



Instructor and Coach **NEWSLETTER**

Welcome to the Autumn edition of the Instructor and Coach Newsletter, the weather outside is the worst it's been for a long time so we think it's safe to say Autumn is most definitely here!

Response to the Spring edition was mixed, people we spoke to that had read it said it was good and contained some informative articles. On the other hand, there was little response to the request for feedback (both positive or negative) from instructors and coaches regarding the instructional and coaching set up.

We can only assume that either nobody read the spring issue or, that you all think the current system is great and there are no problems!

We do need feedback and all relevant comments will be brought to the attention of the FSC, you have the opportunity to influence the FSC, please use it!

Please send all contributions/suggestions/articles/letters to:-

Email: dave-thompson@bhpa.co.uk (please send attached files as "text")

Fax: 01792 - 280941

snail mail: Dave Thompson, 13a Sketty Avenue, Swansea, SA2 0TE.

THE EXAMINATION AND INSPECTION PANEL

There have been a number of notices in both Skywings and previous editions of the IC News Letter regarding common deficiencies in candidates for instructor examinations.

Feedback from examiners indicates that the most common cause for failure this year has, yet again, been the result of lack of confirmation and little or no use of question and answer technique.

All too often candidates assume a student has understood instructions or explanations, without actually confirming this to be the case. This can lead to potentially fatal outcomes hence the importance placed on this area by examiners.

The only safe way for an instructor to confirm understanding is to use good question and

answer technique. Ask leading questions until you are satisfied that the student really does understand. It is very dangerous to assume that 'they got it right therefore they must have understood.'

It is the duty of the CFI and his/her senior staff to ensure that candidates for examination are up to the required standard. Any failures can only be a reflection on them.

It is therefore important that CFIs put candidates through a mock exam in order to spot weaknesses before the examination and correct them. CFIs who do not put their TIs through a mock exam will be expected to explain why!

FROM THE AIRSPACE PANEL

Aviation Charts

The CAA have issued two new half-million (1:500 000) ICAO charts:

Sheet 2171CD Southern England and Wales Edition 23

Sheet 2150 ABCD Scotland, Orkney and Shetland Edition 18

(Edition 20 of Sheet 2171AB - Northern England and Northern Ireland can be expected sometime this autumn).

A totally new series of CAA quarter-million (1:250 000) topographical charts is also making its appearance. Each now covers a greater area than before, hence reducing the number of charts required to cover the United Kingdom from eighteen to eight. This should result in a greater print run for each sheet, keeping the unit cost down. The first of these new 1:250 000 charts is to be England South (should hopefully have been available from July), and the next which is to be Central England and Wales should be available early in November.

All UK aviation charts are available from Westward Digital Ltd (recently appointed by CAA as the UK's chart distributor) by telephoning 01242 235151 or from usual stockists and flying clubs.

Ridge Rage, Air Law and YOUR Responsibilities

By now I hope you will all have read the article about Ridge Rage on page 10 of the August edition of Skywings Magazine. Let me remind you that as Instructors and Coaches you all have a responsibility to ensure that all those in your charge understand this particular topic (amongst others). You should of course also be informing and teaching less experienced pilots by example.

Perhaps the most important rule mentioned in the article is "an aircraft shall not be flown in such proximity to other aircraft as to create a danger of collision" - this means no aggressive flying, no trying to hog the lift band at the cost of other pilots, no forcing other pilots out of thermals etc. (I could go on and on!!)

Lets all try and fly safely and sensibly together sharing the airspace. Lets encourage all other pilots to do the same. If we are seen by the regulatory authorities to be unable to effectively educate and control our own members then there is always a danger that perhaps they will do it for us - that could spell disaster for our sport !!!

TOWING PANEL COORDINATOR: TONY WEBB

Sun, Sea and Sangria!

In Lanzarote this year there were an enormous amount of 'first times' for all the new CPs as usual. It was refreshing to see lots of new faces from different parts of the country. The standard of flying witnessed was good with everybody having a great time. The good times were had on the hill till dark and then a short siesta before clubbing till dawn. These Hang Glider pilots are made of sterner stuff than us middle aged types that need their seven hours KIP. I guess there is no harm in burning it at both ends as long as there's 8 hours between bottle and base bar.

Lanzarote has a very different visual scale to our familiar English terrain. Therefore instructors coaching newly qualified pilots should be

aware of this fundamental difference and help them appreciate Lanzarote features. The other fundamental to bear in mind is the fatigue from partying all night. It is normally OK as those who have over done it spend a good deal of time sleeping in the car on the top of the hill before committing aviation.

