

British Gliding Association Annual Report 2017



Chairmans Report

This annual chairman's report represents my sixth and final version and, as Elizabeth Taylor's sixth husband allegedly remarked, "I know what to do, just don't know how to make it seem interesting".

It seems but a moment since I walked down from the hang glider launch on Dunstable Downs to enquire at London Gliding Club about learning to glide. That was 1985. Today the hang gliding and gliding community are closer than ever, even sharing an office building in Leicester. In fact, we and colleagues in the other airports bodies have been working more and more collaboratively in recent times as the external challenges mount. Regulation, finance, an ageing membership demographic and a potentially existential threat from the ever increasing airport airspace grabs are the major challenges we face.

You'll all be aware about the huge swathes of airspace given over to operators at Norwich, Southend and Doncaster over recent years. We await with trepidation both Exeter's airspace application and the outrageous application from Farnborough. Now Oxford and Brize Norton have applied for more airspace, severely restricting north-south and east-west traffic across the region. Leeds Bradford are consulting. The airspace application process is flawed, is about to change, yet no-one appears to be looking after the increasingly congested and narrowing corridors between these under-utilised controlled areas. A very hard working team have been working on all our behalf to fight for common sense. It's likely you'll all be asked to put your hands in your pockets to help further.

On a more positive note, news from EASA suggests a lighter weight regulation for non-commercial, 'light' activity is in the pipeline, if we're still part of the system of course. David Roberts deserves a special mention amongst other volunteers for being a tireless champion in campaigning within the corridors of Brussels for us in sports aviation. Thank you from all of us David.

CAA our friend or foe? Friend most definitely, but constrained by legality and process from occasionally delivering what we'd consider common sense. Our relationship with the CAA is fantastically open, professional and surprisingly collaborative (airspace notwithstanding). Their staff are trying to do the 'right thing', but we could do much worse as some of European gliding colleagues have found. The revised ACP airspace change process (ACP2) I'm assured by the top at CAA, should deliver the transparency and accountability we and many others have been pressing for. Fingers crossed.

Juniors increasing activity. Could be a headline. It's brilliant news and supported by many clubs providing active support with reduced fees, junior gliding centres, etc. Membership figures show an increase in the next generation.

Competitions. Since writing my last report, Russell Cheetham won the Open class World championships in Australia, then came back to compete at the Lasham based 2017 European championships. Full credit to the Lasham club team and Andy Davis as director for a superbly delivered competition. The British team came away with one of its best results and multiple gongs.

The BGA ladder shows plenty of activity, though our airspace and wave guru John Williams has been relatively quiet as he builds a house and light aircraft. Not everyone's idea of retirement, but he's done so much on the airspace side, he deserves a bit of flying time. 1000km UK triangle this year?

Clubs are still largely in rude health, though most remain reliant upon a worryingly small team of volunteers. Indeed, our whole movement is reliant on volunteers, from the clubs, special topic groups, BGA committees, Exec, etc. That said, the few remunerated staff we have operate as volunteers for much of their time, putting in extra hours and energy because they share the passion. The Leicester office always seems a happy place to visit, the flying courses are invariably well respected and yet the BGA delivers airspace representation, regulation, safety management system, computing back office, magazine, child protection, health and safety, insurance, membership system, competitions, planning responses, environmental aspects, etc. Much through the clubs of course, but much falling at the door of our CEO, Pete Stratten. Please take it from me, we are incredibly fortunate to have such an individual in that key post. One of the BGA's finest assets. Thank you for your support maestro.

And so onto my likely successor as chair, assuming the clubs give the vote at our next AGM. Andy Perkins has kindly stepped up to the plate and I'll be handing over the keys to the BGA Bentley as soon as the tow-bar's been removed. He's younger, has more energy and politically far better connected - as we'll be needing during the next few years. No grey hair, though he and Helen have a youngster Henry, so thinning can't be far away.

I started this tenure as chairman with great intentions of course, but was handed by my successor Patrick Naegeli, a BGA in stable financial health, with an upgraded set of Articles, great governance and a movement that's arguably the envy of the European aviation movement.

It's been a privilege to chair such a fantastic organisation. Good luck Andy!

Safe landing.

Peter Harvey
BGA Chairman

CEOs Report

2017 has been another successful year for British gliding. In last year's report, the European Championships due to be held in August at Lasham was identified as a potential highlight during 2017. And didn't disappoint. It was an awesome competition and our congratulations go to Andy Davis, his competition team and the Lasham Gliding Society for delivering a highly successful, great spirited and suitably competitive international event. And of course congratulations to the British Gliding Team pilots who won so many of the available medals.

Once again, a great number of club and BGA representatives have been making a difference across the wide range of activities we are engaged in to support our sport and our clubs, including but not exclusively or in any particular order on governance, representation, airspace, airworthiness, club development, competitions, marketing and promotion, operations, pilot licensing, risk management, and sites. During 2017, we published the BGA strategy that aims to ensure that the organisation and infrastructure understands what is required to support the evolution of gliding in the next 10-20 years. The strategy was developed after an extensive programme of consultation across BGA member clubs and volunteers. It will continue to be an important point of focus as work emerges on and around the various themes.

