



Comment Form

*Comment nr.....
(for EASA use only)*

NPA-06-2006

(end of comment date: 16-10-2006)

Instructions:

Comments should be sent in 'WORD', using the following link: NPA@easa.eu.int

1a. COMMENT TO:

Question raised in the Content of the Notice of Proposed Amendment

1b. AFFECTED PARAGRAPH:

IV. Content of the Notice of Proposed Amendment / Question 1 on Page 7 of 26

2. PROPOSED TEXT/ COMMENT:

The European Gliding Union (EGU) agrees that the establishment of high level essential requirements is the best means to set the safety objectives for the safety regulation of aerodromes. However these new regulations should only cover aerodromes, used by commercial aviation with complex aircrafts. EGU does not consider that aerodromes that are utilised exclusively for the operation of gliders should be subject to essential requirements. There exists such a big difference between a public aerodrome and a simple grass covered gliding strip that some sort of differentiation must be made.

Where gliding operations takes place on an aerodrome with commercial aviation, appropriate essential requirements are needed to ensure that the co-located operation can continue as safely and effectively as the present.

3. JUSTIFICATION:

EGU is accepting, that EASA is extending the scope of the regulation to the safety and interoperability of aerodromes. However European glider pilots feel that regulation should be objective based and proportionate to the type of activity, to the complexity of the aircraft used, and to the risk to the public. Any unnecessary regulation should be avoided and regulation should only be considered where there is a clear security imperative as identified by the historic and present situation. The primary objective of the rule-makers should be to protect third parties and not to unduly protect individuals against themselves. Regulation should, as frequently identified by the Agency, be kept to the minimum necessary to minimise risks to third parties. EGU can provide accident statistics that demonstrate the very low level of public risk within the operation of gliders and supporting activity at gliding aerodromes.

Gliding clubs within Europe have gathered and demonstrated experience and competence in the operation of their airfields. Gliding has operated satisfactorily for many years. For EGU there are some disadvantages and risks associated with this attempt to harmonise or standardise the safety regulation of all aerodromes. Additional regulation would only increase the costs and doesn't improve safety on these



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relatively small gliding fields. Therefore EGU requests, that gliding operation on glider airfields will be exempted from this EASA regulation.

If this proposal for an exemption of gliding airfields cannot be accepted by EASA, EGU suggests to introduce special essential requirements with reduced regulations for airfields used for gliding club operations. EGU is prepared if necessary to provide recommendations, based on good practice that have been developed successfully over many years in consultation with European NAA's and National Governing Bodies which could form the basis of Essential Requirements for aerodrome safety appropriate to gliding and aerodromes where gliding and commercial air transport is collocated.

4. PERSON/ORGANISATION PROVIDING THE COMMENT:

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1a. COMMENT TO :

Question raised in the Content of the Notice of Proposed Amendment

1b. AFFECTED PARAGRAPH :

IV. Content of the Notice of Proposed Amendment / Question 2 on Page 8 of 26

2. PROPOSED TEXT/ COMMENT:

No – The European Gliding Union`s (EGU) opinion is, that the proposed essential requirements do not constitute a good basis for the safety and interoperability regulation of gliding aerodromes. As explained in the answer of question 1 gliding aerodromes should be exempted from these essential requirements.

For airfields with co-located commercial air transport and gliding operations there is a need for some special regulations to ensure that gliding can continue to safely operate alongside commercial air transport and is not unnecessarily burdened.

Rescue and fire fighting services on gliding aerodromes could be regulated on a low level like it is done now. Due to the low risk no special new regulations are necessary.

3. JUSTIFICATION:

EGU is concerned that the stated Essential Requirements will not add any safety benefit to gliding operations but will provide the potential for significant social, economic and bureaucratic burdens on those who participate in the sport of gliding, and have the potential to negatively affect the sport gliding industry and the benefits that sport provides within society and to the aviation industry.

EGU does not agree that the Essential Requirements described within part II of the NPA are applicable for gliding operations. Some examples:

Under A – 1c the regulation states, that the landing and take-off areas must be surrounded by defined areas, which protect aircrafts flying over them during take-off and landing operations. Most of the gliding airfields in Europe have no defined surrounding areas around the airfield, due to the special operational characteristic of gliding. Caused by the way of operation (e.g. winch-launching procedures / close by slope soaring areas / circuit planning) there is no need for such a planned protection area.



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Under A - 1g a fence or other suitable barrier is required, to prevent the entrance of unauthorized persons, vehicles or animals. Other suitable methods are foreseen. Most of the gliding sites in Europe have no fence around. Safe operations are ensured due to signs around and the way of operating by different communication systems (radio / telephone) between the take off point and the launch-area (winch). Caused by the complicated owner status of most gliding sites (contracts with states, farmers, communities allow to use parts of their properties) it is impossible to provide fences around an gliding site.

