

Regional Airspace Users Working Group South West Newsletter 2020

Foreword:

The RAUWG South West meeting was due to take place in May 2020, however due to obvious reasons caused by the disruption of the Covid pandemic it was postponed. The final decision was made to put together a Newsletter to at least inform everyone of any information to be considered by users of all the aerodromes in the South West. The general feedback has been that this meeting functions best when everyone physically meets in a group. This will hopefully resume in 2021 if the Covid situation relaxes. All information below has been directly provided by you the members via email. I kindly ask that you take read of what other operators would like you to consider. Please distribute this along your units and flying clubs for everyone interested to take a read and hopefully learn something, ultimately we hope to make the aviation environment even safer and more enjoyable for all users.

The Park Gliding Site

We are the gliding club at the SW end of Salisbury Plain and have a tow plane, a winch, 6 club operated gliders, a motor glider and about 30 privately owned gliders. Most of which can be airborne on a good day, some in the air locally soaring and others cross country flying. In normal times we will be doing 50 or so launches in a day.

The biggest hazard for passing traffic is the winch cables, which will not be seen in the air. This is mainly traffic in the north south direction being funnelled between Salisbury Plain and the Bristol Zone. We regularly launch gliders to nearly 3000ft QNH and a conflict with a cable would be very bad news for any aircraft. Many of the gliders will be soaring within 10 miles of the airfield but on a good day our gliders can be found anywhere within 250 Kilometres or so. Occasionally we fly locally in mountain wave up to 10,000ft, or higher with a transponder.



Pilots need to be aware that we winch launch gliders with cables which go up to theoretically 3700 ft QNH. That is unusual, but 2500 ft QNH is a normal height for a winch launch. A close encounter between a Dyneema winch cable and an aircraft would have a very bad outcome, both for the glider and the conflicting aircraft.

Transiting traffic is a problem and earlier this year one of our pilots filed, what was subsequently classified as a Class B airprox with a microlight. The microlight had a

transponder and the glider had a Flarm, which highlights the need for better interoperability with Electronic Conspicuity, as lookout is not always enough. We are aware of the CAA push for ADSB, but it will be some time before many gliders are ADSB equipped. In the meantime, use of PowerFlarm by all traffic in the area would be well advised. We installed, at our own expense, a PilotAware station which retransmits the Flarm traffic to PilotAware aircraft, but the range of these is not great.

Old Sarum airfield

(Information provided by Boscombe Down based on communications with Old Sarum)

Old Sarum airfield (located 4 NM SSW of Boscombe Down Aerodrome) currently operate mainly for Para dropping. On a good weather day, they can have up to 15 flights to FL150 whilst drop skydivers



at multiple levels (7,000ft 10,000ft and 15,000ft). Therefore it is important to remember and encouraged that all aviators contact BDN Zone on 126.7 initially to find out the status of the para dropping. If BDN are closed then a call to Old Sarum (Frequency 129.905) must be made to gain any information if your intended route takes you within 5NM of the overhead. Flying at any level within closer proximity could pose a danger to both skydivers and any aircraft.

A Few words from GASCO (General Aviation Safety Council)

Recurring issues of pilots calling too close to aerodromes requesting MATZ crossers.

CAP 413 10.75. Pilots requiring a MATZ, and where appropriate, ATZ penetration service must establish two way RTF communication on the appropriate frequency with the aerodrome controlling the zone when 15 NM or 5 min flying time from the boundary whichever is the sooner, and request approval to penetrate the MATZ, and if appropriate ATZ. When requested by the controller to 'pass your message' the pilot should pass the following information:

Some (many) GA pilots requesting penetration of the Boscombe CMATZ are making their calls late thus creating difficulties for the military controller who may be working on a different frequencies, in to coordinating their transit safely with the military traffic operating within and near the CMATZ. Please could GA pilots be reminded to make their call 5 minutes before the CMATZ boundary as set out in CAP413.

NOTE 14. BOSCOMBE DOWN ADVISORY RADIO AREA FL50-FL195. Pilots entering the area are strongly advised to call Boscombe Down on 126.700MHz. They will provide information on test flight activity and, if requested, advice on arranging a detour of the test area. For full details see UK AIP ENR 5.2.

Note for the above please be aware that calling BDN Zone on 126.7 whilst flying at any level in class G airspace is helpful for both the controllers and the pilots.

Upavon Gliding Club

Upavon gliding operations will have increased activity in 2021 with 25% more courses to be held from the airfield. Please be aware of increased glider activity especially on good weather days when thermals are significant gliders can soar for many hours.



Boscombe Down



Here at Boscombe Down our main concern is Pilots flying too close to the Salisbury Plain danger areas. Since JUNE 2020 there have been 11 instances of airspace/danger area infringements 8 of these have been in Salisbury Plain or D127 (Porton Down). It's quite important to consider that Salisbury conduct live firing exercises on a daily bases and no one needs to be told that projectiles and aircraft don't mix well together. GA should not rely on ATC for the geography of the area, however controllers will do their best to assist as much as possible so please do

not be afraid to give Boscombe Zone a call on Frequency 126.7.

RNAS Yeovilton

- Yeovilton (VLN) is home to both Royal Navy and Army assets. These consist of Merlin Mk4 & 4a, Wildcat (AH & Maritime) and Tutor; however, we are routinely visited by fast jets (F35, Hawk and Hunter) and large transport aircraft.
- VLN also hosts Navy Wings Historic Flight which operates Swordfish, Tiger Moth and Sea Fury aeroplanes along with Yeovilton Flying Club operating a mixture of GA aircraft.
- Our helicopters routinely operate day and night 5 days a week at low and medium levels with a 24/7 availability to assist the MAG. They operate all over the South West and transit to/from Salisbury Plain or local helicopter landing areas as well as regularly visiting the south coast. They may also operate over the sea with Royal Navy warships.
- Some of these helicopters are available to support the UK Counter Terrorism Force; therefore, Yeovilton operations are classed as 24 hours.
- The Yeovilton Area of Intense Aerial Activity (AIAA) extends up to 6000ft and our instrument flying areas extend 3000-6000ft within this. Here, helicopters and fixed wing may be practicing instrument flying both day and night. These flights usually end up being vectored for precision approaches.
- Our Grob Tutors are used for pilot grading and elementary flying training. Normally operating in designated cardinal-based sectors between 4000-8000ft, this training includes practice emergencies, PFLs and aerobatic manoeuvres with circuit flying taking place at Yeovilton airfield.
- Merryfield is our satellite aerodrome and is mostly used by helicopters.
- Yeovilton radar provides a LARS, D119 and MATZ crossing services and, as an autonomous radar unit, can provide a CAS radar crossing, joining/leaving service.
- Fighter Control Training is also conducted at the Royal Navy School of Fighter Controllers, Yeovilton. This consists of a mixture of simulator and live controlling hours utilising Hawk, DA20 and on occasion visiting (Typhoon/F35/F-15/Rafael) fast jets operating both east and west of N864.
- Our navigational aids include TACAN, ILS and PAR so we can accept military and civilian practice diversions upon request - although PPR is essential.

