be in a position to capitalise on any investment in the sport of gliding by corporate or government entities
- Review Junior Gliding Centres
- Review and further develop the website
- Engage with Air Cadets using appropriate media
- Engage with third party organisations to allow more young people to opportunity to glide

### **Andy Perkins**

BGA Executive Committee lead for Junior Gliding

## Medical Advisers' Report

During calendar year 2013 there was no accident to a glider or powered aircraft operating under BGA control following which a medical cause was assigned. I became aware of an incident in which a pilot performed badly on an annual flight review and was then discovered to suffer developing bilateral cataracts. After treatment he returned to flying but this demonstrates that practical tests of function can have medical value.

This year our medical team has been joined by Frank Voeten because it is necessary that one of us is currently licensed to practice. Under recent national rules, retired doctors are no longer permitted to practice although they remain qualified to give policy advice. Frank is an active glider pilot and instructor, an Authorised Medical Examiner and in current general practice so is well qualified to join the team.

The year saw the implementation of changes required by the replacement of the NPPL by the LAPL. The responsibility for the fitness of glider pilots has been transferred from the BGA to the Civil Aviation Authority. The consequences have been a reduction of work for the Association medical advisers and an increase in costs for pilots. Charges vary but the cost for a two year LAPL medical is typically around £60 from an AME. GPs are now only permitted to issue or extend a LAPL in simple uncomplicated cases without any new limitation (other than spectacles) although they may extend once limited.

Indications from a relatively small number of cases are that AMEs take a more stringent view of controlled diabetes and epilepsy but a notably less restrictive view of cardio-vascular disease than has been previous BGA advice. Several pilots who had previously been restricted have been told that their restriction could be removed. That is somewhat surprising because, since 1960, no BGA-regulated pilot has suffered an accident due to either diabetes or epilepsy, whereas there have been a number of fatal accidents and serious incidents arising from cardiovascular disease. An inevitable consequence of this transfer to the LAPL is that the BGA medical advisers will be less aware of adverse pathology in the glider pilot population.

During the year there were 94 file items logged, a considerable reduction on previous years. Of these, the majority (38) were from

pilots and concerned specific medical problems. Three were from clubs and concerned individuals. The second major source (23) of enquiries was from the BGA and other Associations, some in Europe and these were largely about policy. General practitioners were the third group with 21 queries and these were all concerned with individual pilots. There is some overlap because a pilot and a GP may both communicate over the same problem. Some 37 queries related to policy, a large proportion of the whole.

As previously, cardiovascular disease was the major diagnostic group with 14 queries, the second being neurological (9) followed by metabolic (8), psychiatric (7), malignancies (5), ophthalmic (4) and orthopaedic and respiratory (1 each). The recommended disposal was full flying in 10 cases, restricted (OPL) in 36 cases and temporary grounding in one case. Only one pilot was recommended for grounding and that was a psychiatric case with a diagnosis of bipolar disease.

Previously there has been debate on the youngest age for flying. Unlike other aircraft classes, glider pilots are now permitted to fly solo at age 14. This exists in the ICAO rules because at one time gliding used the solo method of training with low hops. It is no easier, and probably harder, to fly a circuit in a modern glider (Ka21) than in a typical powered training aircraft (Cessna 152). Therefore this reduction of age for the first solo is of medical interest. So far there have been no problems, albeit with a few well supervised examples, so this casts doubt on the evidence for the minimum age for powered flying.

Sadly the average age of the glider pilot population continues to rise and with it the inevitable probability of adverse medical events. Therefore and despite EASA, the medical recommendation by the BGA advisors is that those instructors who do not hold a valid class 2 pilot medical certificate and who are over the age of seventy years should not fly with early pupils or passengers. However there is no safety reason why older instructors or those with an OPL limitation cannot undertake all ground responsibilities and fly with advanced pilots who would be capable of recovering the aircraft.

**Drs Peter Saundby, Steve Gibson & Frank Voeten**  
BGA Medical Advisers

### Safety Committee

Early in 2013, the Executive Committee directed that to meet the needs of its clubs and the sport, the BGA would aim to move beyond traditional reactionary systems to try to predict areas of exposure by developing and adopting a formal Safety Management System. After many months of development and consultation, including some very helpful feedback from clubs and individuals, the Executive Committee adopted the BGA Safety Management System (SMS) Manual in January 2014. The BGA gives priority to continuing to reduce the fatal accident rate, to not harming any third parties and to avoiding any airspace infringements. We're confident that the SMS will not impose additional burdens on anyone. Current, qualified pilots are particularly unaffected. The SMS will help the safety committee to more effectively identify and focus on the priorities in support of clubs.