Under B – 1c/d the aerodrome operator has to ensure, that any person involved in aerodrome operations or maintenance or a person with permitted unescorted access to the movement areas is trained and qualified. The voluntary work of the members and helpers (like family members) for the operation in a gliding club and the maintenance of the gliding airfield will not fulfil these requirements. There is no way for a gliding club as operator to fulfil these regulation.

Under B – 1g it is mentioned that a programme must be implemented to reduce the risk of a bird strike. For gliding operations there is no need for such a programme.

Under B – 1i the operator has to establish procedures related to operations in reduced visibility or at night. Gliding operations are not affected, because they are limited (VFR / day).

Under C – 1/2/3 the mitigation of hazards not directly under control of the operator will be regulated. Due to the way gliding is operating most of these potential hazards are no hazards for gliding operations (e.g. change in land use / lasers / wild life activity). Therefore all these items in part C of the essential requirements are not suitable for gliding operations.

4. PERSON/ORGANISATION PROVIDING THE COMMENT:

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1a. COMMENT TO :

Question raised in the Content of the Notice of Proposed Amendment

1b. AFFECTED PARAGRAPH :

IV. Content of the Notice of Proposed Amendment / Question 3 on Page 9 of 26

2. PROPOSED TEXT/ COMMENT:

No – It is the European Gliding Unions (EGU) opinion that aerodromes which are not open for public (commercial air traffic) use should not be subject to Community Legislation. Like explained in the answer for question 1 the gliding airfields, which are mostly not open for public use, should be exempted from the operational Essential Requirements.

3. JUSTIFICATION:

To clarify this item EGU believes, that a clear definition for the term “open for public use” is necessary. It is very important to note the difference between commercial air transport or public use on one hand and recreational (in this case, gliding) or private use on the other hand. For EGU gliding airfields are clearly not open for public use, because they are mostly used only by the members of the clubs which are situated on this field.

As a consequence the EGU view is that these aerodromes which are not open for public use should be exempted from the essential requirements.

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1a. COMMENT TO :

Question raised in the Content of the Notice of Proposed Amendment

1b. AFFECTED PARAGRAPH :

IV. Content of the Notice of Proposed Amendment / Question 4 on Page 10 of 26

2. PROPOSED TEXT/ COMMENT:

For gliding aerodromes no regulation of aerodrome equipment at community level is needed. Safe gliding operations do only require a wind direction indicator and some sort of a marking of the runway or a sign for the landing direction which clearly requires no special regulation.

3. JUSTIFICATION:

No special comment is necessary.

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1a. COMMENT TO :

Question raised in the Content of the Notice of Proposed Amendment

1b. AFFECTED PARAGRAPH :

IV. Content of the Notice of Proposed Amendment / Question 5 on Page 11 of 26

2. PROPOSED TEXT/ COMMENT:

- a) It is the EGU view that essential requirements and therefore also the detailed implementing rules (related to the physical characteristics and infrastructure of small aerodromes) are only required where gliding and commercial air transport are operating on the same aerodrome. In this case, the implementing rules should indicate where possible that the regulation pertaining to the sporting and recreational activity must be proportional to the risk.
- b) It is the EGU view that essential requirements and therefore also the detailed implementing rules (related to the operation and management of small aerodromes) are only required where gliding and commercial air transport are operating on the same aerodrome. In this case, the implementing rules should indicate where possible that the regulation pertaining to the sporting and recreational activity must be proportional to risk.
- c) There is still a need, to define the term "small aerodrome". The definition, which is given in the draft of the essential requirements under B 2 (page 25) seems to give a possible frame for that. Furthermore EGU believes that the segregation which is already proposed in the ER`s does not take into consideration the differences in operation between the sporting and recreational powered flying operations at aerodromes, and in particular gliding operations at separate gliding aerodromes. The text of the NPA appears to indicate that the Essential Requirements are designed to be appropriate to large and small aerodromes (page 11 / paragraph 34) and makes no differences between the types of operation.



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3. JUSTIFICATION:

The EGU comment for question 1 identifies why it is the EGU view that the draft of Essential Requirements is not appropriate for gliding. This is the reason, why in our opinion ER`s and IR`s are only required where gliding and commercial air transport is operating on the same aerodrome.

