

MEETING NOTES – BGA SAFETY COMMITTEE 13TH JANUARY 2018

Present: Hugh Browning, Tim Freegarde, Mike Fox, John Hull, Pete Stratten (Chairman)

Apologies: Gordon MacDonald, Jon Trueman

In attendance: Dinant Riks (Oxford University GC President)

1. Introduction

Introductions were made and the agenda agreed.

2. Analysis and Trends

HB summarised the overall situation and long term trends. Headlines include;

- Analysis of trial lesson/introductory flight accidents indicates no long term improvement
- The fatal accident spike during 2017 – analysis indicates a spike rather than any trends, but time will tell if there are longer term implications
- Ground accident, preparation for flight, and field landing accident trends are increasing
- Around a third of accidents apparently arose from human failings

Key observations re HB's presentation;

- Trial lesson and introductory flight safety remains a key priority issue that needs fresh thinking
- In all safety work, more focus is needed on human factors. We can't change people, but we can mitigate human failings by changing the way things are done

3. Review of progress – 2017 priorities

The 2017 priorities were reviewed, noting;

- Progress with communicating safety topics but work still needed including re end users who only sporadically engage with gliding
- Progress with inadvertent stall/spin work, including a detailed presentation made to club management. Tim Freegarde noted his intention to develop the presentation for club use
- Little measurable change in respect of trial lesson/introductory accidents, despite a significant amount of discussion with operators

4. Review of Accident Investigation Recommendations Summary

Referring to previously circulated detail, a review of outstanding actions took place. Mike Fox agreed to review and report back on the two outstanding actions that refer to Instructor Manual amendments.

Action: MF

5. BGA Occurrence Reporting

It was noted that as the BGA experiences a lower number of technical occurrence reports than an organisation of its size could expect, the technical occurrence reporting process has recently been simplified and promoted. Details are at

<https://members.gliding.co.uk/reporting-an-occurrence/>

6. Accident Investigation Update and Next Steps

Experience of additional investigation activity (above that required or carried out by the AAIB) indicates some success but it is clear that a revised approach is required. The criteria for carrying out additional investigations was discussed in detail and all agreed that the criteria for 2018 and 2019 should be all trial/introductory flight accidents, third party accidents and accidents involving young pilots under age 18. The process will be defined

and include a preliminary verbal discussion by a member of safety committee ahead of launching the investigation.

The planned changes will be discussed with the investigating team.

It was agreed that all clubs should be advised on the reason for investigations and that while confidentiality should remain assured, the process should be transparent to all.

Action: PS

7. Club Safety Officer Seminars

It was noted that led by Tim Freearge, the 2017 CSO seminar programme had been successfully delivered to a large number of CSO's at four locations; Lasham, Husbands Bosworth, Pocklington and Portmoak. Positive feedback had been received. Two further CSO seminars will be programmed during 2018 including in the south west. It was agreed that the CSO seminar programme should be repeated every two or three years, noting there is a need to consider that some longer term CSO's may welcome new content.

Action: TF

8. Supervisors Seminar

Ongoing discussion between Jon Trueman, Pete Stratten and Mike Fox on the topic of supervision was noted. A proposal noting the need to develop and deliver gliding supervisor seminars was discussed. All agreed that the proposal should be progressed to deliver a trial seminar during 2018. The one-day seminar which will be targeted at any BGA club member responsible for supervision will be based on the interactive format used in the MAA Flying Supervisors Course.

Action: PS/MF

9. Airspace Safety

The ongoing need for airspace safety awareness, the ongoing number of infringements by all classes of airspace user, the misuse of Airprox data by airspace proposers, and the ongoing lack of effective and cohesive action by CAA were noted. The recent infringement by a glider in Scotland was noted along with potential lessons learnt. Those present agreed that the topic is both a pilot and club issue, with considerations including;

- Equipage
- Familiarity with equipment
- Training
- Airspace not pervasive in many pilots experience
- Mind-set
- Is BGA training and guidance on the topics adequate and relevant?

Discussion took place around UKAB gliding expert suggestion that all pilots are encouraged to make greater use of radio and the need for an online airspace self-assessment tool similar in function to that used for safe winch launching.

The details of proposed BGA review were considered and suggested changes were agreed. It was agreed by those present that an objective review by someone not normally involved with either the safety or instructor committee will be beneficial and should be carried out as soon as practical. All agreed to consider who might be approached.