The BGA is of course a not for profit organisation. The Executive Committee aim to maintain the financial reserves at an appropriate level. With inflation and other pressures, from time to time there is a need to increase fees charged by the BGA. The budget presented at the 2018 AGM includes additional allocations to airspace and marketing resources and associated modest increases in membership fees. You can read about the 2017 financial outcome elsewhere in this annual report.

Sadly, a number of tragic accidents in the worldwide gliding family have again reminded us of the ever present need for diligence and care. Orville Wright once stated; "In flying, I have learned that carelessness and overconfidence are usually far more dangerous than deliberately accepted risks." Let's all think more carefully about potential threats and errors before getting airborne in 2018. We can all learn from BGA and other safety education publications.

The EASA rulemaking task groups on sailplane operations and flight crew licensing rules are due to deliver in 2020. The BGA and CAA GA Unit are liaising closely on this project that shows great promise, including alignment with the CAA's risk-based approach to regulating GA. Andy Miller and Patrick Naegeli are contributing an enormous amount of time and effort through their EGU roles. Brexit is looming, of course. As previously reported, BGA has passed its views on threats and opportunities to Government, whose 'plan A' is that EASA rules will apply after Brexit.

Looking forward again, airspace is by far the greatest challenge. During 2018, we will be supporting efforts to address outdated and unsatisfactory UK airspace policies. With ad-hoc development of lower airspace and EASA Air Traffic Management requirements looming, we need the Government to move smartly to avoid a situation where in years ahead the only remaining available airspace are choke points. The need for a collaborative and strongly cohesive approach to the issues of the day has never been more relevant. At another level, whilst we benefit enormously in dealing with airspace change consultations from our outstanding volunteer support, again it's not a level playing field and we cannot compete with well-funded consultants with inside knowledge and time. We need to engage some professional support for airspace matters, and at the time of writing, arrangements are being made with other GA Alliance member organisations. But obviously there are costs. All of us who enjoy this wonderful sport need to be reasonably prepared to stand up and be counted when asked, which may include us all additionally contributing directly to airspace related

work.

At this year's BGA Conference, we get the opportunity to recognise some of the enormous contributions made by glider pilots and supporters, to meet up with old friends and new, to see some of the fantastic kit available to us and to hear in detail from some really interesting speakers. I look forward to seeing you there if you can make it. We'll also be welcoming new members of the BGA Executive Committee and saying thanks to others whose time on the Executive Committee is over, as set out in the BGA Articles of Association. At this point, I would like to publicly express my thanks for the outstanding support of the outgoing Chairman Peter Harvey and of all the other Executive Committee members.

The BGA employs five full-time staff and three part-time staff. We also utilise contracted services for certain activity. All are dedicated professionals and I'd like to record my thanks for their ongoing contributions. A long standing member of the office team, Keith Auchterlonie, retired during 2017 and we wish him well.

I would also like to thank the chairmen of the various BGA sub-committees who on behalf of the Executive Committee do so much with their committee colleagues to ensure that key areas of BGA activity are proactively managed and developed to meet the needs of all clubs and their pilots. We are all fortunate to have dedicated, subject matter expert volunteers of such high calibre representing our interests and ensuring the continued good governance and success of gliding in the UK.

Pete Stratten
CEO

Treasurers Report

The financial year to 30 September 2017 has been a satisfactory one for the BGA which has resulted in a small decrease in the BGA reserve of £263. The larger loss which is shown on the P&L is as a result of the timing of competition expenditure. The 'ring fenced' reserve relating to competitions has historically been shown separately on the balance sheet. I have prepared an addendum to the accounts, which explains this in a little more detail, along with the movement in the headline after tax P&L between 2016 and 2017.

As discussed elsewhere in this document, the BGA is a not for profit organisation, and our financial objectives remain to maintain a strong balance sheet that will ensure we can provide the support and services our members require and expect. It is also our objective to position ourselves to meet the challenges and opportunities in the future, whatever and whenever they may be.

We have prepared the 2018-2019 budget, which includes a modest increase in membership fees. Along with our continued robust approach to cost control, this modest fee increase will assist us with achieving our objectives both for business as usual activity and for meeting future challenges, including those relating to airspace. It is part of our strategy to increase marketing activity, and this is reflected in the increase in budgeted marketing spend. In the last year, there was the Go-Gliding initiative, which was spearheaded by Dave Latimer. This saw a financial contribution from both the BGA directly, and a number of individual clubs. Amongst other benefits from this initiative, we saw a significant increase in the profile of gliding, both from a social media perspective and from more traditional media. Voucher sales continue to perform well, and it is always pleasing to see the redemptions from these being received by clubs.

As with last year, the budget only includes items where we have a reasonable degree of certainty as to what expenditure might be. We have therefore excluded budget items that cannot be quantified with a reasonable degree of accuracy. It is, of course, always impossible to predict the future, and where there may be a call on expenditure that has not been included in the budget, this call will be considered in detail by the Executive and subject to a robust decision making process. We continue to recognise the need to increase the number of instructors, and to encourage this, we will keep the reduced BGA fee detailed in last year's report for the foreseeable future.

