

Australian Ballooning Federation

PILOTS CIRCULAR

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Pilots Circular is produced by the Australian Ballooning Federation Inc., and contains operational and safety information for all Australian balloonists. All ABF members – from the newest student to the most experienced pilot – are invited to contribute to PC on issues you feel other pilots may wish to know about, or to raise questions that you would like information about. Thanks to all members who contributed to this issue.

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The Revised ABF Operations Manual

The new version of the operations manual has been published and the official document since February 2007. Hopefully all members have read and digested the contents. There are some small but significant changes that do impact on the way we operate. This PC is primarily to highlight those changes and each will be presented as a separate topic.

Radio Operators Certificates

The Radio Operators Certificate (ROC) will be mandatory for all PPC holders from 1 July 2007.

Pilots who do not hold an ROC after this date will not legally be permitted to exercise the privileges of their PPC. Any PPC holder doing so will risk suspension of their pilot certificates. A PPC holder with a CASA Flight Radio Operators Certificate (FROL) may operate legally.

It is now also a requirement that a Student Pilot Certificate holder must also complete their ROC prior to first solo. (alternately hold a FROL)

Variations to Student Training

Some aspects of the student training have been altered as follows:

- Student pilot certificate may now be issued to age 15 years or over.
- Required total training hours increased from 15 to 16 hours.
- Student may now be issued PPC at age 16 on completion of training.

Students, Instructors and examiners must ensure they are aware of syllabus and training requirements to ensure students complete all aspects of training.

Maintaining Currency

Instructors/Examiners must undergo a flight check every two years and this check is to be documented on the Flight Check Record posted on the ABF website. The completed copy is to be submitted to the ABF administrator. This check flight may be carried out up to 90 days prior to the due date.

A similar flight check document is to be completed for a PPC holder renewing lapsed currency.

An instructor/examiner may apply to the operations manager for a once only extension of currency, which will be assessed and if appropriate may be granted for a period of up to 90 days.

Accident and Incident reporting

This area has been significantly changed over the years with ATSB now being the interested party, Section 7 should be read carefully so there is no doubt as to our responsibilities in relation to incidents. Check the definitions of IRMs (Immediately Reportable Matters) and RRM's (Routinely Reportable Matters)!

Reminder to Instructors/Examiners

When presenting students for flight check or confirming student eligibility for a flight check, please ensure **all mandatory flight exercises** and **total flying hours** are correct. Applications for PPC **will be delayed** if the student records are not completed accurately.

Visiting unfamiliar areas

If you are planning a trip to fly in an area that is not known to you, check with any local balloonists (if available) for any updates on SZs, landowner issues etc. SZs can be an issue, if new ones have not been posted to the ABF website.

Flying in Marginal Conditions

From time to time, eyewitness comments come back to this office relating to balloons flying in marginal conditions. These conditions may be fast; they may involve poor visibility or various combinations. Just consider carefully before launching, do not respond to peer pressure. There is always another day to fly under safer conditions. It is surprising how many people observe our activities and are often swift to judge and condemn. Let's not give them the opportunity to comment. We have a very good safety record, if we can demonstrate common sense in our activities, we will maintain that record.

Operations at Non-Towered Aerodromes

This reminder is being recycled, remember, these procedures apply to 99% of all aerodromes and are also practised at many private fields carrying moderate recreational air traffic. Do you know your responsibilities??

If not, read the DOTARS package and Pilots Circular Issue 9, and be sure you understand them. Some reminders below:

The main changes are - MBZ's cease to exist, CTAF procedures now apply at all non-towered aerodromes, CTAF no longer has fixed boundaries but slightly different radio procedures apply within 10NM (18.5 km) of any non-towered aerodrome. Radio frequencies generally will not change.

A 'non-towered' aerodrome is one where there is no control tower or the tower is not active (also called a 'non-controlled' aerodrome).

Since 24 November 2005 you should not be flying unless you:

- have a **current** air navigation chart for your intended flying area and locate any aerodromes in the area
- know and follow the new procedures when within 10NM of an aerodrome
- in particular, carry and use VHF airband radio where required (you must have a CASA radio licence or an ABF radio operator certificate to use it)

You should use the new procedures, but also be alert for other aircraft which may NOT remember to use them.

Be aware that aircraft making straight-in approaches to land at an aerodrome are now supposed to advise this on radio using the words 'JOIN FINAL' instead of 'MAKE STRAIGHT IN APPROACH'. And faster aircraft may make their first radio call from as much as 30NM away as they approach.

CASA Air Worthiness Bulletin

The Civil Aviation Safety Authority has issued the following Airworthiness Bulletin:
[AWB 14-001 Issue 1 - Cameron Stratus Double Burner Mount Cracks](#)

This involves the inspection of Cameron Stratus double burners for cracks in the welding around the gimbal mount. Download the AWB for full details.

This and other AWBs can be viewed at:

<http://www.casa.gov.au/airworth/awb/index.htm>

Kavanagh Balloons Maintenance Manual - Issue 4

Kavanagh Balloons have moved to a single Maintenance Manual that covers all models in their product range.

Refer to webpage <http://www.kavanaghbaloons.com.au/fm.html>. This page contains information on the revision status for the Maintenance Manual. The latest issue is available for download at this site in Adobe PDF.

Bound and colour printed copies are also available for order from their office.

Smallaire fan blades

Most members should have received this message via email, however we relay it again.

Many thanks to Shaun Darby of Hot Air, Cairns for the info quoted here.

”In the last 2 weeks we have had two separate incidents where the fan blades have disintegrated during cold inflation. In the previous 10 years of using these blades we have had no problems at all.

After investigating the 1st incident it was found a crew member had cleaned the fan blades with degreaser the week prior, we spoke to Smallaire and they in turn spoke to the manufactures of the blades who said it shouldn't have had any effect on the blades. The blades were approximately 8 years old so we put it down to potentially the age of the blades or it had picked up a stone and the degreasing a week prior was just a coincidence.

We ordered new blades to replace all our old ones and plan to every 5 years.

Today we had another set of fan blades disintegrate during cold inflation, these blades had also been degreased so we can not put this down to a coincidence anymore and must presume that the degreaser is having an adverse effect on the blades.

We have obviously removed all the fans that had their blades degreased from service until their blades can be replaced.

Can you please advise all ABF owners of Smallaire fans if cleaning the fan or blades make sure they do not get degreaser on the fan blades as it could potentially have a reaction with the blades and in turn result in the destruction of the blades.”

Launch Ropes

The operations manual, Section 6.2 now makes the use of a launch rope **Mandatory**.

General observations from a range of Australian events indicate our pilots do use launch ropes. Our safety officers have pressed this point solidly over the past few years.

This may now only be an issue at an event that has attracted visiting overseas pilots