COASTAL SOARING ASSOCIATION, INC.

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

Revised 09/17/2010

A. General

1. The sailplane's canopy shall normally be kept closed and the spoilers open whenever the cockpit is unoccupied and members are not actively preflighting or postflighting the sailplane's cockpit.

2. Ground-vehicle tow ropes shall each be at least 50 feet long.

3. Sailplanes shall be tied down if there is risk of gusty winds.

4. Only the specified ground-tow vehicles shall be allowed on or near the runway.

5. With a direct crosswind of less than 10 knots, takeoff on Runway 18 is preferred. In that same case, if traffic permits, landing on Runway 36 is preferred, but only if there is no conflicting traffic in the pattern.

6. All operations are conducted monitoring 122.8 MHz on the radios.

7. All aircraft shall be lubed prior to their first flights each month. All aircraft shall be washed and waxed on the first Saturday of each quarter.

8. Canopy covers shall be stowed so that debris cannot collect on the inner surfaces that could scratch the canopies when the covers are reinstalled.

B. Launch

1. The pilot in command (PIC) has sole responsibility for ensuring the airworthiness of the sailplane, integrity of the towrope, and the competence of the wing crew.

2. The standard Soaring Society of America (SSA) hand signals and procedures shall be used.

3. The sailplane's release mechanism shall be checked by the sailplane pilot prior to the first flight of the day of any sailplane.

4. The tow plane's release mechanism shall be checked by the tow-plane pilot prior to the first tow of the day.

5. A "thumbs up" from the wing crew means that the pattern appears to be clear

and the sailplane appears ready for launch (the speed brakes are in and any tail dolly is off).

5. A “thumbs up” from the PIC means that the pilot is ready for launch and the wing crew should level the wings.

6. Prior to takeoff, the tow-plane pilot shall announce his intentions, e.g., “Coastal Traffic, Pawnee 22 Yankee, taking off runway __ with glider in tow, Coastal” on 122.8.

7. Normally, takeoff and landing operations shall be into the wind.

C. Aerotow

1. The sailplane pilot shall inform the tow pilot of the desired release altitude and location, any planned maneuvers (e.g., “boxing the wake”), or other special considerations prior to launch.

2. Standard SSA tow signals shall be understood and used.

3. The high-tow position shall be used.

4. No maneuvers shall be initiated below 1000 feet AGL while on aerotow.

5. There shall be no accelerated (“slingshot”) tow releases initiated.

6. The sailplane PIC must visually verify the towrope release before executing an immediate and brisk right turn.

7. The aerotow flight path shall be such that the sailplane is within safe gliding distance of the airport, as feasible.

8. Pilots shall be familiar with the emergency landing options at both ends of the runway and know the procedures for premature release from tow. Pilots shall avoid unsafe, low turns back to the airport.

9. In the event of a double-release failure (neither the sailplane nor the tow can release), the sailplane pilot shall make a reasonable effort to break the rope. If this effort is unsuccessful, both the sailplane and the tow shall land out at Site 8A, the helicopter training field immediately northeast of Coastal Airport.

D. General Flight Rules

1. Sailplanes shall normally remain within easy gliding distance of the airport. Sailplanes should be able to return to the field with at least 1000 feet AGL. Pilots shall be conservative when accounting for winds and sink.

2. Remain clear of Site 8A when helicopter training is in progress or radio-controlled aircraft are flying there.

3. No aerobatics are authorized, except for necessary training maneuvers as determined by a Certified Flight Instructor - Glider (CFIG).

4. No intentional off-field landings are authorized, except by prior arrangement.

5. Thermaling rules:

    a) No thermaling is authorized below 1000 feet AGL.

    b) Extreme caution must be exercised when thermaling with other sailplanes.

    c) The established turning direction shall be followed.

    d) When thermaling with other sailplanes, stay in a position where you can see and be seen by others in the thermal.

6. Know and remain clear of the Class C Airspace boundaries (non-transponder equipped sailplanes cannot enter or fly above Class C Airspace without prior ATC authorization).

E. Pattern and Landings

1. Check the wind before entry into the traffic pattern.

2. The normal landing-traffic pattern is to the west of the runway.

3. Begin pattern entry no lower than 1000 feet AGL.

4. Announce pattern entry on 122.8 (e.g., “Coastal Traffic, Grob glider, upwind, landing runway 36, gear down and locked, Coastal”).

5. Minimum pattern airspeed is 150% of the stall speed, plus 50% of the wind speed.

6. Test the spoilers during the early part of the pattern. Leave your left hand on the spoiler handle throughout the remainder of the pattern (this will eliminate grabbing the flap handle rather than the spoiler handle when flying the Blanik).

7. Fly the standard-rectangle landing pattern:

a) Be established at 1000 feet AGL over the intended touchdown point on the upwind leg.

b) Fly the downwind leg to arrive opposite the touchdown point at approximately 600 feet AGL.

c) Deploy the spoilers as required.

d) Turn to base leg so as to allow continued, partial-spoiler deployment and generous obstacle clearance until touchdown.