When teaching at home I have found that some students will turn up for training with enormous hangovers, something to do with nerves they tell me. We as tutors have to suss this out for our selves. It is a delicate art to discover the sobriety of your potential flyers, and, as a CFI, that of your staff!!!

Tony Webb

Hang Glider (hill) Tethering, A Tip from Towing?

An instructor was introducing a new chap to Hang Gliding using a traditionally accepted method of tethering, i.e., ropes to the wings held by students. The instructor has the nose rope and the lower rope usually tied to the base-bar. The student is asked to push the bar out a little in order to keep the glider airborne. Now I think this is counter productive because the student will believe for a long time that to make a hang glider fly one needs to push the bar out. When I spoke to the instructor about this method I do not believe he understood what I was on about. He said that all he was doing was giving the chap a taste of what hang gliding was about. Well if this fellow ever continued to learn to fly the first thing the instructor would

have to do would be establish that this chap thought he had to push the bar out to fly. If the instructor was fortunate enough to discover this information before take off then some reprogramming could be achieved. The student in question's first experience of Hang Gliding was wrong BIG TIME.

Back to tethering and giving the right impression. Using a tip from towing it would give a better impression of flying if the lower rope were attached to the pilots hip position on the harness and not the base bar. This gives the instructor all the control necessary but allows the glider to fly like a glider rather than a dragkite. Any retorts to the above would be appreciated.

TONY WEBB Flexwing Training

TRAINING AND COACHING

The Brits Abroad

It has been brought to our attention that the standard of British paraglider pilots attending SIV and Cross Country courses overseas has declined over the last few years.

There have been two main areas of concern, the first being pilots inability to perform an 'Alpine' or 'forward' launch, the second their inability to make an accurate approach to a landing field.

The former was probably predictable as once out of school alpine launches are not frequently practised. With the amount of pilots flying abroad now schools could put more emphasis on alpine launches and the need to practice them especially if a foreign trip is planned. Schools are reminded that students should be proficient in all launch methods before gaining their Club Pilot licence.

The latter was perhaps less predictable yet no more difficult to address. The problem appears to be that pilots with no alpine experience and little UK cross country experience find it difficult to plan a landing when looking down at the landing field from 3000 ft. The problem is exaggerated when valley winds, power lines, rivers and busy roads etc. are brought into the equation.

Pilots must be made aware that accurate landings come after accurate approaches and the best way to achieve this is to lose height and assess drift upwind of the landing area followed by a down wind leg, a base leg then final glide into land. When was the last time you saw a jumbo jet doing 'S Turns' at the end of the runway at Heathrow? It's up to the instructors and club coaches to get this across to students and pilots though it can be a difficult thing to practice with insufficient altitude although not impossible given the right conditions.

ACCIDENT? PREVENTION? AND? MEDICAL? PANEL

WHAT IS AN ACCIDENT?

Before any action can be taken to prevent accidents, it is essential to understand what is meant by the word.

An accident to many people is associated with injuries; in fact to such an extent that in common usage the words "accident" and "injury" are considered by some to be synonymous.

However, in order to understand accident prevention techniques, it is important to appreciate that injuries or damage to equipment/property is the **RESULT OF AN ACCIDENT OCCURRING!**

In some circumstances, something may go wrong, but if there is no positive result such as an injury or damage, it often goes unnoticed or is given no attention. Such an event is nonetheless an accident, albeit that there was no consequence,- e.g. "an airmiss." It is essential therefore, to find a more precise definition of an accident, rather than a vague concept that almost invariably is related to the consequences.

We need to ask the following questions:-

Was an action taken, or an occurrence, or a situation

- 1. NORMAL?
- 2. EXPECTED?
- 3. PLANNED?

If the answer to any of these questions is negative, then there has been a deviation or, in other words, **AN ACCIDENT!** Therefore any accident may be defined as an incident which may or may not have resulted in injury, damage or both - or have had no consequence at all. It is worth noting that the consequences of accidents are not necessarily immediate.

THE ONLY CURE IS PREVENTION

All accidents have a cause. They are either the result of:-

UNSAFE ACTS or UNSAFE CONDITIONS or ACTS OF GOD.

We have no control over the latter, (though some people believe they can effect some sort of influence here, but that's another issue altogether) but we can do something about the former.

