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Gliding Australia
The Gliding Federation of Australia Inc.
trading as **Gliding Australia**

Operations Advice Notice

No. 02/2025 **15th February 2025**

End of Life Celebrations

Purpose: The purpose of this OAN is to reinforce Operations Directive (OD) 1/25 End of Life Celebrations.

The loss of a member of the gliding community is a profound source of sadness. However, it is also an opportunity to celebrate the individual's life and contributions. While we aim to honour their memory, it is crucial that any plans to celebrate their life adhere to CASA regulations and the Gliding Australia (GAus) Manual of Standard Procedures Part 2 (MOSP 2). This document, OD and OAN 02/2025 End of Life Celebrations, provides guidance on how to respectfully and legally commemorate a member's life.

This document aims to ensure that all end-of-life celebrations are conducted with the utmost respect and in full compliance with aviation regulations.

Dropping of Ashes from Sailplanes and Powered Sailplanes

CASA regulations are explicit in their intent regarding the dropping of items from aircraft. While gliding operations have certain exemptions, these do not extend to the dropping of human remains. According to CASR 91.190, the pilot in command of an aircraft contravenes regulations if anything is dropped from the aircraft during flight.

To be clear: ***Glider pilots cannot drop ashes (human remains) from an aircraft. Not from any type of glider or from a Towplane***

Relevant Exemptions

Glider pilot's often mention that we have exemptions that allow dropping "things" from our gliders. Civil Aviation Order (CAO) 95.4 outlines specific exemptions for sailplanes and towing aircraft. These exemptions include the dropping of tow ropes, launch cables, detachable drag-inducing devices (Drag-chutes), and water ballast, but do not cover the dropping of human remains.

Air Displays

In lieu of dropping remains, there may be an intent to display a glider flying to the public. This is an obvious extension. Ideas I have heard past included: aerobatic displays, formation flying of gliders - the classic "Missing man formation" or flypasts at various altitudes.

MOSP 2 defines an "Air Display" as organised flying performed before a public gathering, including aerobatic manoeuvres and formation flying. Prior to such events, the display organiser must validate the participating pilot's Glider Pilot Certificate, Medical Certificate, and flight activity endorsements with Gliding Australia (GAus) Executive Manager Operations (EMO).

Further to the above, the EMO will ask what the display will consist of. The planning for a display is rigorous and takes time. There are many things to consider, for example:

- Are flight parameters legal. Location, altitude, airspace involved
- Other airspace users not associated with the club or location
- Risk assessments
- Training for the display
- Suitability of the aircraft being used.

The list is exhaustive.

Further to this, the EMO will check the details of the display with CASA Sport.

Plans change

On the day of the display, inevitably, plans change. Pilot's approved get sick, the aircraft has a minor defect that may impact the mode of operation, the weather reduces the ceiling of operations, etc.

There can be a rush of blood, these are emotional times. Pilot's, wishing to help, decide to change plans hoping to provide a better display. A high-level pass becomes an unplanned low-level pass. Many unforeseen issues can arise from last minute changes.

Are there organisations that can drop ashes from the air?

- Ashes to Ashes (www.ashestoashes.com.au)
  – by scattering cremated ashes high into the sky by way of a fireworks display.
- Sky-Ads (www.sky-ads.com.au)
- Blue Horizon memorials

The bottom line

- Glider pilots cannot drop ashes (human remains) from an aircraft. Not from any type of glider or from a Towplane
- If you are considering a glider display, contact the EMO very early in the process.

Dave Boulter
Executive Manager Operations