Somerset Soaring Ventures

Somerset Airport (SMQ)
Standard Operating Procedures
Glider Flight Operations

Owner & Tow Pilot
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Our Primary Concern Is Your Safety

SSV offers glider rides to the public who wish to experience the enjoyment of motorless flight. We also offer flight training for those who want to learn the sport and obtain a FAA license. With a private glider license, an individual may fly a glider solo or take passengers for a ride.

The commercial pilots and instructors who fly for SSV are FAA certified and their primary concern is your safety and enjoyment of the sport. All glider students, pilots and line support staff must follow their directions at all times.

As a student or local pilot, flying at Somerset airport, you are required to read and understand the guidelines and operating procedures set forth in this document. If something is not clear to you or you need further information, please ask one of the SSV staff.

Thank you for flying at SSV and we hope that you find as much enjoyment in the sport as we do.

Jay Hahola
Owner, Somerset Soaring Ventures

Checklist

All pilots must use a preflight, pre-takeoff and pre-landing checklist while operating at Somerset airport. Checklists are specific to each glider. SSV will provide a checklist for students and SSV gliders. Clubs and private owners must provide their own checklist and be prepared to show it to SSV staff if requested to do so.

Staging of gliders on the field

All gliders being prepared for flight must be staged on the south side of RW 26. They must be far enough away so landing aircraft do not fly directly over them. All pilots must perform a positive control check on their gliders when in the staging area. SSV line staff will assist pilots in moving their gliders into position when they are next in line to launch. We ask that you are ready to launch when the tow plane returns from the previous launch. Tow intervals are about 10 minutes, depending on the tow altitude.

Launch Procedures

The glider pilot in the cockpit preparing to launch is responsible to be aware of the operations taking place around him/her at the time of launch. At anytime during the launch procedure the glider pilot may abort the launch by releasing the tow rope and opening the canopy.

1. The pilot will tell the line staff the desired height of tow. The line staff will signal the height to the tow pilot.

2. The tow plane will move into position in front of the glider.

3. When the pilot signals to the line staff that he/she is ready for the tow rope to be connected, the line staff will connect it and offer the pilot a release check.

4. When the pilot is ready he/she will signal the line person with a thumbs up signal.

5. The line staff will then lift the wing to signal the tow pilot that the glider is ready to launch.

6. The tow pilot will wag the tow plane rudder, the glider pilot will wag the glider's rudder and they will commence the launch.

7. If there is no wing runner, the tow plane is signaled that the glider is ready to launch when the pilot closes the canopy.

8. If you have a radio tune to 123.0 while on tow and 123.3 when off tow. Before entering landing pattern retune to 123.0.

After Launch Climb out Procedure

After launch it is standard for the tow plane to turn right. This is to avoid flying over the power runways, 30 and 12.

Emergency Rope Break Procedure

Review Image 1 for standard rope break procedures. As you can see there are left, right and straight ahead options in the event of a rope break or tow plane malfunction. You should review this with an instructor and also go to the end of the RW 26 to look at the available areas to land in. At SSV we adhere to the over 200' rule. In making a turn back to the airport we teach turning to the left. This turns you into the wind and helps align you with RW 8. Of course depending the specific situation and conditions, other options may prove more appropriate. It is the pilot's ultimate decision.

Landing Procedures

SSV uses a Right Hand landing pattern on Runway 26 and Left Hand landing pattern on Runway 8. See Image 2. RW 26 is the pattern used 95% of the time, although RW 8 is also used. Please see Image 1 for a photo and drawings of the patterns. In a normal landing, on RW08 the glider does not fly over the power runways. Enter either pattern at 1000' above the ground. Once you have committed to the landing you must proceed to land. Do not attempt to thermal once in the pattern. Airport altitude in 105' above sea level.

Be alert for gliders in the other pattern. If 2 gliders are in opposite patterns at the same time, the glider in the RW 8 pattern should make an effort to deviate to the RW 26 pattern behind the other glider. Safety is the deciding factor. If 2 gliders are landing in opposing directions, upon landing each glider should veer to the right when on the ground. Otherwise it is standard to veer to the north side of the runway when using either runway.

Somerset Landing Pattern Usage and Radios

Everyone is encouraged to fly with a radio and use it to announce your entry into the landing pattern for RW26. It is not mandatory to have a radio for RW26. But it is encouraged. All landings on RW08 **must** be announced on a radio and the standard landing pattern for RW08 is to be adhered to. Radio use for RW08 is mandatory. When RW26 is in use do not use RW08 if there is more then a 3kt tailwind. If you have a doubt about the wind do not use RW08. When landing on RW08 the pilot is to bring the glider to a stop before the first glider parking space on the north side of the runway.

If Glider Inadvertently Takes Off With Spoilers Open

A. If the tow plane IS NOT able to climb and gain altitude:

1. The tow pilot will use the standard SSA approved signal of a rudder waggle, signaling to the glider pilot that the spoilers are open.