UNSAFE ACTS

These stem mainly from ignorance. The pilot made a mistake! How often does this occur? But **WHY** did he make a mistake? The answer probably lies in his background, either at home, his education or his training - his experience (or lack of it), or his personal habits, ie. his attitude.

UNSAFE CONDITIONS

By this we do not mean weather conditions, but it includes such factors as unsafe equipment, or in other words, Airworthiness. Do not confuse poor equipment maintenance, errors in equipment assembly (e.g. reserve parachutes packed incorrectly) or poor choice or meteorological conditions in which to fly, as examples of Unsafe Conditions. Such errors clearly come under the heading of Unsafe Acts.

So we can now identify four steps leading up to the accident:-

BACKGROUND

FAULT OF THE PERSON

UNSAFE CONDITIONS

UNSAFE ACTS

Our concern must be to investigate the reasons for this pattern of events, which, if not checked at the correct point in the sequence, invariably leads to an accident followed by some sort of injury.

So what is the correct point? Where do we attack this sequence at its most vulnerable stage in order to influence the outcome?

BACKGROUND?

FAULT OF THE PERSON?

NO! We can do nothing about a persons back-ground, nor can we standardise human nature.

However, what about the other two.

UNSAFE CONDITIONS

Here we are looking at canopy certification and its suitability for our level of ability. Have we had it checked annually, and has it become porous? On the hang glider, are the luff line lengths within spec?, and what are the batten profiles?

UNSAFE ACTS?

The major contributory factors to these are:-

1. MENTAL ATTITUDE

It is not suggested for one moment that the term "mental" refers to a state of lunacy, but lack of power of concentration is within the term of failure of person, and in this sense constitutes a mental attitude. Personal disposition or attitude to the Sport is a very strong factor in performance; a person may be over confident, impulsive or afraid: he may like showing off, taking unnecessary risks, or he may be suffering some temporary disposition. All these traits can impair a person's normally stable reaction to a situation.

2. SUPERVISORY FAILURE

This heading covers lack of "learning" in the case of the qualified pilot. Brought about by inadequate initial training; bad habits which were never corrected during initial training, or those which have been picked up since leaving the school environment.

The average person can usually see the cause, can suggest a remedy, and often holds the remedy himself.

This indicates that the greatest factor is the human one, and that

the war against accidents must be fought in peoples minds.

1st Aid Courses:

The FSC would like to remind all instructors that it is their responsibility to maintain a current 1st aid certificate. Courses recognised by the FSC are as follows:

Public First Aid.

Health and Safety Executive Statutory Course (industry and commerce).

Military First Aid Course (only accepted for military personnel).

Bangor Scheme of Mountain 1st Aid.

Revised Alpine 1st Aid Scheme for Fell/Mountain Walkers.

All of the above courses are valid for three years and take from 2 - 4 days to complete (some may be attended over a period of evenings), they all involve an external examination. Prices vary so shop around.

Organisations to contact:

England	St Johns Ambulance Association
Scotland	St Andrews Association
Wales	St John, Priory for Wales
UK	British Red Cross Society

Numbers for all the above can be found in the telephone directory or via directory enquiries.

For information on specific courses in your area contact the Health and Safety Executive information line on 0541 - 545500

It may be worth noting that the FSC are considering changing the minimum requirement to that of the Health and Safety At Work 1st Aid Certificate.

Accidents in Schools

The following are summaries of accidents that have occurred in schools during May and June of this year. The dictionary definition of the word 'accident' is as follows: "an unforeseen event or one without apparent cause. An event occurring by chance." I would suggest that none of the incidents below occurred through pure chance or were without cause which would indicate that they were avoidable.

It is imperative that all instructors and TIs remain vigilant in their assessing of students and that briefings are appropriate and completely understood by all.

97/079

Male, aged 26, weight 75kg	Paragliding	EP rating
Glider: Falhawk Atoll	Wind: 5-10 mph, Thermic	
Injury: Broken R/Wrist, Cut Eyebrow, Minor, Hospital treatment		
Date: 25/05/97	Site: Pennyclod	

Student briefed to fly straight top to bottom (test flying new wing at school). After TO, soaring flight attempted but control input too aggressive and uncoordinated. Landing approach made too low over boundary, sink experienced. Attempt to tighten turn, glider entered spin at 45ft agl. Ground Impact near tree.

