

WAY NOW OPEN FOR GLIDER FLYING IN POSITIVE CONTROL AIRSPACE

by JOHN D. RYAN, Chairman
SSA Governmental Rules and Regulations Committee

In a recent *Soaring* article, "Know The Law," it was pointed out that glider flying above 24,000' (18,000' in some areas) was effectively prohibited by Special Regulation 424-C which required radar beacon transponders, etc., of all aircraft operating in such space. Several months ago, the SSA Governmental Rules and Regulations Committee approached FAA in an attempt to work out an arrangement whereby gliders could use this airspace after having received prior permission. The SSA proposal recommended that the following steps be taken:

1. The individual or group involved shall contact the appropriate ATC center and discuss the proposed flights with the chief thereof, explaining the entire operation, in order that no possible misunderstanding can take place.

2. A Sectional chart shall be presented showing an area or areas in which clearance may be required for high altitude flights and copies of this chart shall be retained both by the center and the individual or groups involved. (Due to varying meteorological conditions clearance in different areas may be required from time to time, and the desired areas should be similarly numbered or lettered on both sets of charts in order that, when clearance is requested at a later date, mention need be made only of "Area A, Area B, etc.," and no misunderstanding or confusion can result in the identification of the airspace in which clearance is being requested).

3. When flight is desired in one of the areas previously delineated the individual or group involved shall request clearance for the flight from the appropriate center either in person, by telephone or by radio. This request shall indicate the time at which the flight wishes to start using the airspace, the identification of the airspace by reference to the previously agreed upon area or areas, and the length of time for which the clearance is desired. In addition, the center

shall be informed as to whether or not radio communications will be maintained between the glider and the center and if such communications are possible, an appropriate frequency shall be agreed upon.

4. It shall be understood that one or more gliders may be using the area or areas involved at the same time. This presents no danger as all flight shall be conducted in a manner which will assure the following:

a. Visual reference to the ground shall be maintained at all times in order that the flight will not violate the boundaries of the assigned airspace.

b. Flight shall be conducted clear of clouds at all times.

c. No flight shall be made in positive controlled airspace without a clearance from ATC.

d. All flight in positive controlled airspace shall be terminated before the final time limit of the clearance, unless an extension is granted by the appropriate center involved (this might take place in cases where radio communication is available).

d. When the above provisions are complied with this shall constitute a waiver of provisions (1)(b) and (c) of SR-424 C.

It was felt that the above would serve to open the way for glider flying at high altitudes. Under date of December 3, 1963, the following letter was received from FAA:

Mr. John D. Ryan
Chairman, Governmental Rules
and Regulations Committee
The Soaring Society of America, Inc.
8040 Mohave Road
Scottsdale, Arizona 85251
Dear Mr. Ryan:

This is further reply to your letter of August 28, 1963, concerning glider flight in positive control airspace. We have completed our review of your proposal and our over-all reaction is that the proposal is practical.

We recommend that soaring groups arrange meetings, well in advance of the proposed operation, with the FAA Air Route Traffic Control Center having jurisdiction over the particular airspace.

Through these meetings, the soaring groups and the center concerned will work out the necessary arrangements to conduct such operations. The soaring group should be prepared to supply the center officials the following details:

1. The particular rules with which the flight cannot comply.

2. The airspace in which the flight desires to operate.

3. Air/ground communications capabilities.

4. The method by which the center will be informed of the time of launch and landing time in the event that air/ground communications are not available.

5. The flight plan.

We suggest that coordination with ARTCC's be accomplished well in advance of each operation. This is particularly true of initial coordination to obtain an operating area. Sixty days would not be excessive in such cases. We are confident, however, that as experience is gained and requirements and capabilities are identified, the need for coordination and lead time will be reduced.

Sincerely yours,
/s/ Lee E. Warren
Director
Air Traffic Service

It has been learned that one of the clubs in Colorado has already set up such a procedure as is outlined above and now has the way open for wave flying in their locality. Although it has not been mentioned specifically in the above letter from FAA, it is probable that all the centers in the western part

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