

Club Policy on Young Drivers (Light Utility Vehicles)

1 Introduction

This document establishes the club policy on the operation of our light utility vehicles by young drivers. By young drivers we mean those younger than, but not including, 16 years of age. The club currently operates John Deere Gator light utility vehicles.

It is now legal for a young person of 14 to fly a glider solo and the club accepts members at 13 years of age for flying training. We believe that it is important that all our trainees, of any age, are able to participate as fully as possible in supporting the club activities. It is particularly important for youngsters to be given every opportunity to further their personal development.

Gliding is an adventure sport which presents the participants with challenges and risks. The aim of this document is to establish a course of action to manage the potential risks for young drivers and exercise our duty of care to members and visitors.

2 Summary

In section 3 we identify what we believe to be the most pertinent advice which has informed our policy. This comes from two sources, the Health and Safety Executive and the manufacturer of the Light Utility Vehicle in question – John Deere Ltd.

In section 4 we present a concise statement of our policy followed, in section 5, by an explanation of how our policy has been derived from the available advice and to what level we are compliant with that advice.

3 The Available Advice

3.1 Advice from Health and Safety Executive

We have drawn advice from the relevant sections of the Health and Safety Executive document INDG472(rev 4) 06/13 "Preventing accidents to children on farms".

Although we are not engaged in agriculture, nor are we a business with employees, we felt that this document described a very similar environment to that in which we operate.

3.2 Advice from John Deere Ltd

Where a piece of machinery states in the manual or elsewhere a restriction on its use, the Manufacturer is primarily protecting itself against any possible claim. John Deere Ltd, accordingly, recommend that the Gator should not be driven by those under 16 years.

We have sought clarification of this advice and, from the reply received from the company, we have concluded that there is nothing any more difficult or dangerous about operating a Gator Utility Vehicle than any other similar vehicle. We recognise, however, the legitimate concerns, expressed by the company, that we should ensure that those driving a Gator are physically capable of reaching and operating the controls and that they are trained to operate the vehicle safely with an understanding of the potential hazards and dangers.

4 Statement of Policy

4.1 Initial Assessment

Before allowing a member under 16 years of age to train to drive a Gator they will be assessed for their maturity and also whether they are physically able to reach and operate the controls of this vehicle. The assessment will be made by a gliding instructor and must be signed for on the members record card.

4.2 Parent/Guardian Approval

Before a member under 16 years of age is accepted for training we will also require the specific approval of the parent or guardian. This should be signed for on the members record card.

4.3 Training, Practice and Testing

Before allowing a member under 16 years of age to operate a Gator they will be trained according to a defined program. This will include the essential knowledge required to operate a Gator safely in support of club operations, including all potential hazards and dangers. They will have the opportunity to practise operating the vehicle and then be tested. The training and testing will be conducted by approved gliding instructors who are appointed by the Chief Flying Instructor. Approval to drive a Gator must be signed for on the members record card.

4.4 Supervision

Young drivers will be under the supervision of the launch point controller and the pilots/instructors of the gliders that they are retrieving. For this reason we must ensure that young drivers under the age of 16 are instructed not to retrieve solo pilots under the age of 16 without additional supervision.

4.5 Restrictions

The following restrictions will apply to young drivers under the age of 16:

- * They will not carry other young people under age 16 as passengers;
- * They will not drive Gators outside the driving area defined in paragraph 4.6;
- * They will not reverse Gators closer than 6m to any aircraft/vehicle/person to the rear;
- * They will not drive Gators on public open days (including friends and family days).

4.6 The Driving Area

The permitted driving area for drivers under 16 is anywhere within the boundaries of the airfield with the following exceptions:

- Not inside the Hangar;
- Not on the grass within 15 metres of the cutting that surrounds the Hangar.

5 Analysis of the Advice

5.1 HSE Document INDG472(rev 4) 06/13

The following table identifies which sections of the HSE document are applicable to our activities, and how we have addressed the advice in these sections.