The 2017 financial year has seen us move from our previous auditors, Grant Thornton, to Haines Watts. Auditor rotation is good practice, and we have been happy with both the cost and service provided by Haines Watts. I would also like to thank (amongst others) Peter Bishop and Liz Pike for the invaluable work they do behind the scenes in helping us to achieve our financial objectives. And finally, I would like to thank club treasurers and other members for their outstanding contributions to the ongoing success of their clubs and our sport.

Tony Smith
Treasurer

Airspace Committee Report

Many of us are cross country soaring pilots who live on an island in the North Atlantic which lies at a latitude similar to North America's Hudson Bay. It's hardly surprising that we get accustomed to seeking out tiny indications of rising air hidden among what seem to be hopeless skies. Our whole outlook on life can benefit (or suffer) from that very attitude; it's just our way of dealing with uncertainty imposed by geography and meteorology that we are powerless to influence.

So in writing this I find myself searching for the little rays of sunshine that might precede a thermal or positive news that we've noticed during the year that's passed. But in the airspace world I can't see them. Improved airliner performance, control technology and environmental pressures ought to be reducing the footprint of controlled airspace. In fact the stream of proposals from operators\consultants who appear to neither consider nor care about the impact on the safety and operability of others just continues.

The regulator's track record of airspace decision-making speaks for itself - proposals from commercial interests invariably get approved regardless of the impact on or input from GA. And Post Implementation Reviews (PIRs) which ought to remedy flawed decisions have been both late and toothless.

Anyone seeking a deeper overview of the situation would start well by reviewing what happened (or did not happen) in a very limited selection of 2017 events:-

- *Hawarden. At last year's BGA Conference, I shared the platform with CAA and spoke about the lack of justification for the proposed RMZ. After the event we discovered that the decision to award the RMZ had already been taken. The subsequently published documentation exposed a regulatory attitude which if repeated elsewhere would render all our efforts pointless.*
- *Doncaster. At the BGA conference in 2015 CAA publicly stated that in their opinion some 70% of Doncaster CAS should be removed. In 2016 the CAA long overdue PIR simply endorsed the existing excessive CAS.*
- *Farnborough. We continue to await a CAA decision. We remain utterly opposed to what we believe (and all available data shows) to be an unfair, unsafe and disproportionate proposal and cannot comprehend how any regulator using evidence-based decision making could possibly approve it.*
- *Leeds Bradford. We have again responded to a consultation where a commercial entity seeks more CAS in areas where we believe that it is not needed. Airport aspirations and consultant's spin should not impact airspace decisions, but we cannot ignore the established track record of all such proposals getting CAA approval.*
- *Exeter. We have again responded to a consultation seeking more CAS in areas where we believe that it is not justified.*

- Brize/Oxford. We have now seen the consultant's proposals which would have a catastrophic impact on our activities and our safety. We heard directly from those who prepared them that they did not properly consider the needs of others. Clearly this proposal should never have reached the stage it is now at, but we cannot ignore the established track record of all such proposals getting CAA approval.

- NATS. One ray of light that we saw late in 2017 was an interaction with NATS who are involved with the redesign of upper airspace to fit future needs and technological possibilities. Uniquely they seem to appreciate the merits of working together to solve problems before one-sided solutions provide little more than a battle ground, too late to create better solutions for all. They also well understand how current but outdated CAA separation standards are forcing excessive and unnecessary CAS. It's very early days, but we are hopeful of mutually productive discussions during 2018.

The business of getting airspace which is safe, proportionate and takes into account the needs of all users should be simple. However it requires a joined-up approach to solving overall problems rather than one-sided or commercially driven attempts to acquire control of airspace for particular vested interests. We welcome the introduction of a new airspace change process and the inherent drive to improve transparency. However without a collaborative approach to the understanding of problems and development of creative solutions no process, new or otherwise, will escape the adversarial, time-consuming and wasteful efforts that always lead to inappropriate results.

My thanks again to the many who help our efforts on airspace, without you the task would neither be possible nor tolerable.

John Williams
Chairman

Competitions and Awards Committee Report

The Competition and Awards Committee's scope is broad – we are responsible for promoting all forms of competition gliding and for policy and management of UK and international competition matters. Your current committee are: Chair – Liz Sparrow; Vice Chair – Alan Langlands; Brian Spreckley; Russell Cheetham; Paul Crabb; Richard Hood; Iain Baker; Andrew Mugleston; Jon Gatfield; Justin Craig; Matt Davis; and British Team Manager – Graham Garnett. New recruits Benedict Smith and Matt Page join us in January; and many thanks to Andy Cockerell who has stood down.

Every year we set up the Competition calendar and Nationals entries, manage the Ratings list and select and manage the British Gliding Team. Alongside this, we work with clubs to encourage competitive cross-country flying. We contributed to the revised BGA strategy issued in October 2017 and three key areas of this underpin our work;

- Consistently world-leading international team performance.
 - Structure and resource Team coaching and management organization, and infrastructure.
 - Encourage Team sponsorship and donors.
- Strong external projection of UK competitions & British Team, contributing to wider public awareness and knowledge of British gliding.
 - Facilitation of products of UK competitions and the British Team, to access major sponsorship.
 - Improved external communication channels and media management.
- UK comp structure which increases participation rate both of pilots and club organisers.
 - Facilitate common & simplified comp organisation, sharable IT / other infra.