97/082

Male, aged 34, weight 72 kg	Paragliding	Novice rating
Glider: Trekking Thermic	Wind: 5-10 mph, Variable/Thermic	
Injury: Frac Tib/Frac Foot, Moderate, Hospital treatment		
Date: 25/05/97	Site: Hay Bluff	

Student Briefed. Completed non assisted alpine launch with gentle turn-left. After 50m started r/turn encountering gentle lift, maintained course until parallel with slope. Ignored Instructor shouts to turn left, flew on no alteration to course, hit large rock feet first.

97/089

Male, aged 72, weight 13st7lb	Paragliding	EP rating
Glider: Airwave Black Magic	Wind: 5-10 mph, Steady	
Injury: Suspected Back, Hospital treatment		
Date: 04/06/97	Site: Steyning Bowl	

Brief - Reverse inflation, hold canopy above head, when clear take off & T/right to land on slope. Instructions completed student flew along slope, no attempt to slow down, shouted instruction not followed, student impacted slope.

97/093

Male, aged 55, weight 73kg	Paragliding	Novice rating
Glider: Commit Spudnik	Wind: 5-10 mph, Steady	
Date: 26/05/97	Site: Steyning Bowl	

Completed several morning flights, lunch break. Afternoon, change in wind direction to a SW 10mph S/breeze. Student briefed on flight. Flew out to approx 10ft ATO drifted left, upon landing fell over.

97/098

Male, aged ?, weight 95kg

Paragliding

Novice rating

Glider: Edel Corvette

Wind: 0-5 mph, Steady

Injury: Sore foot, Minor

Date: 31/05/97

Site: Hillend W.End

First days training, first 2 flights OK. During third flight stuck feet out to avoid a low small bough, flare not good landing in semi PLF.

97/103

Male, aged 32

Hang gliding

Novice rating

Glider: Hiway Stubby

Wind: 10-15 mph, Steady

Injury: Dislocated Elbow, Minor, Hospital treatment

Date: 12/06/97

Site: Hill Farm

Had already completed high flights and broad turns v/well, no problems. Brief 2nd circuit, high flight l/hand circuit flight landing near centre of field. Took off to do same circuit't as before but appeared to slow at 25' into wind for no apparent reason, stalled.

97/108

Male, aged 32, weight 95kg

Paragliding

Novice rating

Glider: Edel Atlas

Wind: 0-5 mph, Steady

Injury: Twisted Ankle, Minor

Date: 16-06-97

Site: Hillend

Near perfect conditions, student briefed to forward launch, gently turn left then right. Straighten on approach and land. Canopy inflated and overshot, tucked. Shouted instruction to stop obeyed before hill got very steep, but twisted ankle on stopping.

97/109

Female, aged 29, weight 61kg

Paragliding

EP rating

Glider: Trekking Thermic

Wind: 5-10 mph, Variable

Injury: Sprained Ankle, Minor

Date: 15/06/97

Site: Radnor Forest

Training Top to Bottom flights. Briefed to fly out from T/O with beats up & down ridge turning into wind well AGL to complete final glide to landing spot. Executed well, but failed to notice w/direction change on land/approach. Attempted turn into wind not enough .Flared tried to runoff speed.

97/110

Male, aged 42, weight 90kg

Paragliding

Novice rating

Glider: Firebird Marlin

Wind: 0-5 mph, Variable

Injury: Sore foot/side/arm, Minor

Date: 17/06/97

Site: Whiteside

Brief - On site & Assess technique. To Alpine launch out from hill, turn R & land into wind. Student launched into light wind and sat in harness to soon, canopy overflew and tucked one side dragging student s/ways, half running & falling to a stop.

97/111

Female, aged 23, weight 75kg

Paragliding

Novice rating

Glider: Harley New Wave

Wind: 0-5 mph, Variable

Injury: Severe Bruising L/Back & Pelvis, Minor, Hospital treatment

Date: 15/06/97

Site: Cwm Maen Gwynedd

1st flight of 2nd day. Brief - straight flight to practice correct brake position in flight. Good Alpine Assisted launch but pulled on full brake both sides as feet left ground and released again as seat hit ground, canopy overflew pulling student f/ward rolling into & over rock

97/112

Male, aged 33, weight 12st7lb

Hang gliding

Novice rating

Glider: Hiway Stubby

Wind: 0-5 mph, Steady

Injury: Swollen Ankle, Minor

Date: 13/06/97

Site: Woldingham

Briefed throughout day on take off & landing techniques also airspeed. No mishaps during the days training. A 'phone call received 2 days later suggested a swollen ankle was probably caused on landing that day.

