



EGU Newsletter 2/2019

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Editors note

On the EGU website <http://www.egu-info.org> you find a lot of useful information. If you have forgotten the password to the internal section, please contact EGU.

A report by the President

Patrick Naegeli

In my last update on the subject of Part-Gliding, the new EASA rules for sailplane operations and flight crew licensing (SFCL), I mentioned that the draft SFCL text had now moved from EASA to the EASA Committee of the European Commission (EASA Committee) for review prior to a formal vote for their acceptance either this summer or autumn.

The EASA Committee met in mid-April. During the course of that discussion a number of questions were raised by a very small number of EASA member states about aspects of the new rules, in particular, concerning the need, or otherwise, for examiners to be required in the revalidation of sailplane instructor ratings. The new rules require examiners to be involved in the issue and renewal of instructor certificates, but not necessarily in the revalidation. Appropriately trained and approved flight instructor coaches can be used for that purpose. The new rules broadly mirror what has been done in most national gliding associations prior to the arrival of EASA. If examiners were to be required to support the revalidation of instructors then this would create unnecessary operational and practical issues for some member states, and an unnecessary intervention by examiners for all.



AERO 2019

During Aero Expo in Friedrichshafen, the EGU met with EASA and also with representatives from NAAs to discuss the issue. EASA are clearly of the opinion that the draft rules do not need to be changed, as is the EGU. If the new rules are not formally accepted by the EASA Committee later this year then it will give rise to a real possibility that the new rules will not become law in April 2020, and may be not at all. We cannot allow that to happen.

To that end, we are keen to make sure that we meet with any NAAs that have concerns with the new rules as soon as possible in order to avoid any further issues or delays to the passage of the new rules through the remaining stages of the EASA Committee. If your NAA is one with concerns then please let me/us know as a matter of urgency. We will be happy to meet with them,

discuss those concerns, and see what we can do to reassure them that the new rules are safe and proportionate.

Have fun, stay safe.

Airspace and Interoperability

TO Airspace Andreas Peus & Ole Gellert Andersen

At the EGU-conference in Budapest the EGU-board announced its decision to take up again the work in the European Airspace Group (EAG). The EGU-member states were asked to nominate persons of contact for this work in their countries. 15 countries have found their persons of contact for this matter, and 8 countries were represented, when the Technical Officers for air space – Andreas Peus and Ole Gellert Andersen - called for the first meeting in the EAG on 30th March 2019 in Hamburg.



EAG Meeting in Hamburg end of March

Andreas Peus opened the meeting by giving a short background for taking up the airspace work and interoperability, and the presentation of the attendants showed that the airspace situation is quite different in those countries, which were represented. The EASA Safety Conference in Vienna in November 2018 showed increased need for the gliding community to cope with airspace matters. There was only one glider pilot on the podium at that meeting, and all others were representing taxi flying, commercial air transport, unmanned airborne vehicles a o.

Francois van Haaff from Holland presented the booklet “Preserving Airspace Access for Air Sports” by Ronald Schnitker. The air sports have been forgotten through the years on behalf of commercial flying. The FAI has 2018 presented its

Manifesto for glider pilots right to airspace. EASA, ICAO and others already know this manifesto, and it is important to make this document known for all dealing with airspace. In fact it is important to increase the understanding for glider pilots need for airspace. There could be some concern about politicians thinking: “We agree – but not here”. Niklas Eriksson from Sweden compared the problem with a 14 year old boy playing football. Politicians would never tell this guy to travel 100 km to play football. We must bring the politicians to think the same with gliding. The matter is quite fundamental. The airspace is a main arena for glider flying in the same way, as a football arena for playing football or an ice arena for playing ice hockey.

Airspace situation in Europe

The development according airspace in the EGU nations is very different with some positive and others negative. We shall therefore define the topics, which are reasonable for a co-operation within the EGU. The airspace is a declining resource for glider pilots and the commercial traffic could threaten the air sports activities in the future.

The growth in air traffic is not a European issue compared to the far east. Domestic flights are in fact declining in some countries, because business people use Skype instead of physical meetings. That brings up the question if airspaces have to be kept at their present size. It is not likely, that the NAA’s will take the initiative to reduce controlled airspace. We must try to initiate such a reduction. On the other hand, the impact of drones and unmanned airborne vehicles will be vast, but it is not totally foreseeable now. But drones are not the only challenge.

Glider pilots access to airspace with no or low restrictions will be the main purpose for the EAG-work in the future. It is therefore important to bring such airspace issues into the work within the EAG to ensure results, which can be used in all member countries. Success in one country can lead to success in other countries. We can help each other, and no EGU-member should struggle alone. EGU is here to assist.