Addressing the first two areas, this summer we ran a trial with a media manager for each International competition with the aim of providing consistent, high quality competition updates to the sport and wider community. Our aim longer term is to raise the profile of the team and so create an opportunity for outside sponsorship to help with team funding and support development coaching. We are continuing this trial in 2018 by the end of which we hope to have some financial payback. We see competitions as a great focus for raising the profile of gliding generally – and this will need a common approach to how competitions are run and publicised for maximum impact. This combines with the third area, where we work with competition organisers to share tools and best practice on how to make your competition unmissable for competitors and profitable for the club – there's a conference and Facebook group specifically for this, and we're attempting to develop a common system to make it simpler to run and publicise comps. Our Interclub lead is working to re-establish Interclub where it has waned via workshops at conferences, Facebook and coordinating with regional captains. So if your club runs Nationals, Regionals or Interclub League – or is considering doing so - and you are not part of these networks, email compscommittee@gliding.co.uk to get involved.

For those who didn't follow the coverage this year, here's a quick run through of the highlights of the competition season...

The British Team - follow them at www.britishglidingteam.co.uk and on Facebook – were busy with five international competitions in 2017 starting with the World Gliding Championships at Benalla, Australia in January. A nail-biting contest gave us Open Class World Champion Russell Cheetham, with Andy Davis taking Bronze; Mike Young won Bronze in the 18m with Steve Jones in 7th and Derren Francis came 6th in 15m. At the Women's Worlds at Zbraslavice, Czech Republic in May our top pilot was Claudia Hill, 9th in the Club Class. Next up was the Europeans in Moravska Trebova, Czech

Republic in July where Steve Jones and Gary Coppin took Silver in the Double-Seater class. The Junior Worlds at the end of July had Jake Brattle and defending Club Class champion Tom Arscott narrowly missing medals, coming 5th and 6th. In August we had the first senior international the UK has hosted since 1965 – the Europeans' flapped classes at Lasham – which was highly successful, and our team duly made the most of the home advantage taking 6 of the available medals - Silver for Tim Scott and Bronze for Gary Stingemore in the 15m; Silver for Mike Young in the 18m; Silver for Peter Harvey and Bronze for Russell Cheetham in the Open Class plus the Team Silver medal.

The UK Nationals scene commenced with the 18m and Club Classes at The Gliding Centre, Husbands Bosworth in June, won by Steve Jones and Tim Fletcher respectively. Cotswold Gliding Club in July ran the Standard and 15m classes as a joint class electing respective champions David Bromley and Matt Cook, with Andy Davis winning the Opens and John Meyer the 20m class. At the Juniors in August, British Team members took the top three positions, with Jake Brattle triumphant.

There were 8 Regional competitions, and number of other opportunities to test your mettle against other pilots including Competition Enterprise and the Pocklington Two-Seater Competition. At the end of what turned out to be a pretty good cross-country season, Cambridge Gliding Club hosted the Interclub League final with The Gliding Centre taking the honours. Making the most of the variety of racing conditions available to us, the National Ladder was won by Sant Cervantes with 29738 points – over 3000 points clear of runner-up John Williams.

Congratulations to you all!

Ours is the best sport in the world, and the Comps Committee's vision is to increase competitive cross-country flying by providing a fun, safe and challenging environment which encourages people to take part in, and improve their skills to move up through, the different levels of competition. If there's more we can do to encourage you, let us know what it is. Here's to some great racing in 2018!

Liz Sparrow
Chair

Development Committee Report

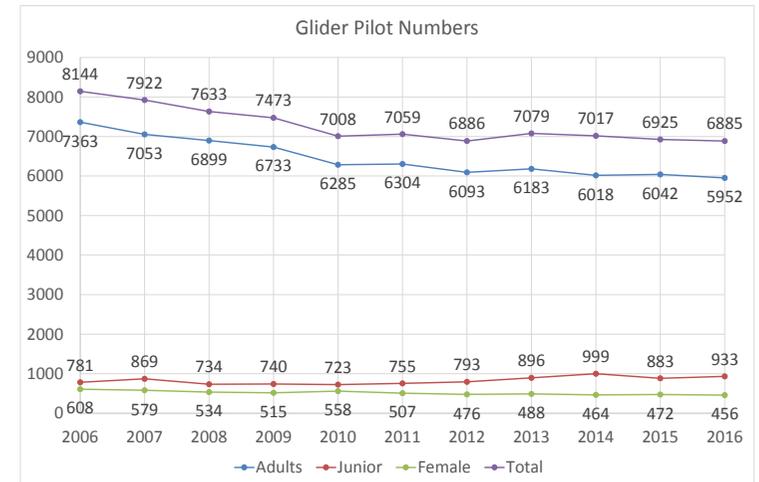
Based upon annual returns to the BGA the number of glider pilots in the UK remains fairly static at just under 7,000. Although we still have a worrying age profile with nearly 40% of glider pilots aged over 60, the strength of the juniors continues, thanks to the hard work of their leadership group. Indeed I am particularly pleased to see that many of yesterday's juniors are turning into today's leaders in our sport. We must continue to support the juniors and find better ways to keep them active in our sport as they face up to the pressures of new careers and young families. Given that more than half our clubs are either stable in terms of membership numbers or growing we continue to seek to share their good practices to other clubs. The Development Committee is also actively promoting university clubs as part of overall junior development.

