

# Glider Conversions

As your flying hours and experience increase you will be able to fly new glider types in the club fleet. As well as a performance increase, each glider has different handling qualities and possibly new features you have not experienced yet. Water Ballast, Trailing Edge Brakes and Flaps are just a few. Combine this with learning to fly the glider correctly and knowing how to de-rig the glider for cross country flying and there is a lot to familiarise yourself with. It is clear that all of this cannot be learned in a very short time so some preparation is needed.

## Manuals

Thoroughly read and understand the gliders flight manual and the club pilot handling guide. This will outline the glider operation and limitations. Read and understand the gliders instrument manuals and guides. If they instruments you have not used before then it is in your interest to learn how to operate them on the ground, not in the air. Read the glider de-rig guide and familiarise yourself with the glider's trailer. If the glider in question has outlanded or needs to be de-rigged, get involved and learn how to do it with practical experience as you might be the next to land it in a paddock.

Doing all this can take some time so don't leave it until the morning you are planning to fly for the first time as it will only make you rush things. When you are getting close to getting to flying a particular glider type, start looking at the reference material. It is available on the club website and in hardcover in the briefing room at the clubhouse.

## Cockpit Familiarisation

Obviously the cockpit layout of the glider you are converting to will be different to what you are used to so it is a good idea to take some time on the ground by sitting in the cockpit with parachute on and familiarise yourself with the controls. This is also a good time to make sure you are comfortable. Go through the motions of a takeoff and landing to make sure everything is done correctly.

## First flights

Only convert to a new glider type in favourable weather conditions. Take a higher than normal aerotow to give you time in case you don't find lift. Once you are reasonably comfortable with the glider and have some height try operating controls such as undercarriage and airbrakes to get the feel for them. Try out both the low and high speed range of the glider (weather permitting) and maybe try a stall or two. Before taking a glider cross country you must have done five good takeoffs and landings to make sure you are familiar with the type. This may be waved by the duty instructor.