8. Fly the sailplane onto the runway and avoid pitch attitudes that would cause a tail-first landing.

9. Sailplane pilots shall clear the runway to the west as conditions and safety allow.

10. Use the wheel brake judiciously and release it just before stopping. Avoid full wheel-brake, “tail slam” stops.

F. Cross-Country Flights

1. The Bronze badge, or higher, is a prerequisite for cross-country flying.

2. Members without cross-country experience shall make a simulated outlanding at a field chosen with a club instructor.

3. Prior approval from an instructor is required for any cross-country flights.

4. A competent retrieval crew must be available for any cross-country flights.

G. General Procedures

1. All applicable FARs must be understood and observed.

2. All applicable airport rules must be understood and observed.

3. The bulletin boards shall be checked for any safety- or procedure-related information before each flight.

4. The sailplane shall be returned to the line before the next scheduled flight.

5. If planning to fly through one’s scheduled time into unscheduled time, ensure the ground crew knows the latest you intend to return.

6. Use of the club’s flight-recording device may be scheduled in advance or on a

first-scheduled, first-served basis.

7. Only licensed drivers shall operate the club's ground-tow vehicles.

8. All student solo flights must be approved by a CFIG who is on site for the launch.

9. Members assembling individually-owned sailplanes for flight shall ensure that both a Critical-Assembly Check and a Positive-Control Check are performed prior to moving into the launch position.

10. Introductory rides for the purpose of attracting new members to the club shall be given by pilots with at least a Commercial Pilot - Glider rating.

11. Any pilot who has not acted as PIC of a club aircraft for a period of 120 days or more shall, at a minimum, review these standard operating procedures and attest to the same.

12. A sailplane preflight inspection shall be conducted prior to moving the sailplane into the launch area. Student pilots under the direction of an instructor may conduct a practice preflight if the sailplane has already been staged near the launch area and the preflight does not interfere with airport operations.

13. Any flight or action of questionable safety should be brought to the pilot's attention as soon as possible by an instructor or any available club member. Members shall make a club instructor aware of any such flight or action.

H. Tow-Plane Retrieval

1. In the event of a tow-plane retrieval for a cross-country landout, a club member shall stand by the club cell phone to keep the tow pilot advised of local weather conditions.

2. Tow-plane retrieval shall be charged at $125/hour on the tow-plane tachometer for retrievals outside the local area, as determined by the Board.

I. Tow-Plane Preflight

1. The tow pilot shall preflight the tow plane in accordance with the appropriate checklist.

2. All fueling/defueling of the tow plane shall be accomplished outside of the hangar.

3. The tow pilot shall preflight the tow rope for condition and any knots, and ensure the tow-plane release is operational.

4. The tow rope shall be at least 200 feet long between aircraft attachment points.

5. The tow pilot shall normally ensure that sailplanes are towed for an upwind release.

6. A tow pilot must be current and qualified in Airplane Single-Engine Land (ASEL) operations (three takeoffs and landings in the past 90 days and a current FAA Third-Class Medical or higher).

7. The tow pilot shall contact Pensacola Approach Control prior to the first launch to inform them of the day's planned operations. Additionally, the tow pilot shall contact Approach Control and report the release altitude as soon as the sailplane is off tow.

J. Weather

1. Flight operations shall not be conducted if the crosswind component exceeds 10 knots.

2. Operations in or around thunderstorms and rain squalls and their associated downdrafts shall be strictly avoided.

3. Standing water on the runway at Coastal Airport can be a particular problem, and operations shall be stopped when this condition occurs.

K. Operations/Safety Officer

1. During any sailplane operations, a club member who is Private Pilot - Glider (or higher) certificated or a student/transition-student pilot club member who has completed the designated ground-safety course and been cleared by a CFIG shall be assigned as the CSA Operations/Safety Officer (OSO) and on the field during that day's operations.

2. The OSO shall manage flight operations, specifically observing activity to ensure adherence to these CSA Standard Operating Procedures.

3. The OSO shall pay particular attention to and be observant of weather conditions.

4. The OSO is responsible for keeping the runway and launch area clear of sailplanes, vehicles, spectators, and all collision hazards.

5. The OSO is responsible for oversight of the launch operations to ensure that wing runners have been properly trained and briefed, assist in collision avoidance prior to sailplane launch by observing other aircraft in the traffic pattern that may not be visible to the pilot of the sailplane or the tow plane, and ensure that the sailplane is properly configured prior to takeoff, including the requirement that the canopy is closed, the spoilers are closed prior to and during the takeoff run, and any wheel dolly has been removed.

6. The OSO has the authority to stop, correct, modify, or cease all operations should the situation warrant such action. All safety-related decisions of the OSO are final.

7. The OSO is the point of contact in the event of a sailplane landout, incident, or accident.

8. The OSO shall turn on and carry a handheld radio set to 122.8 MHz, plus turn on and carry the Association's cell phone throughout his duty day.

9. The OSO shall ensure the club's equipment and facilities (aircraft, carts, radios, batteries, hangar doors, fuel-shed padlock, etc.) are secured at the end of each day's flight operations.

10. The OSO earns credit for one tow for each ten launches during duty stood.