97/118

Male, aged 37, weight 74kg

Paragliding

EP rating

Glider: Firebird N-Joy

Wind: 0-5 mph, Steady

Injury: Sprained Ankle, Minor, Hospital treatment

Date: 05/06/97

Site: Salmas (Germany)

Brief - Fly out into valley, lose height o/landing field & set up for landing. Successful launch but not enough speed, canopy collapsed, suffered front/collapse causing pilot to trip and fall down slope.

97/119

Male, aged ?, weight 14st4lbs

Paragliding

Novice rating

Glider: Edel Apollo

Wind: 5-10 mph, Steady

Injury: Suspected Broken Femur, Moderate, Hospital treatment

Date: 16/06/97

Site: Steyning Bowl

Brief - Take off & follow directions from Instructor at bottom landing. As instructed did a left then right turn but continued r/turn instead of turning left as indicated by Instructor. Facing slope student appeared to panic, no avoiding action taken.

97/120

Male, aged 27, weight 13st

Paragliding

Novice rating

Glider: Airwave Black Magic

Wind: 5-10 mph, steady

Injury: Sprained left ankle, Minor

Date: 26/05/97

Site: Compton Bowl

Brief - Forward launch for straight flight, flare on landing. Failed to flare and tripped on low scrub and fell.

INSTRUCTOR ? AND ? COACH ? TRAINING ? PANEL

Risk Assessment

Although our advice to those who have been approached by external bodies requiring confirmation of such a policy is to quote the Technical Manual (Section 1 Chapter 4) as satisfying the principle through experience gained over some 30 years, it is nevertheless common sense to take it a stage further in your operations. Every day, and throughout the day, Duty Instructors and Tow Coaches should continually assess those areas where risk is concentrated; equipment, conditions, site hazards, communications (between everyone) and, of course, the biggest risk area - the student. Whenever there is a change the instructor must ask 'Has the risk to anyone increased - if so, what can I do to reduce it?'. And discussion with others is a very good sign of a professional approach. (Call Tom Beardsley if you need advice on risk assessment policy)

Technical Manual

All TIs, Instructors and Senior Tow Coaches should have received Amendment 03 and incorporated it into the TM. PLEASE NOTE - enter into the Amendment Record Sheet : Amendment 02 "NOT ISSUED" and date it October 1st 1997.

The omission was an error on our part and this is the simplest way to avoid any confusion.

There was also an error in Amendment 03 - the new Appendix G in Section 1 Chapter 5 actually has "Chapter 13" printed in the top right hand corner of all pages; this is obviously wrong and should be corrected.

Appointing Assessors

It was very disturbing to hear of an Assessor being appointed within several days of becoming qualified himself - closer scrutiny showed it wasn't an isolated case! The Chief Examiner insists that CFIs and Chief Coaches take a highly professional approach when appointing Assessors - not least is choosing someone who has 'extensive' experience practically and has also been used to train those seeking similar licences. Only when this foundation is achieved should anyone be considered as able to assess and qualify others. The Chief Examiner does not

relish the thought of imposing minimum standards or having to carry out spot checks - those responsible for appointing assessors are asked to double check the competency of current and future candidates. Don't forget that the appointment should be recorded in the Instructor Log Book (or Flight Log Book in the case of Dual Pilots).

Operating outside your licence:

There have been two recent incidents involving dual paraglider flights, both resulting in injury and both pilots being unlicensed. A student has also been injured when receiving instruction when the school was also operating well outside the accepted practices. Just the sort of situation that compensation barristers love and insurance companies walk away from.

The whole point of the licensing system is to ensure that pilots/instructors receive the appropriate training so that they are mentally and physically equipped to fly and instruct safely. If you try to shortcut the normal procedures and injury results, then the reason for the licensing system becomes crystal clear. Rules and procedures are not dreamed up to further the cause of beaurocracy, they are formulated after hours of consultation with those at the leading edge of the sport and are intended to make the activity as safe as possible. That you also stay out of hospital and coroners courts can be seen as a bonus.

The Technical Manual provides the definitive procedures for operating within an acceptable framework. If this is not adhered to then your insurance cover may become void and your personal assets could become part of any compensation claim.

Stick to the Technical Manual and protect your house!

HANG GLIDING AND PARAGLIDING EXAM PAPERS

At the time of going to press the following are the reference numbers of the current exam papers:-

HANG GLIDING

EP	ref.	T87 & T88 (2 papers)
CP	ref.	T89
XCPC (P)	ref.	11/91
AP	ref.	11/91

PARAGLIDING

EP	ref.	T52(2)-10/91
CP	ref.	CP97A-01/97
P	ref.	T51(2)-10/91
AP	ref.	T41(2)-04/93

The correct answer foils carry the same reference number as the question paper, eg, paragliding CP answer ref. = CP97A-01/97.

