

## Topic of the month: June 2026

### Canopies

Over the years a number of gliders have lost their canopies, both in flight and on the ground. Having a canopy open in flight can be very disconcerting, cause damage and potentially result in a crash. Internationally there was a recent fatal incident caused by a canopy opening in flight.

#### Daily Inspections

Ensure you examine hinges locking pins and their anchorage points. Check for cracks and movement in the canopy frame, hinges or fuselage where there shouldn't be any. Check that locking mechanisms work properly and that there is reasonable stiffness in the locking action.

Make sure the canopy is clean.

#### Control confusion

Check and be aware of any possibility of mistakenly operating a canopy release lever instead of some other control lever such as an airbrake, undercarriage or fuel control knob. Make sure clothing gloves or sleeves in particular can't inadvertently catch a canopy release lever.

#### Pre Flight Checks

Different gliders have different canopy locking mechanisms. Make sure you are familiar with the mechanism on your glider. Some glider types (e.g. Vega) may require a helper to check the canopy is locked.

**During your checks never forget the check that your canopy is closed and locked**

As wing runner, it's always useful to keep an eye on the pilot to ensure if the canopy and brakes are locked before hooking the glider on. If in doubt, ask the pilot if they are sure that their canopy is locked.

#### Canopy Opening in flight

Serious incidents have been the result of pilots trying to hold or close the canopy in flight when it suddenly opened. Of course, it is very disconcerting having the canopy opening in flight. However, always remember: **Aviate First**. While it is tempting to deal with the canopy, if you are on tow or low, forget about the canopy and concentrate on a safe landing.

Safe Flying

Wolf