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Gliding Australia Ltd

Safety Management System

Safety Bulletin

No. 01/26 15 October 2026

GAus Safety Policy Commitment

Purpose. This Bulletin supersedes SB 04/23 *Safety Policy and Priorities.* This revised Safety Policy Commitment statement provided below has been approved by the GAus Executive and Board and will be included in an update to MOSP5 Safety Management System through a CASA Change Management Proposal.

This bulletin provides guidance for all officials, clubs and members on the agreed basis for embedding safety in all aspects of GAus operations, airworthiness, performance flying, administration, governance and member wellbeing.

What has informed this policy change? Member feedback, through webinars, specialist panels, safety events such as the 2026 Safer Skies Stronger Clubs workshop, CASA Sector Safety Risk Profile workshops and data analyses, industry events including Safeskies 2026 and PACDEFF Human Factors forums, plus inputs from GAus Executive and Board members have informed this update.

Members have affirmed they are seeking simple advice and clarity about safety priorities, plus the key focus areas, initiatives and activities being pursued to improve safety.

CASA and industry have affirmed the need for clear statements on how risk is considered and managed, supported by reporting and analysis, and expectations on members regarding safety culture and building awareness.

What are the priorities and main changes? This safety policy clarifies priorities for safety improvement, noting Australia's Aviation State Safety Program, Sector Safety Risk Profile issues and SOAR reporting trends. The occurrence priorities are:

- Aircraft & Glider Control or Loss of Control,
- Aircraft or Glider Separation and Mid-Air Collision,
- Runway Safety Events, Excursions and Incursions,
- Airframe Occurrences, and
- Terrain Collision & Hard Landing Events.

GAus specialist panels, Executive and Board agreed new key safety focus areas include:

- Managing risks from new technology & propulsion systems,
- Reducing canopy related incidents,
- Reducing ground obstacle and ground handling damage,
- Improving situational awareness, communications, particularly for mixed aviation operations,
- Improving aerodrome safety, shared airspace operations,
- Reducing hazards from infrastructure development close to aerodromes, changes in VFR airspace design and procedures, and
- Improving training and safety awareness communications.

The policy statement also recognises GAus recognition as a CASR Part 149 Approved Self-Administering Aviation Organisation, and change of name to Gliding Australia Ltd, a company limited by Guarantee. Current office bearers have approved this statement to give it effect now, pending a future update to MOSP5 SMS.

Improvement Opportunities. You may have different perceptions of risk or safety priorities affecting our freedom to fly and future operations and airworthiness. Further member feedback is invited, through your club officials, regional officers, specialist panels, safety officers, or directly to safety@glidingaustralia.org or via change proposal to returns@glidingaustralia.org – or by phone or face to face. We encourage open safety conversations and dialogue.

The GAus Executive and Board also monitor and assess enterprise level risks: these include many safety risk issues but also issues affecting the viability of gliding as a sport, or viability of clubs, or regulatory compliance, governance, administrative, financial, legal and member participation aspects. We recognise that safety policy issues overlap aspects of enterprise risk. Again, your feedback via club officials, regional officers and national specialist panels is invited. Your Executive and Board members are committed to building and developing a successful, safer sport.

Safe soaring and happy landings!

A.R. (Drew) McKinnie
GAus Safety Manager
15 October 2026

Attachment: 2026 Safety Policy Commitment Statement

GLIDING AUSTRALIA SAFETY POLICY COMMITMENT

Gliding Australia Ltd (GAus), a CASR Part 149 Approved Self-Administering Aviation Organisation (ASAO), supports clubs and members in pursuing safe, accessible, and enjoyable gliding sporting aviation.

We strive to provide the safest practicable environment for all people to experience the thrill of gliding, provide opportunities and foster excellence in all areas of the sport whilst recognising our responsibility to the wider aviation community.

This means doing the right things, to high standards, in the safest practicable way, in a sporting aviation environment.

Commitment: We are genuinely committed to safety. We do not regard safety as an add-on: it must be an outcome of collective activities, at national, regional and club levels. We achieve safety through commitments to resourcing and excelling in airworthiness, training, operations, sporting events, administration, member support.