Please check that your papers are current and look out for updates. Contact the office if you have any problems.

Instructor Log Book Requirements

While the standard of school records has on the whole improved it has been noted that instructors can be a bit lax when it comes to filling their own logs.

It is a requirement for all pilots to make a log of their flights and hours etc. In addition to this instructors are required to make a log of their instructional experience. This is important as it provides a record of currency at the time of licence renewals and also when applying for licence extensions or further instructor licenses, eg when applying for a senior instructor licence. Instructors will be required to provide both personal flying and instructional log books in the case of an inspection or interim inspection.

Renewing Licences

Any Licensed Member who wishes to renew his or her licence simply needs to prove that they are current and then, usually, obtain a relevant countersignature.

The criteria for proving currency is left to the CFIs judgment - levels of activity, for instance, vary widely, but we have a clear responsibility to the students to make sure all instructors are 'up to speed'. Unbelievably, there have been instances where CFIs have signed renewal supports without even seeing the instructor (or worse, a TI) for some time - in a few cases since last year! We feel some strong guidance is necessary and offer the following advice to the CFI :

1. Involve your SIs when considering Instructor renewals;
2. Involve all Instructors when considering TI renewals;
3. Use a similar approach when looking at Operator and Dual Pilot Licences;
4. Check Instructor Log Books for training currency in all Training Exercises;
5. Check Pilot Log Books for flying currency;
6. Check Operator Logs;
7. Check 1st Aid Certificates for validity;
8. Make certain that at least one member of the team has observed and consciously evaluated the Licensee's performance;
9. It is more important that Licensees has been observed recently; if they haven't been since the beginning of the season (even if they have put their time in) then they should not be regarded as current.
10. Don't forget that SIs need the same approach.

Finally, remember that CFIs are representing the FSC; we expect you to set a high standard when you are approached for support; there is also the point that your instructor team deserve to be treated in a professional manner - it helps to build that all important mutual respect.

Where the buck stops

An alarming response was received from a CFI who was being interviewed about a serious incident; "I delegate everything to my Instructors, including responsibility - although I was there it is nothing to do with me". Right as far as delegation goes; this is positive management.

WRONG from the responsibility angle; that was negative management. It is your team and you selected them to maintain your standards (and those of the FSC). You cannot accept the plaudits that comes with success but duck the issue when faced with failure.

Tow Releases - parascending

This matter (old Aerolex defects versus newer alternatives) deserves a paragraph although there isn't really the room to go into detail - those who have been upset or surprised by the move have received explanations from TB. What matters is that the grass roots have set their minds to the problem and are offering solutions - this is exactly what was intended, as opposed to the issuing of an edict by the FSC. To correct one misconception, equipment testing and approval lies in the hands of the Airworthiness Panel; the defect has been known for over 25

years and we must move on. Clive Robinson has tested most types of quick release (some others have been received for test as a result of this exercise); to date all have passed to varying degrees with the sole exception of the older Aerolex which failed dramatically.

To clarify the FSC situation - this unit will be banned; the plan is to phase it out, vehicle end first (by November 1st '97) followed by pilot end (by April 1st 1998). Some financial support has been agreed and the clubs informed.

Please keep evaluating new ideas and continually assess the performance of units in use - report all incidents so that a track record can be built up. Before making any major modifications or introducing an entirely new and untested unit please contact Tom Beardsley to discuss tests and proving trials.

We must take this opportunity to scotch the reactionary response that this was a plot to close down all parascending clubs - these are an essential part of the sport and the very positive initiatives which have come out of the discipline to increase its profile and image over the past couple of years have been well received and fully supported by the Association. On the other hand, it has to be said that some of the obstinate and destructive criticism from a small minority has left the FSC, in particular, less moved.

USING A TI

Following on from the guidelines given in Issue 2 it is clear that Instructors need to gain experience with TIs during their own training towards Senior Instructor. To allow this to happen a TI may be used to help an Instructor (rather than a Senior Instructor) providing :

- a) the TI is signed off for the Training Exercise being taught;
- b) the Instructor has been signed off to supervise TIs
- c) the total number of students does not exceed 8
- d) All the students must be under the direct supervision of the Instructor (the TI cannot have a separate group).