One of the ways we share good practice is at the annual Club Management Conference which continues to be the highlight event for the Development Committee, the 2017 event was attended by 169 delegates representing 51 clubs. As well as the normal news and safety briefings this year's conference included much more on marketing, member recruitment and retention which is a welcome development. In addition to the main Club Management Conference in November we also held a mini-Scottish Club Conference in February 2017 that was kindly hosted by the Scottish Gliding Centre at Portmoak. As with the main conference there were strong themes on both membership trends and shared ideas on how we can encourage and support the many volunteers who are so vital to our sport. We also held a marketing workshop in 2017 run by volunteer Sharon Kirby. We plan further, similar events in 2018.

The Development Committee were also active in supporting the Glide Britain project. This exciting project demonstrated that using social media it is possible to reach out to a very broad audience which some of the most successful Facebook posts reaching almost 60,000 people. Interestingly the majority of those people reached were in the age range 30 to 40. Perhaps this represents a mechanism for attracting people from that age group which is where the current gliding population is weak. With support from clubs participating in Glide Britain this reach was extended further through broadcasts by local radio and TV stations. The project will also deliver some excellent promotional video material in the first half of 2018. On the basis of this success we will be looking to see what further activities we can undertake to promote our sport.

The changes to rates continues to be a concern for many clubs with some facing substantial increases. The rating group continued to do sterling work in this area although support and help from the Valuations Office Agency has not been all we hoped for. We are however able to focus on helping those clubs who are most severely impacted by these changes.

Perhaps the most significant threat for the future is site security with increasing pressure from Government for housing developments. We are forming a group to look at how we respond to this and also liaising closely with the General Aviation Awareness Council who are considering this same issue from the broader general aviation perspective.



Through our Development Officer, Alison Randle, and other experts we continue to provide a range of advice to clubs. In 2017 we advised 7 clubs on general governance matters, 11 clubs on funding and a further 6 clubs on issues relating to site security and planning. We have further work to do to help clubs in 2018 as new rules on data protection (General Data Protection Regulation, GDPR) come into force.

We also continue to interact with Sport England, Wales and Scotland. We are monitoring the development of the Club Matters internet based support being developed by Sport England and increasingly see this as a very useful support resource for clubs. We also continue to work actively with the Sports and Recreational Alliance (the umbrella organisation for sports' national governing bodies like the BGA) who are influential when it comes to consultation with Government on matters relating to sport. Finally I would like to thank all those involved in the Development Committee for their support and for the time they devote to our sport. Though often not very visible but without the efforts of an amazing group of volunteers our sport would not be what it is today.

Dave Latimer
Chairman

Flight Operations Committee Report

The Flight Operations Committee continue to support the BGA in a variety of areas many of which are dealing with airspace and associated issues. There is no doubt that airspace incursions are a serious issue, it is a problem that is not going away.

The overall numbers of airspace incursions have not decreased. The BGA has been represented on the CAA's Airspace Incursion Working Group for a number of years and in conjunction with our colleagues from the other general aviation sports have provided valuable insight and information to the CAA. One outcome of that is the introduction of an Airspace Infringement Awareness Course as a method of re-educating some transgressors. Based on the driving speed awareness courses they were introduced during 2017. As yet I'm not aware of any glider pilots having attended one of the courses! The CAA have encouraged those airfields who are high on the infringement statistics to create a local airspace incursion team (LAIT). A number of gliding clubs are involved and the overall feedback has been positive.

The BGA will be actively looking at how we can improve on the training and delivery of navigation and airspace to pilots at all levels of the sport. We have good representation at the Airprox board. What is of interest is comments from clubs about aircraft in close proximity of their airfield when winch launching is taking place. When asked what action the club has taken the answer is often "nothing". If you consider that safety was being compromised, then take action and if necessary file an Airprox.

The introduction of 8.33 radios gives glider pilots the opportunity to talk to air traffic units in flight. Many modern ATC radars don't pick up gliders therefore controllers may not know you are around. Talking to them aids flight safety and it may mean that entry into controlled airspace is made easier. At the same time gliding clubs should be looking at ways that other local airspace user are aware of their activities. This applies particularly to clubs that only operate mainly at weekends and then decide to have some mid-week flying. Moving map displays are on the increase but we should not forget the core skills of using an air chart. The BGA is involved with the CAA on the quality and content of the air charts which have to fulfil the need of the all pilots. Not an easy task. NOTAM's are another area where trying to keep all airspace users happy is proving to be me a challenge. Many glider pilots will choose to use alternative to the CAA/NATS site as their source for NOTAM information. You must consider how reliable and up-to-date that source is.

The challenge for clubs is to ensure that all pilots from the ab initio to experienced cross country are provided with or are capable of resourcing, understanding and implementing the airmanship skills that will avoid airspace issues.

Peter Moorehead
Chairman

Instructors Committee Report

Firstly I'd like to thank my predecessor Don Irving for his long and dedicated service to the BGA and specifically the Instructors committee. Having taken on the role of Chairman in December 2016 I now appreciate how much effort and hard work Don contributed during his time as Chairman. His award at last year's conference was well deserved.