Habbo Brune from Germany showed an interesting statistic from the DAeC comparing air sport flying with commercial air traffic from 2017. There were 3,15 mio air sport flights and 1,80 mio airline flights below FL100. Gliders and motor

gliders were about 1 mio of the 3,15 mio flights. The air sport activities are significant compared to commercial traffic, and gliders and motor gliders make a great part of these activities. The gliding community should therefore be heard.

Germany has introduced the “TMZ-H” within airspace E, which means TMZ with listening watch. By squawking a specified code pilots indicate that they are monitoring a corresponding RADAR frequency, without getting in contact actively. If the controller wants to talk to the pilot, he can call him on the frequency, as he can see the callsign on the radar by the mode-S squawk. TMZ give much more airspace and do not require clearance. This could be an idea to be followed by other countries.

High-altitude glider areas have been established in Norway and Sweden up to FL280 from FL95. They are categorized as Danger-areas. You must have a transponder to fly in these areas, but as soon as you are there you are being asked to turn off the transponder! So gliders have to be upgraded with costly equipment they will not use afterwards, just to satisfy requirements for a certain airspace class. It make no sense.

The attendants decided to work on the demand for a border crossing flight plan for gliders. We have the Schengen countries on the ground. We should have the same in the air. Niklas Eriksson and Habbo Brune will work with this topic, and the EGU can raise the matter in EASA.

Flow of information between Airspace users and NAA

The collaboration between NAA’s and the airport is very different in the EGU countries. In Sweden there was an example, where the airspace for a minor regional airport had been expanded without consulting the local gliding clubs. The local authorities had made this expansion to satisfy Ryanair as an operator at the airport. Ryanair had – however – never asked for an expansion of the airspace. There was no help from the NAA, and the result would probably be a close down of a gliding club.

Airspace must according to EASA-rules be risk based, but some countries is far away from Brussels and think: “The more control – the safer it is”. But is this statement true? By expanding controlled airspace the uncontrolled airspace is being narrowed, and this could in fact make safety problems without controlled airspace.

Neil Goudie from UK told about the British approach to airspace matters. The air sports federations in the UK have made a partnership with the airspace work in the General Aviation Alliance and succeeded in creating a political interest on this matter from APPG (All Party Parliamentary Group on General Aviation). That might be an example to be followed by other countries.

Initiative on the allocation of 20 ‘8.33 kHz’ frequencies for common use

Francois van Haaff has already asked local authorities for 20 frequencies purely for gliding in Europe, and the request was not rejected. The wish is, that communication on these frequencies should also be possible with a R/T license Light. EGU should be able to administrate the allocation of these frequencies. Francois van Haaff asked the attendants to bring this topic up in their own countries with the NAA and telecommunication authorities. Sweden has just received 25 frequencies with 25 kHz separation especially for gliding, and Sweden will support the idea of the 20 frequencies, but will not push for it, because it could jeopardize the 25 frequencies, that they already have.

Accessibility to Airspace by Sailplanes

Airspace with no or low restrictions is already a rare resource in some member countries, and soon drones and unmanned flying aircraft will demand their share of the airspace. In this case “see and avoid” is not possible, and “sense and avoid” needs equipment. ADS-B is the solution in USA and Australia, but the drone community will probably be coming up with a solution based on the 5G-network to prevent one drone colliding with another to fall down on people. Such equipment must probably be certified and could also be used in an glider. In the near future we will quite surely see gadgets based on 5G-network being able to do the same as an ADS-B. Habbo Brune presented a possible solution – echoUAT (EUR 840) and SkyEcho (EUR 670), but at the moment these systems operate on frequencies, which are not allowed in Europe.

If gliders are equipped with transponder, ADS-B or other systems ensuring separation from other aircraft, could that be the way to get more airspace. USA have given subventions to aircraft owners who installed ADS-B. They did that to improve conditions for commercial aviation and

to do so you also have to support the leisure aviation. This question of subvention should be a topic for EGU and for EAS.

Conspicuity will be a “game-changer”. The airspace cannot be designed in the same way in the future, as it is now. EGU will try to influence the process.

The next EAG-meeting will take place in November/December 2019.



The EGU is the association of European Gliding Federations or Gliding Sections of National Aero Clubs.

Its aim is to represent the interests of all glider pilots in Europe with respect to regulatory affairs.

EGU monitors the developments in European aviation regulation and when necessary, takes action to prevent unfavourable or even dangerous rules affecting our sport from being set up.

The EGU currently counts 20 full members and represents more than 80,000 glider pilots

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