

Outlandings - Be Prepared

Any cross-country flight might be terminated with an outlanding. Are you prepared?

This article is intended to cover the preparation for the possibility of an outlanding. Refer to Allan Latemore's article for the technicalities of paddock selection and execution of an outlanding.

It is worthwhile making an outlanding kit containing the following:

- Torch (A wind up dynamo version is preferred)
- Notepad
- Retractable pencils (pens dry up)
- Compass
- Map of flying area
- Signalling mirror
- Emergency food (non perishable such as muesli bars)
- Money
- Strobe light (which can be plugged into the glider battery)
- Blue tack (to attach the strobe to the glider)
- List of telephone numbers and radio frequencies
- Space blanket
- Lightweight waterproof coat
- Aspirins and Insect repellent
- A paperback book
- Outlanding checklist (see end of article).

This may seem a long list but I can assure you that all the above items take up little space, weigh little, and are very useful. The kit could be kept in a sandwich container or small backpack. Above all you must have **PLENTY OF WATER**.

Other Optional Items

Hand held VHF radio. Batteries are best kept out of the radio to prolong battery life and installed when needed.

PLB (Personal Locator Beacon). Rather expensive and only useful in an emergency but will give immediate help from the emergency services.

SPOT. Very useful device for giving outlanding/OPS normal messages (including Lat. and Long. position) via satellite to sms and email and indirect contact to the emergency services if required.

So what is the procedure when landing out? Once you get down to a height that you think it is probable that you will land out give a call on the radio. Don't leave it until you are on finals you may not be heard and your workload will be too high (Aviate, Navigate Communicate). A position on a GPS can be very useful. Give your distance and bearing to your next turn-point. If you manage to get away make a call to say so. If you do commit to landing then a call "XOW landing out" should be enough. Once you are safely on the ground make an effort

to contact another aircraft. If you are lucky enough to make contact pass on your exact details and make your intentions clear. For example you may call for an aerotow (airstrips only) or you will be walking to a nearby farmhouse to find a phone. Attempt to find the owner of the property and ask for permission for whatever you intend to do.

You may now be in a position to wait for your crew. If you are, not do not rush into making decisions as to what to do next. It is not possible to give all the alternatives but you have to consider factors such as landing in the morning 40-degree heat, landing on a winter afternoon with changing weather and inadequate clothing. One of the safest decisions may be to stay with the glider and maybe even wait until the morning. You can always call up the commercial traffic on the international distress frequency 121.5 if your life is in danger.

If you have a GPS get a fix of your location. If the decision is made to leave the glider go through the checklist you have with you. Take a note of your location and as you walk draw out a map. It is highly probable that after a long walk you may forget where you have come from and who you want to ring so write it down. Don't rush off, there may be a farmhouse just over the next hill, I have on a number of occasions found one after getting back to the glider after a previously fruitless long walk. Don't leave your glider without taking water. What looks like a short walk from the air may actually take an hour, are you prepared to walk for that long in 40 degrees? If not it may be better to wait until later in the day. Be careful about setting off without a clear idea of where you are going you may run out of water. Stick to roads and lanes as they usually lead somewhere. If you are in doubt and have no definite town or road to head for be prepared to go back to the glider.

Is your car or your crew car suitably equipped and full of fuel? Leave a note as to any of the cars peculiarities, i.e. "fuel gauge doesn't work but you can do 300K". You may also like to leave a note to ring someone to say you are OK. You should have country road maps in the car. Naturally the trailer should be in good working order; it's your glider you are going to put in it. Inform the duty pilot the course you intend to take, it is also advisable to call in each turning point you round and where you are going next.

For the retrieve crew: If you are lucky you may have exact details where to go, however don't rush off. If the pilot has given his position and says he is going to a farm house, wait till he rings in, you will only get to the glider and then have to find the pilot, in addition he may not be 100% sure of his location. Once you have made the decision to go be sure you have suitable maps, the country road map should be in the car and if not grab one from someone else. If you can't find the glider immediately study the map to find the most suitable way of viewing the area with the roads available. Be prepared to ring the club if the search is proving useless. If you get to the glider and the pilot is not there do not start to de-rig, unless you are fully familiar with the glider and trailer. If you damage the glider you may to deal with a feral pilot.

This might seem intimidating but outlandings can be fun, often make good stories for the bar and will give you a confidence boost.

Based on an article originally written by James Cooper of the Gliding Club of Western Australia (my mentor).

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Outlanding Checklist

- GLIDER TIED DOWN
- CONTROLS LOCKED
- BATTERY OFF
- RADIO OFF / REMOVED / HIDDEN
- OXYGEN OFF
- GPS REMOVED
- GPS FIX AND LOCATION NOTED
- STROBE ON
- CANOPY COVER ON
- CARRYING MONEY, PENCIL, NOTEPAD, WATER, COMPASS, MIRROR, TORCH, HAT, SUNGLASSES, INSECT REPELLENT