



## Issue 5 - October 2019

### Tug Upsets

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I am sure you have seen the CFI's and Safety Officer's recent posts and read the BGA guidance about tug upsets. But here is a reminder anyway.

Tug upset reports to the BGA were evenly spread over 2009-2019 with about 3 per year. However, 2018 had 4 upset incidents and in 2019 there have been 5 so far. **2 of these (That's 22%) have been at Portmoak!**

Some of these are possibly due to the increased use of lighter tugs, which are more susceptible to glider movements.

The BGAs key messages are shown here. Also, have a look at the safe aerotowing leaflet at

<https://members.gliding.co.uk/bga-safety-management/safe-aerotowing/>

*If you are inexperienced, do not aerotow on a belly hook and do not aerotow in turbulent conditions.*

*Maintain the correct vertical position of the tug in the canopy. Do not allow the glider to get too high.*

*If you are too low behind the tug shortly after the tug take off, or at any other time, move back into position SLOWLY. Being lower than the tug is not dangerous. An upset can follow if you pull up quickly.*

*Release immediately if the glider is going high and the tendency cannot be controlled, or you lose sight of the tug.*

*Fly the glider! Leave any potentially distracting problems with instrumentation or ventilation until after release. Leave the undercarriage down.*

*At release height, is it clear? Pull the release, visually ensure the rope has separated from the glider, and raise the nose slightly before making a turn.*

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### Launches from the West End

Due to the rise of the ground at the west end, the pilot ready to launch may be unable to see a glider that has landed ahead on the centre strip.

The winch driver and launch point signaller will have the best view in this situation.

If uncertain - don't assume the pilot is happy without asking. If there is any doubt at all about

the position of a landed glider the winch driver and/or the signaller (at least one of whom must be able to see) must query the launch and not proceed unless the instructor confirms it's ok to go ahead.

## Importance of recording Incidents

A little story why it is important to record an incident.

Recently a tuggie experienced a sudden jolt just before landing. It turned out the towrope had gone through the field at the north end of the north field and picked up a large clump of grass and debris. It was recorded in Flysafe and the pilot made sure to be higher on the approach in future, in order to get the rope over the fence.

When I discussed this with some other tug pilots it turned out this had happened to at least 4 other pilots in the past, but they just either ignored it or decided to approach higher in future.

If all these incidents had been logged, we

would have noticed a trend and warn all tug pilots to be careful when approaching diagonally into the north field and be high enough to get the rope over the fence.

Luckily these incidents only resulted in frights for the tug pilots, but they could have been avoided earlier.

So please, if something happens to you or you see something that could lead to an accident, even if there is no damage to glider or pilot, record it in Flysafe. This way we can spot any trends and where appropriate change procedures to avoid future accidents.

<https://flysafe.scottishglidingcentre.com>

## What3Words

Ever had difficulties describing to the retrieve team where you landed out? Or even worse explaining it to the emergency services when you had an accident?

There is an app for your mobile that is gaining popularity and is now also used by ambulance services and mountain rescue. It's called **What3Words** and divides the whole world into 3m squares, giving each a unique name using just 3 words. It's easier than finding and communicating GPS coordinates. If you are given 3 words, you can type them in and it shows you the location on the map.

I recommend everyone download this app on your phone and use it if you have landed out or need assistance somewhere. Make sure the language is set to English (UK).



By the way, the office is at

<https://what3words.com/geese.lease.producers>

## Staying current during Winter

With winter approaching and the weather even worse than it was during the summer, most of you won't venture out to fly very often. But remember, it's worthwhile to stay current during the winter. Go flying regularly, even if it is just a circuit in a club glider while your own is safely tucked up in the trailer or hangar.

Check the BGA's currency chart and take a checkflight if you haven't flown for a while.