Priorities: Gliding Australia priorities for safety improvement, noting Australia's Aviation State Safety Program, Sector Safety Risk Profile issues and SOAR reporting trends are:
Ø Aircraft & Glider Control or Loss of Control,
Ø Aircraft or Glider Separation and Mid Air Collision,
Ø Runway Safety Events, Excursions and Incursions
Ø Airframe Occurrences, and
Ø Terrain Collision & Hard Landing Events.

Supporting Key Focus Areas: Supporting these priorities, Gliding Australia key safety focus areas include:
Ø Managing risks from new technology & propulsion systems,
Ø Reducing canopy related incidents,
Ø Reducing ground obstacle and ground handling damage,
Ø Improving situational awareness, communications, particularly for mixed aviation operations,
Ø Improving aerodrome safety, shared airspace operations,
Ø reducing hazards from infrastructure development close to aerodromes, changes in VFR airspace design and procedures,
Ø Improving training and safety awareness communications.

Culture: We must embed a Positive Safety Culture in gliding activities, encouraging free open reporting within a Just Culture, with open discussion of safety feedback to members and clubs. We encourage members to seek improvements and support high standards of airmanship, operations, airworthiness, training, personal behaviour, and positive example. We strive to build positive safety capacity, collaborate to reduce risk exposure and communicate to share our best insights.

Key Factors: Gliding Australia must give priority to not harming members, airspace users and public, minimising fatal and serious accident rates, operating responsibly and safely in a shared aviation environment. Cultivating a Positive Safety Culture that encourages collaborative operations and open reporting within a Just Culture supports this priority.

Risk: Risk management principles and processes are intrinsic to specialist panel and club processes, developed over decades through hard-won experience, with attention to professionalism in gliding operations and airworthiness. We strive to minimise risks associated with gliding operations to reasonable levels, so we can enjoy freedom to fly in shared airspace, whilst protecting members, airspace users and public. We support using Threat and Error Management in mitigating risks. We share obligations to report and address hazards. We engage with external authorities and aviation industry on risk issues.

Emergencies: Gliding is an inherently hazardous recreational aviation activity, with obvious risks. We have responsibilities to plan for emergency events, to respond and minimise adverse consequences. We support emergency response planning at national and club levels, including supervisors at operational level. We offer regional and national level support to clubs facing emergencies and serious accidents, particularly in interactions with emergency services, Coroners, CASA and ATSB. We provide expertise supporting investigations.

Errors: It is vital to acknowledge the inevitability of human errors, that we all make mistakes. Errors and lapses should be openly admitted, with responses tailored to better prevention, stronger defences against adverse consequences. We must learn from mistakes, share insights, talk openly about how we can "do safety better" both individually and collectively.

Policies and Processes: We are all subject to legislation, rules, standards and obligations to operate as responsible, risk aware aviators. We seek to simplify their application wherever possible. We provide online access to rules and manuals. We expect members to know and understand them, appropriate to their respective roles and responsibilities. If we find rules and processes impede safety, we must raise concerns to responsible officers, with proposed remedies. We strive to maintain freedom to fly and equitable access to airspace. Wilful rule violations and workarounds are contrary to Positive, Just Culture. We support reporting processes.

Reporting: This means all members supporting a safety occurrence reporting and analysis system, that enables trend analysis, provides safety awareness feedback and education to members. We seek improved operational and airworthiness safety, informed by learning from occurrence investigations and member feedback. We acknowledge occurrences may be driven by pilot and member errors, design, maintenance and technology failures, sometimes exacerbated by external, systemic, organisational and cultural factors.

Reviews: We support and implement audits and independent safety reviews, ensuring risk mitigation actions are taken. We must continuously monitor and review our safety performance, adjusting practices and controls. We encourage all members to exercise vigilance, counter complacency, support safety awareness, for mutual benefit.

Drew McKinnie
Safety Manager

Amanda VanderWal
A/CEO, Accountable Manager

Steve Pegler
Board Chair
September 2026