The instructors committee continue to meet twice a year, and a main agenda item is the analysis of BGA accident statistics for the past year compiled by Hugh Browning. This very valuable piece of work is vital to us in identifying potential areas of concern, accident trends and safety priorities that we need to address with CFIs and instructors.

During the year the small team of senior instructor coaches led by Mike Fox have continued to deliver the modular instructors course across a number of venues around the country. Feedback from attendees on these courses has been very positive with many appreciating the benefits of matching the progress of the course with their private lives, some achieving the end result very quickly, others going at their own pace. We are continually trying to improve these courses and a trial was run at Pocklington where the interim C module was removed, the content being spread around the remaining modules. The result was a slightly longer final week module with the advantage of candidates not having to take a weekend out to attend a C module. Further work will be done on this model through 2018.

Development work on the instructing front has been progressing at a pace. Early in 2017 the instructors committee recommended to the BGA executive that the silver C requirement to become a Basic Instructor be removed, this has helped a number of clubs with their instructor needs. Mike Fox has worked hard in developing more instructor resources and a dedicated page on the BGA web site has been created. Content includes demonstration videos showing typical training exercises, audio files outlining the recommended pattern for various exercises, and instructor reference cards that can be downloaded to a mobile phone or tablet for an instructor to use with ground briefings as an aid memoir. These reference cards are particularly welcomed as an aid to standardising instructing and I'm very grateful for the work done in providing this resource by Mike Fox and Steve Longland. The BGA instructor manual has also been updated to edition 4 and is now published on the BGA web site as a whole document and in separate chapters for downloading. Hard copies will also be made available.

Various courses and seminars have been run throughout the country to support the needs of EASAFCL FI(S) and FE/FIE renewals and the further development of club flight instructor coaches. More of these are in the planning stages for 2018 along with some new developmental courses for instructors. With the derogation of Part FCL to April 2020 for glider pilots, the seemingly endless work in the background by the dedicated few continues apace, I'm extremely grateful for their continued advice and support.

Lastly I'd like to thank all the members of the Instructors committee, the SRE's and their teams of examiners, instructor coaches and CFI's for all their hard work and continuing support.

Colin Sword
Chairman

Junior Gliding Report

2017 has once again been a year of growth for UK Junior Gliding, with more Junior pilots coming to events than ever before. The Junior Development Team are in place to support clubs as they work to encourage and involve more Junior members. In doing this, we organise several events per year where Juniors can meet, fly and encourage one another to progress. Over the past year, we have built on existing events that have proved to work well, as well as branching out with some new ideas. Schemes currently used to encourage Junior participation were discussed at the Club Management Conference, an excellent opportunity to learn from our fellow glider pilots and share ideas.

Winter Series

Long Mynd

The year started with a weekend trip to the Long Mynd in February for the second round of the 2016/17 series. It was the most well-attended Winter Series event so far, with over 100 attendees! On the Saturday, the majority of the Junior pilots were up, rigging and doing the daily inspections on the kit at dawn, to make the most of the flying day. By the end of a short February day, we had managed a record-breaking 113 launches!!! With everyone getting stuck in and helping to get the gliders on line, it is amazing what can be achieved. On Sunday, the weather was not good enough to fly, but there was plenty of time for the annual Mynd walk.

Nympsfield

The final round of the 2016/17 series was held at Nympsfield. Although a few people arrived early, flying properly commenced on Friday, with many two seaters and single seaters making the most of the good weather to get check flights out of the way and some decent soaring. Several two seaters took an aerotow and flew to Aston Down for a 'Jolly Nice Burger' at the café near the airfield and then got an aerotow back. It has to be the most expensive burger they have ever bought!

Saturday brought with it a mixed forecast-showers early in the day with the possibility of some soaring later. Andy Davis set two cross country tasks, one of 60km and another of 130km. Fortunately, after a morning of showers, they cleared leaving a beautiful, soarable afternoon. The two seaters were kept busy with check rides and making sure everyone on the two page long, two seater list got to fly!

Sunday was the day we had all been waiting for and it is fair to say that it did not disappoint. There was a grid of 50 gliders before briefing. Three Juniors completed their 50km flight towards their Silver Badge, namely Alex Fordham, Henry Inigo-Jones and Matt Johnston and Josh Milner completed his silver duration too. A fantastic conclusion to the best Winter Series yet. Many Juniors also completed cross-country flights of between 150km and 220km. For many it was their first cross country flight this season and there were no land outs!

Denbigh

Moving on to the 2017/18 series, the first Round was held at Denbigh in October. We could not have asked for better conditions, with wave on both the Friday and Saturday. Several of the Juniors made some epic wave climbs, Jordan Richards reaching 24000ft in his Libelle! Several others experienced wave for the first time. The ridge was also working on the Saturday, allowing those new to ridge soaring to have a go in the many two seaters. We moved the BBQ to the Launch Point. With bacon and sausage sandwiches on tap, there was plenty of help at the launch point to keep

the launch rate high!

A big thank you to Midland Gliding Club, Bristol and Gloucestershire Gliding Club and Denbigh Gliding for hosting us!