'Signing off' means a legible CFI signed entry in the relevant Instructor Log Book. For TIs this is entered in the Instructor Training Record section; to sign off an Instructor to supervise TIs the CFI will need to use his initiative and find a space - we suggest using a red pen to distinguish it. The Technical Manual Section 1, Chapter 2, Appendix C, Example 3c) refers.

Tom Beardsley; Mark Dale; Bernard Kane

LAPSED MEMBER SURVEY

You'll have seen (?) the report in Skywings and no doubt the comment that lots of commenters were received which were detrimental to instructors and schools. It's only fair that we should pass on those comments without, of course, identifying either party, so here are a few which we're sure you'll recognise:

"Why can't they have an answerphone message to say it's cancelled instead of making us drive all the way out there only to turn round and drive back"

Such a service is the norm - if it isn't then perhaps you should install one!

"I was disappointed with the instructor's attitude - he didn't seem to want to know" This is all about perception - the student believed there was no interest, and whether he was right or not this should never happen.

"The instructor was only interested in getting his leg over and almost ignored the guys on the course"

There's that perception thing again - remember what we covered on the TI Courses?

"His opinion of students was very low"

DATES?TO?REMEMBER?IN 1997/8

DATE	EVENT	VENUE
11 - 12 October	Coach Course	Petersfield
25 - 26 October	Coach Course	Peak District
Friday 7th Nov.	Training Conference	Loughborough University
17 - 19 November	TI Course	Bisham Abbey
20 - 21 November	SI Course	Bisham Abbey
29 - 30 November	Coach Course	Devon
8 - 10 December	TI Course	Holme Pierrepont
10 - 11 January	Coach Course	no venue
14 - 15 February	Coach Course	Scotland
16 - 18 February	TI Course	Telford
28 Feb - 1 March	Coach Course	no venue
6 - 8 April	TI Course	to be announced

For information on any of the above courses please contact the BHPA office on 0116 - 2611 322.

If you wish to host one of the two remaining coach courses in Jan. '98 and Feb. '98 please contact Clive in the office ASAP for details.

Evaluating your course.

In a bid to improve standards the FSC recommend that schools adopt a system for course evaluation. This is most easily achieved by producing a simple questionnaire for students to fill out on the completion of their course, an example of which follows. Course evaluation questionnaires have proved useful on both the TI and Coach courses run by the BHPA producing some thoughtful ideas not always obvious to the course provider. They also give course providers an idea of what the customer really wants and not just what the school thinks they should have!

ABC Parahang Gliding School
End of course questionnaire

To monitor and improve the service we provide, it is important that we receive feedback from our customers. To this end we have produced this simple questionnaire and we would be grateful if you could complete it and return it to us on completion of your course. PLEASE BE HONEST!

If you have any other comments which may help us improve our service in the future, please tick the "SEE OVER" box and use the reverse of the form for details.

Type of course recently completed:

My instructors were: (names)

	POOR	AVERAGE	GOOD	EXCELLENT	SEE OVER
At the Centre:	1	2	3	4	OVER
Introduction.....	()	()	()	()	()
Course organisation.....	()	()	()	()	()
End of course de-brief.....	()	()	()	()	()
Lecture (Met).....	()	()	()	()	()
Lecture (Air Law).....	()	()	()	()	()
Lecture (Flight Theory).....	()	()	()	()	()

On the hill:

On hill organisation.....	()	()	()	()	()
Instructors.....	()	()	()	()	()
Instruction in group.....	()	()	()	()	()
Personal instruction.....	()	()	()	()	()
Equipment.....	()	()	()	()	()

Pre-Course:

Publicity material.....	()	()	()	()	()
Confirmation details.....	()	()	()	()	()

Would you recommend ABC Parahang Gliding School to your friends?
If not, why?
Any other comments:

THANKS FOR YOUR TIME.

This is an example and may be chopped and changed to suit your particular school, we would be interested to hear of any good ideas picked up with a view to spreading the good word.

YOU LL NEVER KNOW!

Over the summer I have had considerable fun dealing with cases where either a Governing Body (not BHPA) or one of it's officials, i.e. Instructor, Examiner, Inspector or Coach, have been the subject of a law suit.

This usually arises when a pilot claims to have been injured whilst acting in accordance with your assistance or advice. The claims which can arise often amaze those who have to defend themselves against such claims. One such case this summer was a claim by the brother of a pilot who was killed by the admitted negligence of a gliding club. The claimant, who witnessed the death of his brother, was claiming about £ 10,000 for the shock he had suffered and £80,000 for potential loss of earnings because he said, " I was training to be a commercial pilot when I saw my brother die. Since then I have been unable to fly and so I am earning less money than I would have otherwise. That is your fault ". His claim was substantially successful.

