



COVID19 – Guidance for Running Visitor Group Events

Introduction:

Managing visitor groups brings with it additional challenges to normal member gliding operations. We know our members reasonably well and can expect that they understand the sensible steps that should be undertaken to keep themselves and fellow members safe. We can similarly expect a degree of honesty from them that would allow us to act swiftly in the event of a positive test that would require cross-club isolation activity.

We cannot make the same assumptions about visitors. Indeed, the ongoing nature of the COVID situation in the UK is symptomatic of the general public not following the rules and/or good practice across the board. It would be safest to operate on the assumption that each and every visitor is a potential COVID carrier.

Finally, notwithstanding the “duty of care” we have to protect both our club members and the general public, when they attend our club, there would also be significant reputational damage for us should we be deemed responsible for an outbreak of infection.

In order to help mitigate all of the above here are some guidelines to follow.

Arrival and Initial Briefing:

Group visitors may arrive en-masse or staggered throughout the evening. For this reason it is essential that they are properly briefed at the earliest opportunity and supervised accordingly. No more than 6 people should gather in a single room in the clubhouse, including in the lecture room. Therefore any member/instructor who takes on the role of setting up and showing the video, ensures that no more than 5 visitors (including spectators) are in the lecture room at any one time.

Travelling to/from the Launchpoint:

Existing rules around escorting visitors to and from the launchpoint apply. If walking to the launchpoint, the escorting member should ensure that visitors maintain 2 meters distance from one another unless, of course, they are from the same household. Club or members' vehicles should not be used to transport visitors. If some visitors have disabilities that necessitate using their own cars, they should be properly briefed or instructed to follow a member in his/her own vehicle or a club vehicle.

Launchpoint Management:

Visitors should be reminded of the need to observe existing COVID guidelines. Visitors should not be allowed into the DP van. Form filling should be done outside, using the clipboard. A list of all attendees must be made; including spectators. This will help facilitate “track and trace” in the event of a subsequent report of COVID infection. Chairs should be arranged outside the DP van in such a manner as to provide adequate distancing. Clipboards and pens should be cleaned after use.

Instructor Responsibilities:

Instructors should only use one of the club's two-seaters on any single Visitor Group event; i.e. they should stick with the same airframe all evening. They are responsible for ensuring that the cockpit is cleaned before the first visitor flight and before every subsequent new visitor flies.

The default position is that masks should be worn. The instructor can discuss with each individual visitor whether either could/should wear a mask and, by mutual consent can fly without masks. However, if masks are not worn, both parties must be aware of the potential risks. Also, there are occasions when, for safety reasons, masks should be removed (e.g. if the instructor's glasses fog up or clearer verbal communication is required).

Very close contact can result if both instructor and visitor climb into/out of the glider at the same time, with both leaning towards each other. Therefore stagger this such that only one enters/exits the cockpit whilst the other supports the open canopy.

Follow-up Action:

If all goes well, and distancing procedures work, we should not have a problem. However, in the event that a positive COVID result is reported, all persons involved in the Visitor Evening should be contacted and advised. For the group, let Pete Desmond know and he will liaise with the group contact/organiser.

Conclusion:

We want to give visitors a memorable experience for the right reasons. By applying these sensible precautions we should achieve that every time. Even if there is no COVID incident, we will have sent a very clear message to visitors that BFGC is a club that operates in a professional manner and that we take the COVID risk seriously.

Pete Desmond