

## **EHPU 2010: Airspace Position Paper**

The aim of the European Hang Gliding and Paragliding Union (EHPU) is to promote and protect hang gliding and paragliding in Europe. The EHPU seeks in particular to consult and negotiate with all relevant regulatory authorities in Europe to this end.

In Europe there are at least 115,000 hang glider and paraglider pilots with over 115,000 aircraft (many pilots own more than one aircraft). On a weekend day with good thermal conditions a total of over 200,000 km of cross-country flights are typically flown by at least 20,000 hang glider and paraglider pilots. Normally airspace with ICAO classification G and E is used.

Hang gliding and paragliding are the most elementary forms of controlled flying: a minimal amount of equipment is needed. Hang gliding and paragliding activity is very hard to control because take off and landing is possible nearly anywhere. The National hang gliding and paragliding Associations play an important role in ensuring that restrictions are respected by pilots.

Hang glider and paraglider pilots have a justified expectation that their right of access to airspace for their air sports will be protected. Just as on land on water where ample space is reserved for people who enjoy their sports in those dimensions; like hikers, joggers, cyclists, sailors, swimmers, kayakers and canoeists. In the air it is equally justified to require that space is made available for recreational and sporting activities. It should be fundamental that adequate airspace for simple non-engine aircraft with minimal electronic equipment will be ensured throughout the EU.

Legislative developments in the airspace over Europe imply a substantial reduction in airspace available for air sports, including hang gliding and paragliding. In addition to these changes there is an increase in the requirement for equipment like transponders and radios. In general, the EHPU does not support these changes.

It is important that European Airspace Rules do not restrict hang gliding and paragliding in the future any more than is already the case: cross-country flying is an essential part of our sport. Nearly all hang gliding and paragliding competitions consist of cross-country flights.

The established and well-proven principle of see and avoid in G and E airspace should be available over the whole of Europe, except where there is a clearly demonstrable and irrefutable need for a restriction. New technologies should only be applied where appropriate, practicable and affordable.

The hang gliding and paragliding community is not prepared to pay for services that it does not use, it does not need, and does not get any benefits from.

Changes of air space regulations must be subject to a full consultation with all affected parties. The consultation must include a full Safety, Environmental and Regulatory Impact Assessment.

In conclusion the EHPU supports sensible applications of procedures, which do not increase current restrictions for hang gliding and paragliding across Europe in the future.

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