2. The tow pilot and ground operations will immediately attempt to contact glider pilot on the radio, 123.00.

3. If the glider pilot does not close spoilers, the tow pilot will give the emergency release signal.

4. If the flight of the tow plane is in eminent danger, the tow pilot will release the glider.

B. If the tow plane IS able to climb and gain altitude:

1. The tow pilot and ground operations will immediately attempt to contact glider pilot on the radio, 123.00.

2. The tow pilot will stay in close vicinity of the airport and climb to pattern altitude.

3. Once at pattern altitude the tow pilot will use the standard SSA approved signal of a rudder waggle, signaling to the glider pilot that the spoilers are open.

4. If the glider pilot does not close spoilers after several rudder waggles the tow pilot will give the emergency release signal.

Line Staff / Wing Runners

The SSV line staff consists of a group of young future pilots and local pilots and instructors. The younger members of our staff are from a local Aviation Explorers group. To qualify for the position they must first complete the "Wing Runners Training Course" and present a copy of the competition certificate to a SSV instructor. The course website location is www.soaringsafety.org/dl.asp

It is the responsibility of the line staff and wing runners to help ensure the correct operation on the flight line. They must stay alert during the launch and landing operations, making sure there are no conflicts. The staff is to assist ride passengers in whatever way possible. They should not assist student pilots in other than basic operations. The students are here to learn.

The public is very often near the gliders when launching. Watch out for them and make sure they are kept safe.

Image 1, Landing Patterns

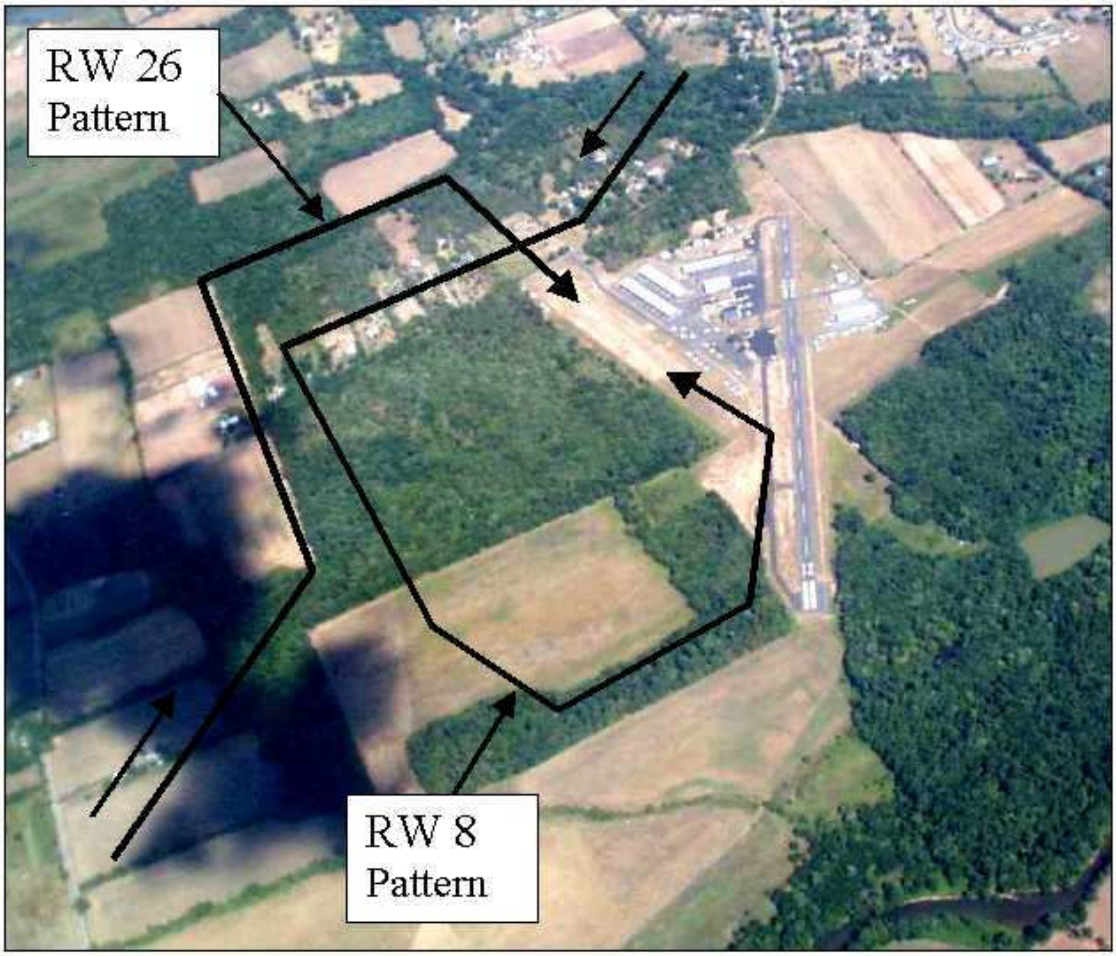

Image 2, Emergency Procedures (Please talk to an instructor)

RECOMMENDED STANDARD AMERICAN SOARING SIGNALS