The Safety Committee reviews all key safety and quality issues and, like all sub-committees, reports to the BGA Executive Committee. The committee, which meets at least twice per year, was re-structured in tune with the SMS development and now comprises:

- Accountable Manager
- Safety Data Analyst
- Chief Technical Officer
- Training Standards Manager
- Lead Regional Safety Officer
- Chief Accident Investigator
- Invited subject matter experts as required

The terms of reference for the Safety Committee are summarised here as:

- Review the SMS policy and standards
- Review significant incidents and findings
- Review and maintain the hazard matrix
- Ensure safety trends are monitored effectively
- Commission, where required, and review progress of safety improvement activity
- Ensure issues are effectively communicated
- Monitor the effectiveness of the safety management system

You can contact the BGA Safety Committee via the BGA office staff who will pass your query to the correct person. But as ever, if you have an immediate safety concern, in the first instance talk to the person or people involved or the CFI of the club concerned. Follow-up reporting is completed via the BGA incident and accident report forms available on the BGA website. If you have a safety concern where an incident 'nearly, but didn't quite happen', or you feel someone ought to know about a safety issue that would not otherwise be reported, increasing numbers of clubs have local incident reporting systems in place for just that purpose. We can expect all sites to have this additional, local incident reporting process in place during 2014 as clubs jump through a small number of hoops to qualify as BGA Approved Training Organisation sites.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank current and former Regional Safety Officers, members of the Safety Committee and all those pilots and instructors at clubs who do such a fantastic job of helping to facilitate a sport gliding environment where the levels of risk are as low as reasonably practicable and third parties are protected from our activities.

We should all remember that the long term statistics tell us that despite our excellent work, we will experience certain types of accidents in 2014. Please read the safety literature produced by the BGA and published online, please launch with your hand on the release and if you can't keep the wings level before take-off, please release before the wing touches the ground.

**Pete Stratten**  
Chairman, Safety Committee



Last year saw the continuing consequences of European legislation, which we have largely accommodated, albeit at significant cost and inconvenience. The BGA plays a strong role, working through European air sport groups such as EAS and EGU to seek appropriate alleviations. This is slowly paying off and is causing EASA to make some, albeit small, recognitions of the special issues facing sport aviation.

#### EASA - European Regulation

During 2013, negotiations have taken place through the 'General Aviation Task Force on Part M', to simplify and reduce the duplication in the processes of annual airworthiness justification. Hopefully we will feel the benefit of this in the near future. The EASA Certification department is also responding to continuing pressure to lighten burdens on design and modification. Through a quick reaction directive, we are now permitted to use certain minor parts which have not been formally released with full documentation, subject to the agreement of the engineer and the owner. Furthermore, we have now received more cooperative guidance on the installation of special-to-type sporting and navigation equipment to enable our sport to remain both progressive and safer.

The Part 66 'L' licence discussions with the CAA regarding the transition of BGA inspectors remain ongoing. Progress is slow because we are still awaiting the final decision from EASA on the details of the licence. The start of the implementation process could still be later in 2014 with full implementation one to two years later. Current inspectors and potential applicants will need to have regularised their status by that time.

#### UK Developments

Our relationship with the CAA continues to enable mutual understanding. The BGA feels it holds a position of respect with the national regulator whereby those roles which remain in national hands are managed in an appropriate and cooperative manner. We meet regularly with the CAA at both policy and operational levels.

The Government 'GA Red Tape Challenge' initiative is intended to reform regulation in General and Sport aviation. It is hoped this will offer potential for some deregulation and self determination, albeit that the UK gliding community is constrained by the European regime that applies to most sailplanes. We are pleased to see the

BGA represented at the highest level in this initiative. The CAA is already planning to de-regulate self-launching microlights under certain conditions, and the BGA is reviewing the introduction of this new class of vehicle with the BMAA, hopefully to agree a common policy towards their certification and operation to mutual benefit.

#### BGA Support Activity

Education, refresher training and communication will be an increasing focus for the technical community, driven by the requirements of personal licensing. In 2013, we ran 12 continuation seminars and most attendees found the 'Human Factors' talks interesting and informative. We thank the presenters for their care in writing and presenting this directly pertinent material. Further training and continuation workshops will be held in 2014 as part of a long-term aim to maintain the currency of our, largely volunteer, workforce. We are particularly keen to run a practical course on woodworking skills as these risk being lost with the preponderance of GRP sailplanes.

We are now operating with more formal links to the safety community, under the BGA Safety Management System. Relevant 'Occurrence Reports' are considered at Airworthiness Review meetings, and the Technical Community is represented by the CTO on the new format Safety Committee.

Jim Hammerton our CTO, and his RTOs continue to provide technical advice to members over many technical aspects of gliding. We also thank Keith Morgan and his quality team for their efforts and advice during this year. The CAA's quality oversight demands are stretching and Keith has had a challenging year meeting all targets.

#### **Howard A Torode**

Chairman, Technical Committee

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