

Look Out - Summer is coming and with it an increase in Class G Activity!

The middle weekend of May was a timely reminder that Summer is almost upon us. As we all know, it brings with it a general increase in sport and recreational flying, flying displays and major outdoor events that might require restrictions of flying. Class G Airspace, in which most of us GA types fly, gets generally busier so to mitigate that increased risk we need to be more effective in our lookout if 'see and avoid' is going to help keep us apart. But don't forget to squawk (if you can), obtain at least a Basic Service, and call D&D on 121.50 for help if you get a little unsure of your position (lost).

Doing the proper preparatory work before we get airborne means we can absolutely maximise the time spent looking out through the perspex! How well prepared are you for your next flight? Have you checked the weather and NOTAMs, do you know where to go to get the best information, how do you get the best value from SkyDemon or other flight planning packages, have you used the AIS Information Line (0500 354 8020) as a final check that nothing has changed before you get airborne? A tip, if the message starts with "recorded at 1800 on...." the day before – nothing is likely to have changed – so you don't have to listen to the rest if you have done your planning properly!

Do you know how to maximise your airborne scan in order to stand the chance of seeing other Class G users. There is good advice on how to make your lookout as effective as it can be here http://airspacesafety.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/ASI_flyer_artwork_30_04-3.pdf. To be really effective, it does not just happen – you have to actively work at it! Enrol the help of your passengers who can add to the number of eyes on the task; include lookout in your mandatory safety brief to them, especially how to tell you what they see and where it is using the clock system – e.g "helicopter, 11 o'clock, same height, crossing left to right" This summer will see a significant number of events, including the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow, that will require temporary restrictions of flying (RA(T)) to be in place. When all of the individual restrictions of flying are added together, this year looks to be almost as busy as 2012. So it is really important that you know where to get the necessary information. For the Commonwealth Games there is a dedicated site at www.airspacesafety.com/commonwealth . Other restrictions will be published by NOTAM and will appear in your brief from NATS' AIS (available at www.ais.org.uk) or on SkyDemon etc.

This coming bank holiday weekend will also see the start of some of the bigger gliding competitions. In addition to individual NOTAMs for the launch and recovery sites, BGA website will show individual routes to be flown on the day at <http://www.bgaladder.co.uk/showtask.asp> . The NOTAMs will have telephone contact details for the operating sites – please use them to find out if the competition is going ahead or to find out the route that has been set as the task. They await your call!

Generally, most gliding sites operate at the weekends but some have occasional midweek operations (for timings, please confirm via the AIP En-Route Section (5.5)ENR 5.5 – available at www.ais.org.uk). However, many sites are likely to be active 7-days per week up to official night during the summer period so there will be gliders (and tugs) in their vicinity, normally upwind and up to the cloud base while convection is still occurring. Club sites that are normally active 7 days per week include:

North – Aboyne, Portmoak, Pocklington, Sutton Bank, Camphill, Long Mynd

South – North Hill, Lasham, Booker, Dunstable, Parham, Gransden Lodge, Halton, Bicester, Husbands Bosworth, Shenington, Enstone, Aston Down, Nympsfield, Talgarth

Remember also the few hang-gliding and paragliding winch sites, microlight sites which can be very busy during informal fly ins (look on your chart's legend to see how they are depicted on the chart). Last but by no means least, remember that flying through the overhead of a parachute drop zone or a military danger area , unless you know **for sure** it's inactive, is a VERY BAD IDEA. Keep clear of these sites and you are less likely to need an effective lookout to save your life

Let's all have a safe summer flying season, the CAA's GA pilots intend to, – and remember just **three** things – lookout, lookout, lookout!