

Minnesota Soaring Club
Approval for Cross-Country Glider Flight

By
Chris Cooper
Director of Operations

April 30, 2001

Minnesota Soaring Club
Approval for Cross-Country Glider Flight

1. The proposed date of this Cross-Country flight will be _____.
2. The MSC glider for this Cross-Country flight will be _____.
3. The Pilot-In-Command (PIC) of this flight will be _____.
4. The Passenger/Observer (for dual-place glider) will be _____.
5. The PIC holds the following SSA Badge: _____ Number: _____.
(A Bronze Badge is required at a minimum.)
6. Barograph checkout complete. Yes / No
7. Assembly/disassembly of glider to be flown. Yes / No
8. Retrieval Crew Sheet completed. Yes / No
9. Completed one (1) glider XC in last 12 months. Yes / No
10. Route-of-flight/Altitude Profile Sheet completed. Yes / No
11. SSA badge form initiated. (optional) Yes / No
12. The SSA Official Observer for this flight will be (optional): _____.

Process:

1. Present completed XC Approval Form, Retrieval Crew Sheet, Route-of-flight/altitude Profile Sheet, and MSC Qualification Card to the MSC Director of Operations for review and approval.
2. On day of flight, give the XC Approval Form, Retrieval Crew Sheet and Route-of-flight/altitude Profile Sheet to the FOO or Stanton Operations personnel. These sheets will be retained in MSC records.

PIC is responsible for additional requirements detailed on Page 2 of the Retrieval Crew Sheet

Approved by MSC Director of Operations: _____ Date: _____

With the following restrictions: _____

Minnesota Soaring Club Retrieval Crew Sheet

1. Date of proposed cross-country flight: _____
2. MSC glider _____
3. Pilot-In-Command _____
4. The following personnel are members of the retrieval crew:
 - a. Crew Chief _____
 - b. Crew Member _____
 - c. Crew Member _____
 - d. Crew Member _____
5. Tow car for this retrieve _____
6. Trailer for this retrieve is in good condition, tires are in good condition, glider assembly/disassembly procedure is present, tool box for this specific glider is present, all cradles, braces, straps, ropes, chains and pads are present Yes / No
7. Trailer registration tag current Yes / No
8. Hitch on tow car matches trailer Yes / No
9. Trailer lights work when connected to tow car Yes / No
10. Crew Chief has cell phone Yes / No
11. Cell phone number of Crew Chief while the flight is in progress and during the retrieve _____
12. The PIC or the Crew Chief (pick one) will notify the FOO by telephone that the flight has terminated giving the time and the location, if other than Stanton.

SEE ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON PAGE TWO

Additional information:

1. In the absence of other prearranged coordination, the PIC and the Crew Chief may use the MSC message line, 877-665-3751, to reestablish communication during the retrieve.
2. The PIC will notify the FOO by telephone that the glider has been retrieved and is now back at Stanton.
3. The PIC will make a written report to the Director of Operations including a summary of the flight, the landing site and condition of all club equipment used in the retrieve.
4. If there is substantial damage to club equipment, the PIC will make immediate notification to the Director of Operations via telephone. In conference with the Director of Operations or another MSC Board member, decide whether NTSB or FAA reporting is required.
5. If there is minor damage to club equipment, the PIC will notify the Director of Operations via telephone upon completion of the retrieve.
6. MSC members are particularly interested in lessons learned regarding disassembly and retrieval of club equipment. Let's learn how to safely enjoy cross-country flights with club equipment while minimizing the risk of damage.
7. Your suggestions are welcome. Call or email the MSC Director of Operations.

**Minnesota Soaring Club
Flight Plan / Altitude Profile Sheet**

Flight Plan Portion

1. Pilot-in-Command _____
2. Observer/Passenger (two-place glider) _____
3. Glider Type and Registration Number _____
4. Departure Airport _____
5. Route of Flight _____
6. Destination _____
7. Estimated Time of Departure _____
8. Estimated Time of Arrival _____

Cross-Country Altitude Profile Portion

(Draw or attach your altitude profile here. See SSA Soaring Flight Manual, Chapter 16)

Minnesota Soaring Club Glider Cross-Country Questions and Answers

Q: I haven't heard of MSC gliders being used for cross-country flight. Is this something new?

A: No. Cross-country flight using MSC equipment is addressed in MSC By-laws and Flight Regulations. See Chapter 8 and other sections of your MSC Member Handbook. A number of MSC members have made cross-country flights in club gliders, but not recently.

Q: Why is this issue receiving so much attention now?

A: While MSC rules have allowed cross-country flights in MSC gliders since 1972, there have been no procedures in place to implement this privilege. In response to member requests, MSC's Director of Operations has implemented these procedures so all members will know the process for seeking approval and conducting cross-country flights in MSC gliders.

Q: Is cross-country flight restricted to any particular MSC equipment?

