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D. Cross Country Flying

For many pilots cross country flying is the epitome of the sport with the thrill of the challenge to get you and your glider successfully around a task or take an adventurous flight into the hills and glens of Scotland.

Experienced pilots at this level are self-authorising, self-briefing and relatively independent. Pilots new to cross-country flying should follow the requirements in Currency and Privileges.

D.1 Preparation

- Airspace – please use a moving map with the latest airspace information loaded (using ASSelect for example) and carry a current CAA chart for your proposed flight – mark up your intended route. Be familiar with the airspace notes in this manual.
- NOTAMs must be checked – relevant ones can be marked up on your chart or downloaded to your moving map.
- Notification – use the launch point log sheets to record your intended route whether it is a pre-declared task (e.g. PCS-LOM-BAC-PCS) or even just a vague notion of where you might go (e.g. “Loch Tay area”).
- Radios – it is strongly recommended to have a working radio for general soaring awareness, contacting airfields or Scottish Information/Control, and in the case of a field landing. The usual channel to use when away from Portmoak is 130.105.
- Be aware of the forecast end of soaring and the time of sunset.

D.2 Survival

As cross-country flying from Portmoak can take you over remote, sparsely populated areas with no mobile phone reception, pilots should carry survival gear as per the BGA/EASA requirements. As a minimum you should carry/wear a personal locator beacon (PLB) or have an ELT fitted to your glider and consider:

- Signalling equipment e.g. a high intensity light
- Survival equipment e.g. survival blanket/bag, basic first aid kit, food, drink, warm clothing, etc.

Following a normal field landing one of your first priorities is to let someone know where you are and what assistance you need. This can be done by mobile phone or, if there is no service, use the glider radio to contact other gliders on the gliding frequencies or other GA aircraft on, say, Scottish Information (119.875 or 127.275). Airliners monitor 121.500 and will be able to relay a message if necessary. If that doesn’t work see if there are farms or houses nearby to walk to for assistance. Or walk up a nearby hill to try and get a phone signal. Consider registering your phone with the 999 text service so that you can use this in an emergency. If you cannot contact the office or duty instructor directly **leave a message on the answerphone (01592 840543)**, as this will be checked before calling the emergency services.

Another possibility is to carry a satellite tracking and communications device (e.g. a Garmin inReach

Mini) which can send pre-programmed text messages with your GPS location to designated contacts. These devices can also provide live tracking and can send an SOS to initiate a search and rescue response just like a PLB.

Note that activating a PLB will trigger a full-blown search and rescue response – potentially embarrassing to say the least if you are stood uninjured by your perfectly serviceable glider on a sunny but unsoarable afternoon in a remote Scottish glen!

If you are injured or the situation looks like it's going to deteriorate to a point where some form of rescue will be needed e.g. late on a cold winter's day, then use the PLB.

Obviously use the PLB if you have parachuted out of your glider!

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