Action: All

10. Modernising Winch Signalling

Whilst the safe winch launch campaign has had significant success in addressing winch launch accidents once airborne, the number of wing drop accidents, ie those that occur on the ground run, have not changed over the past 10 years. A wing drop is highly likely to result in a potentially fatal scenario if the launch is continued. It has been demonstrated that winch drivers do not react either quickly enough or at all to a stop light that follows an all-out signal. Audio signalling is effective in that case. It was noted that Stratford GC and Kent GC are developing winch signalling systems that overcome the issue by using a mix of visual

and audio signalling. It was agreed that the BGA will actively promote appropriate winch signalling developments with clubs. Tim Freegarde agreed to continue dialogue with those involved.

It was noted that the revised Club Safety Review template (see below) should include the topic of winch driver training.

11. New ideas for improving / changing the way BGA does safety

Committee members spoke briefly to previously circulated ideas;

- a. Safety project team (TF)
Identify a group of volunteers who could be asked to independently consider technological solution to safety issues and feed outcomes to the safety committee. All agreed*
- b. Airspace safety analysis (TF)
Noting the increased risk imposed by many airspace changes, the need for a reference in support of such risk analysis was proposed and agreed.*
- c. Train more instructors (TF)
Assuming more instructors equals more available training and supervision, it was proposed that the BGA identifies how it can increase the number of instructors trained each year. Those present who had recently completed instructor training noted the challenges, including accessing club FIC resources and time. Recognising this is not a BGA safety committee responsibility, it was suggested that club flying management should be guided on how important FIC activity is and that without adequate focus and support of their trainee instructors, there is a high risk of drop-out from instructor training. Mike Fox agreed to consider in discussion with the IC chairman.
- d. Webinars (MF)
Mike Fox demonstrated the ease in which a webinar can be delivered using freely available and popular social media, and proposed how series of monthly, fixed date and time webinars could improve pilot awareness on a variety of safety related issues given the right presenter. Action MF. All agreed to provide Mike Fox with suggestions.
- e. Preventing wing drop accidents (HB)
Again noting that the number of wing drop accidents have not reduced in the past 10 years, it was proposed that a short training video is produced demonstrating how a wing tip holder should react to loads on a wingtip ahead of a launch. All agreed the need and John Hull agreed to discuss with a film maker at his club.*
Additionally, it was proposed that owners should be encouraged to modify their release knob to a design that is easier to grasp. It was agreed that the proposal should be urgently recommended to the Technical Committee, and subsequently that an appropriate message should be agreed and communicated.*
- f. BGA Safety Committee Endorsed Methodology (TF)
Noting the need to ensure that the current, proven successful, methodology employed by BGA to improve safety is sustained, it was agreed that subject to Executive Committee agreement, the methodology should be established as an appendix to a suitable BGA governance document. Action PS and TF

*Further conversations will be necessary to establish who will action.

12. Bill Scull Award

It was agreed to award the Bill Scull Award to London GC for their long term and ongoing effective and robust efforts to maintain safe gliding operations close alongside London Luton airport operations.

Action: BGA office

13. SMS review/update

Previously circulated updates to the BGA SMS document were agreed and will be recommended to the Executive Committee.

Action: PS

14. Wind gradient

Tim Freearde spoke to a limited circulation paper that considers wind gradient, and the need for greater understanding including quantitative data that may help identify why some gliding conditions are unsuitable regardless of pilot experience. Those present were highly supportive. Tim Freearde agreed to progress.

Action: TF

15. Young pilots

Noting that pilots of all ages have a proportionate number of accidents, it was noted that where pilots under the age of 18 are concerned, BGA clubs have child protection, duty of care, supervisory and reputational risks to consider. It was agreed that the available guidance will be reviewed and where appropriate updated and promoted to clubs.

Action: MF/PS

16. Priorities for 2018

Substantial damage accidents in trial lessons and introductory flights have remained unchanged for decades. When potentially fatal accidents are analysed, it could be considered that those involved were fortunate. The single priority for 2018 is to reduce the number of accidents involving trial lessons/introductory flights and those involving third parties.

How?

- Human factors awareness. Get into pilot's heads that this activity isn't what sport gliding is about; it should be ultra-low risk.
- Club mind-set. As above, with club responsibility to ensure the activity is ultra-low risk.
- Myth bust
- Develop supervision guidance
- Review existing trial lesson/introductory flight guidance and promote

17. AoB

There were no items of AoB.

Pete Stratten
Chairman
BGA Safety Committee