A: No. Current club rules do not exclude any club glider from being used by qualified MSC members for cross-country flight. However, some club gliders are more easily disassembled and trailered than others. In some cases, MSC may not have adequate trailers, pads, and other equipment to easily trailer a particular club glider. This may prove to be the real challenge in the use of some gliders for cross-country flight.

Q: What is MSC doing to get proper trailers and equipment for each glider?

A: We have trailers for the ASK-21, the Junior and the K-8 although special care is required to get the K-8 into its trailer without damage to the glider. (Some minor trailer work would correct this problem.) The K-7 has an open trailer that also requires care in loading in order not to damage the glider. We have no trailer for the Owl. These trailer issues are not being actively addressed, so we are looking for interested members to work these problems. If you would like to volunteer, contact MSC's Director of Equipment.

Q: I am an MSC member with a glider rating, limited flight experience and lots of questions about cross-country flight. Where do I get my questions answered?

A: A good place to get your questions answered is the annual MSC Cross-country Camp, conducted in May. A number of MSC members are available to answer questions regarding cross-country glider flight. See them at the monthly club meetings or pose your questions via email. In addition, a few MSC members with extensive cross-country experience have expressed willingness to share their techniques in-flight.

Q: After flying around Stanton for years, I finally have a SSA Bronze Badge and want to make my first cross-country flight. I don't have my own glider, so what club glider would I use for my first cross-country attempt?

A: You would likely make your first cross-country flight in the K-8. If you are currently approved to fly the Junior, you may want to have your initial cross-country experience in

it. Discuss this question with an MSC flight instructor or the MSC Director of Operations.

Q: Before launching out on my own, I would like to experience my initial cross-country flight with a club instructor or with an experienced MSC cross-country pilot in one of the club two-place gliders. Is this possible?

A: Yes, in either the K-7 or the ASK-21. We don't currently have a trailer to retrieve the Owl.

Q: Why do the new MSC glider cross-country procedures require me to designate a retrieval crew?

A: Despite good planning and the best of intentions, weather is unpredictable and the glider may be forced to land out. In order to ensure club equipment can be retrieved in a safe and timely manner, the Director of Operations requires an adequate retrieval crew be designated before the flight.

Q: What is an "adequate" retrieval crew for each glider?

A: An adequate crew for the K-8 and Junior would be the pilot plus two (2) crew members. For the two-place gliders, an adequate crew would be the pilot and passenger plus four (4) crew members. The most experienced crew member will likely be designated crew chief and one of the crew members or pilots must have experience in disassembly and loading of the specific glider being retrieved.

Q: Why am I required to designate a route-of-flight and altitude profile?

A: This information, along with other data supplied on the request form, enables the Director of Operations to assess your preparation to conduct a safe flight with the chosen glider under anticipated conditions.

Q: What is the altitude profile and why is it important?

A: It is in the club's best interest to not have a club glider land out. This reduces potential for damage to the glider during retrieval and it also ensures the glider is returned to service quickly. The best way to do this is to plan for the flight to terminate at an airport, preferably back at Stanton. The Director of Operations has chosen to use the cross-country altitude profile to assess the pilots planning and reduce the risk of a land out. By using a cross-country altitude profile as discussed in the SSA Flight Manual, Chapter 16 Cross-Country Soaring, the glider is likely always in gliding distance of an improved landing area. (It will be interesting to see what L/D the pilot chooses to use in the altitude profile.)

Q: I believe that if a club glider is damaged as a result of a cross-country flight, we will have disadvantaged a majority of members while attempting to accommodate the few members who want to use club equipment for cross-country flights. What can I do to ensure club gliders are not put at risk on cross-country flights.

A: Some increased risk, limited by the proposed process, yields increased benefit to MSC members. Restricting club gliders from being made available for cross-country flights would require a change to the MSC by-laws and flight regulations.

Q: I believe that promotion of cross-country flight it is essential to the growth of soaring and retention of MSC members. What can I do to ensure we continue to have the privilege of using MSC equipment for cross-country flights?

A: The best thing you can do as an MSC member to retain this privilege is to use it in a responsible manner, make constructive suggestions, volunteer to resolve the trailer problems and be considerate of the needs of other members.

Q: I have suggestions for changes to the cross-country approval process. Who do I contact?

A: Contact the MSC Director of Operations. His phone and email are on the MSC web site and in the MSC newsletter.

Q: I want to make a cross-country flight with a club glider but the Director of Operations is not available to approve the flight. Is there an alternate approval authority for this use of club gliders?

A: Yes. If the Director of Operations is not available, you may seek approval from any MSC Board member. Since this is a new program, the Director of Operations has elected not to further delegate this authority until we have more experience with the program.

Q: Are these new MSC cross-country approval procedures approved by the MSC Board of Directors?

A: The Director of Operations initiated these procedures under the authority granted in the MSC by-laws as a way of implementing a process for interested members to use club gliders for cross-country flights. These procedures were presented to the MSC Board of Directors by the Director of Operations. Approval by the Board is not required.