Junior National Championship

The 2017 Junior Nationals were held at Bristol and Gloucestershire Gliding Club, Nympsfield at the end of August. The weather was kind and there were six racing days around Southern England. The first few days of the week proved challenging, with showers, low cloud bases and lots of high cover. However, by the end of the week, the weather improved greatly, allowing for longer tasks, including a 196km one on the final day. Tom Arscott and Jack Brattle were both on the same score for the first few days of the competition, having decided to team fly, as they had been doing in Lithuania. However, they started racing from the penultimate day of the competition, with Jake taking the lead going into the final day. The final day was, by far, the best of the week with excellent looking cumulus. Jake kept his lead, with Tom finishing second and Finn Sleigh and Mike Gatfield in third and fourth places. An excellent performance from the Junior British Team. A huge thank you to Bristol and Gloucestershire Gliding Club for hosting and to all the Sponsors. Keep an eye on UK Junior Gliding on Facebook for more details regarding the 2018 competition.

Club Management Conference

The second Junior Conference continued to build on the success of inaugural one, with mostly Junior delegates, as well as those running the Junior sections at their respective clubs. Important topics covered included social media, university gliding and bursaries. Yvonne Elliot gave a presentation to the group on the new 'STEM Passport' that is soon to be introduced, so young glider pilots can record the skills they learn at gliding clubs to help them with applications to colleges, universities and full-time jobs. However, we not only discussed STEM based opportunities, but also opportunities for young people involved in the digital arts to pursue their interest through getting involved with producing photos and videos to advertise gliding. A particularly interesting session, at the end of the day, was a comparison between the cadet/junior schemes run by every club present in the room. It was fascinating to hear so many ideas of how to encourage junior pilots to participate in clubs and definitely food for thought.

Summary and 2018 Outlook

For the first time, we will be holding a 'Summer Series,' to complement the Winter Series, focused on those aiming to go solo and complete their Bronze Badge. The first of these will be held at Aston Down in Gloucestershire from 11-13th May 2018. The next two rounds of the Winter Series are to be held at the Long Mynd and Sherington respectively. For more details, go the UK Junior Gliding Facebook Page. Please do encourage Junior Club members from your home clubs to attend, even if just for a day. It is an excellent way to meet other Junior pilots, as well as realise what is possible within gliding-from cross country to aerobatics and instructing, not necessarily something you appreciate when pre or newly solo!

Lucy Wootton
Junior Gliding Development Team

Medical Policy Advisors Report

During 2017 the AAIB published their investigation into a fatal accident with the finding that a possible medical incapacitation was the cause. As was commented by an aeromedical colleague from the USA, “it is unsatisfactory that a medical cause is so often ascribed when no other cause can be proven, but that is also the case in my country”. He also reported on the success of the medical declaration in the USA.

There were no accidents or serious incidents arising from medical causes in this past year. There were even fewer medical queries raised and this is due to the simplification of procedures by which driving licences are accepted; replacing the general practitioner endorsement of solo pilots required by the NPPL. However GP endorsement is still required for instructors and those authorised to carry passengers.

The number of queries is reducing, with only 45 this year. Thirty of these queries were from pilots, prospective pilots or their parents. Other sources were clubs (8) and the BGA office (1). Only four queries came from General Practitioners. The remainder, mostly concerning policy, were from various organisations including a foreign Aviation Authority.

Of the items logged, nine concerned general policy with the remainder being about personal medical issues. Classification of these latter by diagnostic group was led by cardiovascular with fifteen and neurological with six, one being a head injury. Next was metabolic also with six. There was one case each of neoplasm, ENT, and psychiatric. Of less fit pilots, the recommended disposal was restricted in 28 cases, some of which were temporary, 3 with safety pilot and only one was grounded.

For reasons of professional currency, it is essential that the BGA continues to identify medical advisers.

Peter Saundby
BGA Medical Policy Advisor

Safety Committee Report

During 2017, the Safety Committee has again worked to an agreed set of priorities in support of BGA clubs and their members while dealing with the inevitable ad-hoc issues that arise. A number of notable areas of ongoing work include;

Club Safety Officer Seminars. We have delivered a number of Club Safety Officer Seminars across the country, the latest of which was held during November at the Scottish Gliding Centre. The seminars have been well attended and resulted in high quality exchanges and, we hope, even better informed and equipped club safety officers. The feedback into the organisation during BGA seminars is always valuable; the club safety officers have provided the BGA Safety Committee with some excellent pointers for the future and we would like to build on that two-way flow of information. Further CSO seminars are being planned for 2018.

AAIB. Whilst the follow up from most gliding accidents is delegated by the AAIB to the BGA under a joint agreement, fatal gliding accidents are always investigated by the AAIB. By request, safety committee colleagues have supported ongoing AAIB investigations into gliding accidents resulting in perhaps more accurately informed reports than otherwise may have been the case and are always a great learning opportunity for us. Whilst the working relationship between BGA and AAIB is well established, of course both organisations are entirely independent of each other.

