

ing in uncontrolled airspace, if the pilot holds an instrument or ATR rating, clouds can be entered without clearance from air traffic control. When the sailplane reaches 14,500 feet, however, it enters the continental control area where different rules apply: Five-mile visibility, 1,000 feet under and 1,000 feet over, and 1 mile horizontal separation from clouds. The entire airspace over the continental United States above 14,500 feet is controlled airspace, and cloud flying is not permitted without an instrument rated pilot and a clearance from ATC. If these requirements are met the sailplane may then climb on instruments up to an altitude of 24,000 feet, (17,000 feet in certain airways), this part of the flight being conducted under an IFR flight plan. There is no prohibition against VFR flight between 14,500 feet and 24,000 feet except on the certain designated airways where positive control route segments are in effect.

Lest we become discouraged that we are forever prohibited from going above 24,000 feet, the rules and regulations state that "the Director of the Bureau of Air Traffic Management or his designated representative may authorize deviation from the requirements of the regulation prohibiting VFR flight activities and mandatory instruments and instrument rated pilot, transponder, and pilot-controller communications." The rule further states how such authorization might be obtained, and sets up procedures for obtaining permission to deviate.

This SSA committee is presently working out a plan which will permit high altitude flights so that soaring pilots may make use of airspace above 24,000 feet on a VFR type basis. We are proposing that areas be set up by prior arrangement between the pilots and the local air route traffic control centers and that permission be granted for soaring flights within these areas providing notification of the flights is given to the center involved, clearance for the flights given by the center, and visual reference to the ground is maintained in order that the area boundaries will not be crossed. This would eliminate the need for 2-way radio, transponders, and instrument rated pilots in our high altitude flying. As soon as this plan is finalized full

details will be published in *Soaring*.

Any questions? Please address them to John D. Ryan, 8040 Mohave Road, Scottsdale, Arizona, and I will do my best to answer them for you.

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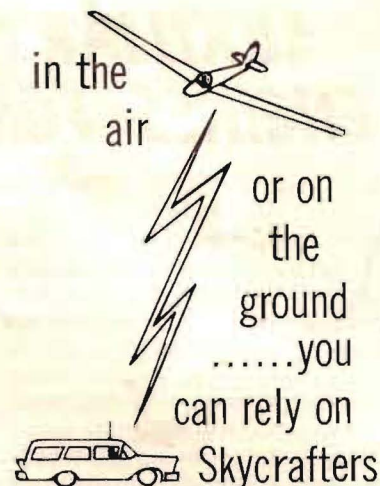
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