One of the biggest problems when trying to defend these claims in court is the quality of material supplied by the defendants themselves. When a case comes to court, both parties are obliged to exchange their evidence and supporting paperwork. In another case a pilot had done some modifications to his aircraft. He had asked a suitably qualified inspector to check out the work and with the inspectors approval, the pilot then flew the aircraft. Due to an error in the modifications of the engine, the aircraft crashed and the pilot died. His widow and children are suing the inspector.

Whilst preparing the file for this case, much of the evidence relied upon by the defence was nothing more than the documentation relating to the modification of the aircraft and the pilots training records. The problem the defence have is that these documents are barely readable, scruffy and wonderfully misspelt.

The defence team can easily imagine the picture in court.

Plaintiff's Barrister:-

"Mr. Jones, you are a fully qualified, professional inspector, appointed by the BHPA who gave my client's aircraft a thorough and professional examination. Is that correct?"

Mr Jones:-

"It is"

Plaintiff's Barrister:-

(Holding up, for all to see, a scruffy, oil-stained, misspelt grotty piece of paper)

"Mr. Jones, are these the thorough and professional records you kept of your examinations ? Tell me Mr. Jones, does it seem reasonable to you, for the court to assume that the professionalism of your records was of the same level as the professionalism of your examination?"

Mr. Jones wilts under the Judges eye and concedes the point, the case is lost!

So as a result of one or more scruffy bits of paper you lose in court, the insurers have to pay out around £ 100,000 and all our insurance premiums go up.

Thus far, I am sure that many of you reading this regard this situation as hypothetical, correct in theory but it won't happen to us. You may be surprised to know that it already has, twice. Once in about 1985, when a BHGA school in Wiltshire (under its previous owners and with different instructors) managed to kill a student and, more recently, when the subscription jumped from £54 to £62 in 1993/4 solely because of 3 accidents in one BHPA school (again under previous owners) operating in Spain.

It may be that you are now under the impression that in our context, I am clearly referring to the school's training records. In some respects this is correct however, all of

this also applies to BHPA accident report forms. These provide us with many happy hours of entertainment and we do not make a fuss when a rather low level of literacy is exhibited, after all we would much rather receive the forms in whatever condition than not receive them at all. However, as Coaches and Safety Officers and Club Committee members, your legal position will always be much stronger if you have filled out FULLY and PROFESSIONALLY any paperwork which may later appear in front of a judge.

As a guide to what paperwork may end up in court let me tell you of a case where a Governing Body decided to ground a type of aircraft because there were a number of unexplained fatal accidents which all seemed to have killed pilots inexperienced on the type. When the type was grounded several pilots wrote in on club letter headed paper to express their disapproval of the grounding. In large, block-capital handwriting, substantially misspelt, were the words,

Dear BHPA,

We think that the grounding of the Super Juno 2 is completely out of order which you need not had done and is a total overreaction.

Yours,

John Smith
for the committee.

Poor old John Smith never thought that his letter would end up in front of a Judge and the same applies to all of you. You'll never know that that is what happened to your I.R., Letter, or Training Records until it is too late to prevent you looking like a complete idiot and destroying all credibility you ever had !

Finally, some of you may be thinking that, quite correctly, none of this matters too much because we are all insured and it is the insurers who will bear the cost. Let me sorely disabuse you of this belief. As I write this article there lies in intensive care a student who has been injured by the activities of his school. This school were in breach of a number of BHPA rules and it is perfectly possible that the insurers will regard the breaking of these rules as also breaking the insurance contract. Thus the school may well not be protected by the insurance. My guess is that this student will be able to claim around £ 30,000 for his injuries alone, plus loss of earnings, future disability, expenses and legal costs. The schools legal position will be somewhat improved if its records have been kept in a professional manner.

Thus, the moral of this story is fill in that paperwork neatly, correctly, fully and regularly because you'll never know who suddenly might want to see it!

Marc Asquith.

P.S. My favourite misspelling from this years I.R.s is "Parachute" abbreviated to "shoot" !

BERNARD KANE MBE

It is with extreme regret and sadness that we have to announce the death of Bernard Kane on Friday 24th October. He was in hospital following a mild stroke but suffered two subsequent major heart attacks.

All officers, members and staff of the Association offer sincere condolences to his family.