Occurrence Reporting. BGA occurrence reporting, also known as accident and incident reporting, is directed in part by reporting regulations. During 2017, we overhauled the BGA reporting process and form to make the process more easily accessible to users, and to ensure that we remain compliant with the relevant regulations whilst still collecting the specific data we need to inform our SMS. Engineering occurrences, which used to be reported on an engineering form that few knew about, are now reported simply on the standard BGA accident/incident report form, which can be completed electronically and emailed to the BGA office exactly like any other accident or incident reported to the BGA. The BGA has a great reporting culture and we'd like to thank everyone that submitted a report during the year. Although we'd prefer zero incidents and accidents, if something doesn't quite go to plan and ends up in a dangerous situation, we like to hear about it; the report may help someone else to avoid an accident. Of course, every report involves a person and our thoughts are with anyone who has been affected by a gliding accident.

Wing drop accidents. Wing drop accidents occur predominantly to experienced pilots. They usually happen as a result of not releasing the cable if the wing drops during the ground run. The message is a simple one – start the launch with your spare hand on the release and, if you can't keep the wings level before take-off, release before the wing touches the ground. The safety-critical role of the wing tip holder during winch launching has also been highlighted again this year, with many now recognising the need to train wing tip holders and how to deal with the situation if they feel a strong load up or down on the wingtip just before launching. Full details are in the latest, i.e. sixth version of the BGA safe winching leaflet available on the BGA member website.

Communication. During 2017, we reviewed the published safety briefings to ensure those remain relevant and accessible. We have published and freely distributed the latest safe winching leaflet, poster and the publication 'Managing Flying Risk'. If clubs need further copies, please contact the office. We recognise that despite (or perhaps in part because of) electronic communications, it's a huge challenge to get the right messages to the right pilots or owners at the right time, including of course persuading people to read and absorb the message. During 2018, we intend to further develop how we get information to pilots. 'Managing Flying Risk' will be updated and republished during 2018.

Other Activity. Safety Committee members are involved in a number of airspace safety related working groups, supporting other BGA sub-committee work, developing and delivering courses and seminars, and providing advice to clubs and individuals. We've also continued to engage with CAA, military and other safety practitioners to share good practice. We have reviewed the BGA SMS for continued relevance, and having reviewed the progress or otherwise of our activities during the past 12 months, the BGA Safety Committee's priority during 2018 is to continue to proactively reduce risk to trial lessons/introductory flights and third parties.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Safety Committee colleagues Hugh Browning, Mike Fox, Tim Freearde, Jon Trueman, John Hull, and Gordon MacDonald, and all club safety officers for all their valuable time, insight and commitment.

Pete Stratten
Chairman

Technical Committee Report

BGA Airworthiness processes

During 2017 significant regulatory developments have been enacted, invoking a 'Self Declared Maintenance Programme' (SDMP) for all our motor-sailplanes and tugs. For sailplanes these rules will be fully implemented during the coming year. These are the first significant changes in BGA airworthiness processes since the emergence of EASA as the regulating body. These highlight the legal status on owners' (individuals or clubs) to ensure the airworthiness of those airframes in their care. The good news is this will enable BGA to restore many of the privileges that we had previously available (formally or informally) to the gliding movement. To address the roll out of these new processes, the BGA's refresher programme for inspectors, as managed by Gordon MacDonald our CTO, will be expanded in this coming year, and will emphasise this topic. Additionally we expect to make available a library of proforma maintenance programmes customised to type, much in the style of the previous BGA compendium. We remain in discussion with the CAA to endeavour to 'future-proof ' this change, so that at least any further changes will be seen to be minor and hopefully in the direction of simplicity.

Ageing airframes

The BGA CTO's review of airworthiness of ageing wooden airframes is now complete. Through these inspections, carried out entirely within the BGA, we have developed what we believe to be a world leading understanding of the condition and needs of these airframes. Our approach is being discussed on a worldwide basis through the VGC and several national authorities. We now expect to carry out a related activity using advanced techniques to assess GRP gliders that are now approaching similar age, or indeed their 3000 hour reviews. Any individual or club who have concerns in this area should contact Gordon at the BGA office.

Our regional RTO's continue to provide valued technical advice at the membership level over wide aspects of the technical side of gliding. The BGA continues to be assisted by Keith Morgan in meeting our CAMO quality targets.

Personal licensing of BGA Inspectors as Part 66 engineers

We are advised via the EC that personal engineer licensing legislation has been enacted but implementation dates remain unclear. For the present we might assume a two year implementation process during 2018 to 2019. This will involve a change in the relationship between the BGA and engineering operators, but we anticipate that currently approved BGA inspectors will be automatically empowered under the new code. We remain deeply concerned that the requirements for qualification of new engineers will lead to a shortage of new candidates.

Future EASA Developments

'Part M Light' is delayed by regulatory issues during implementation, but might still be expected in late 2018. The main purpose of this legislation is to provide a simpler mechanism for Sport Associations to manage their communities, under a combined airworthiness approval (CAO replacing our

existing CAMO). This principally concerns the relationship between the BGA and UK CAA, and we plan to maintain the documentation associated with ARC renewal substantially to current (SDMP) standard. The timing of annual maintenance and airworthiness reviews (ARC) will be re-united, as in the pre-EASA era.

Through EGU and Europe Air Sports, the BGA is pressing for greater freedom to enable renewed national certification of lightweight sailplanes and light aircraft. Recent communications suggests that a greater devolution to national rules is now being accommodated.

Howard A Torode
Chairman

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