Section Heading	Relevance/Compliance
Introduction	(For Information only)
Children under the age of 13	(This section is Not Applicable- we do not have members under the age of 13.)
Children between 13 and 16	<p>Paragraph 1 - "The Prevention of Accidents to Children Regulations 1999 prevent any child under 13 years old from driving a tractor or other agricultural vehicle."</p> <p>(Not Applicable - we do not have members under the age of 13.)</p>
	<p>Paragraph 2 - "Young people over 13 years old are allowed to drive a tractor or other agricultural vehicle at work but before doing so should attend a training course run by a competent training provider."</p> <p>We are not operating tractors or agricultural vehicles, neither are the drivers at work. Nevertheless we will provide a training course run by our own instructors – see paragraph 4.3.</p> <p>Compliant</p>
	<p>Paragraph 2 (continued)- "Whether at work or not, no young person should be permitted to drive a tractor or self-propelled machine unless: - they have the reach and strength to operate the controls with ease while sitting in the driving seat;"</p> <p>We are not operating tractors or self-propelled machines. Nevertheless we will confirm that the drivers have adequate reach and strength – see paragraph 4.1.</p> <p>Compliant</p>

Section Heading	Relevance/Compliance
	<p>Paragraph 2 (continued)- “- they have been instructed in safely operating the tractor etc they are driving and fully understand what all the controls do, and what might happen if they are improperly used.”</p> <p>See paragraph 4.3.</p> <p>Compliant</p>
	<p>Paragraph 2 (continued)- “- they are closely supervised by a responsible adult;”</p> <p>Young drivers will be under the supervision of the launch point controller and the pilots/instructors of the gliders that they are retrieving. Note, however, the minor restriction to ensure continuity of supervision expressed in paragraph 4.4.</p> <p>Compliant</p>
	<p>Paragraph 2 (continued)- “- no other child or young person is on the tractor etc, and no other person is on any trailer or other equipment attached, other than to supervise or instruct and no members of the public, for example those present for a farm open day, are in the immediate vicinity;”</p> <p>Young drivers will not carry other young persons on the vehicle or operate the vehicles on public days. (During normal flying days we provide a coned off safe area for members of the public). See paragraph 4.5</p> <p>Compliant</p>

Section Heading	Relevance/Compliance
	<p>Paragraph 2 (continued)- “- the controls for the PTO, hydraulic devices and engine stopping are clearly marked to show what they are for.....”</p> <p>Our vehicles are very simple, they are started and stopped by the use of a single key switch, there is no need for special markings on the key switch. The vehicles do not have any PTO or hydraulics.</p> <p>Not considered necessary to be compliant.</p> <p>“... and the tractor is maintained so it is safe for them to operate;”</p> <p>The vehicles are not tractors. They are, however, maintained, as a matter of course, under our duty of care towards <u>all</u> members.</p> <p>Compliant</p>
	<p>Paragraph 2 (continued)- “- there are no steep slopes, excavations, river banks, lake or pond edges, deep ditches or similar in the driving area.”</p> <p>There are no such hazards in the permitted driving area (as defined in paragraph 4.6).</p> <p>Compliant</p>
	<p>Paragraph 3 (This paragraph describes examples of farm machinery and farming tasks that are acceptable.)</p> <p>Our Light Utility Vehicles are much simpler to operate than the low powered tractor given as an example here.</p> <p>Compliant</p>
	<p>Paragraph 4 (This paragraph describes farm machinery that is not acceptable - generally powered machines that have a specific function.)</p> <p>(Not Applicable - Light Utility Vehicles are not included in this list, which consists of complex farm machinery.)</p>

Section Heading	Relevance/Compliance
All Terrain Vehicles (ATVs)	(Not Applicable – we do not operate all terrain vehicles, i.e. quad bikes.)
Employing children and young people	(Not Applicable – we do not employ children or young people)
Young people between 16 and 18	(Not Applicable – not within the scope of this policy document)
Find out more	(Not Applicable – These topics are not within scope of our operation.)
Further information	(For Information only)

5.2 Advice from John Deere Ltd.

The advice received from John Deere Ltd included the concerns listed in the following table. The table describes how we have addressed these concerns.

Issue	Relevance/Compliance
Those under 16 do not hold a driving licence....	It is not necessary to hold a licence to drive a vehicle on private land. The relevant club insurance (Commercial Combined Policy) has no restrictions on the use of the Gators. Not Applicable
...and will not have undergone a theory test or driving lessons...	The DVSA Theory test is almost entirely about a knowledge of the Highway Code and hazard perception on the public roads and in traffic. Our own documented training course will cover the essential knowledge that is required – see paragraph 4.3.
...which make them aware of possible hazards and dangers around when driving any vehicle.	Training on the specific hazards related to operating a Gator on our airfield will be provided - see paragraph 4.3.
Young drivers may not be able to physically control the machine or may not be mature enough to make safe driving decisions.	Candidates will be the subject of an assessment by a gliding instructor - See paragraph 4.1