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1a. COMMENT TO :

Question raised in the Content of the Notice of Proposed Amendment

1b. AFFECTED PARAGRAPH :

IV. Content of the Notice of Proposed Amendment / Question 6 on Page 11 of 26

2. PROPOSED TEXT/ COMMENT:

- d) It is the EGU view that essential requirements are only required where gliding and commercial air transport are operating on the same aerodrome. In this case, there is also a need to require certification for the verification of compliance with the requirements. On a small airport without public use or without commercial air transport there is no need for such a certification (about physical characteristics and infrastructure).
- e) It is the EGU view that essential requirements (related to the operation and management of small aerodromes) are only required where gliding and commercial air transport are operating on the same aerodrome. In this case there is also a need to require certification for the verification of compliance with the requirements. On a small airport without public use or without commercial air transport there is no need for such a certification.
- f) There is still a need, to define the term "small aerodrome". The definition, which is given in the draft of the essential requirements under B 2 (page 25) seems to give a possible frame for that. Furthermore EGU believes that the segregation which is already proposed in the ER's does not take into consideration the differences in operation between the sporting and recreational powered flying operations at aerodromes, and in particular gliding operations at separate gliding aerodromes. The text of the NPA appears to indicate that the Essential Requirements are designed to be appropriate to large and small aerodromes (page 11 / paragraph 34) and makes no differences between the types of operation.



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3. JUSTIFICATION:

The EGU comment for question 1 identifies why it is the EGU view that the draft of Essential Requirements is not appropriate for gliding operations. This is the reason, why in our opinion ER`s and and therefore also these certification process should be only required where gliding and commercial air transport is operating on the same aerodrome.

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1b. AFFECTED PARAGRAPH :

IV. Content of the Notice of Proposed Amendment / Question 8 on Page 12 of 26

2. PROPOSED TEXT/ COMMENT:

- a) EGU believes (see answer question 6) that a certification process for gliding operations is only required when gliding and commercial air transport are operating on the same aerodrome. In this case it is appropriate for accredited assessment bodies to assess compliance with the requirements (physical characteristics and infrastructure) providing the assessment body refers to the necessary level of specific expertise in the gliding characteristics and the typical infrastructure of gliding airfields.
- b) EGU believes (see answer question 6) that a certification process for gliding operations is only required when gliding and commercial air transport are operating on the same aerodrome. In this case it is appropriate for accredited assessment bodies to assess compliance with the requirements (operation and management) providing the assessment body refers to the necessary level of specific gliding and operational expertise.
- c) EGU believes (see answer question 6) that a certification process for gliding operations is only required when gliding and commercial air transport are operating on the same aerodrome. In this case it is appropriate also for the agency to assess compliance with the requirements (physical characteristics and infrastructure) providing the agency refers to the necessary level of specific expertise in the gliding characteristics and the typical infrastructure of gliding aerodromes.
- d) EGU believes (see answer question 6) that a certification process for gliding operations is only required when gliding and commercial air transport are operating on the same aerodrome. In this case it is appropriate also for the agency to assess compliance with the requirements (operation and management) providing the agency refers to the necessary level of specific gliding and operational expertise.



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- e) There is still a need, to define the term “small aerodrome”. The definition, which is given in the draft of the essential requirements under B 2 (page 25) seems to give a possible frame for that. Furthermore EGU believes that the segregation which is already proposed in the ER`s does not take into consideration the differences in operation between the sporting and recreational powered flying operations at aerodromes, and in particular gliding operations at separate gliding aerodromes. The text of the NPA appears to indicate that the Essential Requirements are designed to be appropriate to large and small aerodromes (page 11 / paragraph 34) and makes no differences between the types of operation. This response document identifies why it is our view that the draft Essential Requirements are not appropriate to gliding in their current form and are not designed to provide balanced regulation where co-located gliding and commercial air transport co-exists safely under national and local agreement. There are a number of examples of successfully co-located commercial air transport and gliding operations, each subject to appropriate levels of regulation and safely integrated through local agreement.
- f) Like explained above the proposed assessment of compliance with the requirements is only required when gliding and commercial air transport are operating on the same aerodrome. Other criteria to decide which bodies are most suitable to assess compliance will vary from country to country. EGU opinion is, that if EU regulation is deemed to be applicable to gliding in this context, the long term experience of gliding operations within the European gliding industries and federations is an excellent starting point to find responsible bodies.

3. JUSTIFICATION:

Due to the amount of applications for all the gliding aerodromes proximity is a big advantage for all the small aerodromes. Therefore decentralised action would be the most practicable way to solve this problem by creating efficiency benefits. In most of the European countries the national aviation authorities are the competent authority for the gliding operations. In some other countries the national gliding bodies are accredited to do this work.

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1b. AFFECTED PARAGRAPH :

IV. Content of the Notice of Proposed Amendment / Question 9 on Page 13 of 26

2. PROPOSED TEXT/ COMMENT:

EGU believes that no regulation of specific technical aerodrome equipment at community level is needed for safe gliding operations. Like explained in the answer for question 4 gliding operations do only require a wind direction indicator and some sort of a marking of the runway or a sign for the landing direction. If necessary in future aerodrome technical systems specific to gliding operations should be regulated through the industry experts including the gliding federations and associations. Where radio communication is required to provide safe separation between gliding and non-gliding operations on an aerodrome, aerodrome communications should be assessment body regulated by means of appropriate operator licensing and certification of equipment to industry and maintenance standards.

3. JUSTIFICATION:

No special comment is necessary.

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