

# Tractor Driving & Glider Retrieve Briefing

## Notes for the Instructor:

- Brief how to DI the tractor, particularly how to check the fluids.
- Brief how to start & stop the engine, the throttle & gear shift positions, and the other controls of the tractor.
- It is recommended that the student is given at least two tows with the instructor riding on the tractor, and to be further observed solo before signing up, but use discretion.

## General Tractor Driving:

- Always use high ratio with 3<sup>rd</sup> gear for non-towing, and 2<sup>nd</sup> gear when towing. Do not change gear while moving. Select appropriate gear when stationary before moving off.
- Do NOT slip the clutch after you have got moving. Use the throttle to control speed.
- Never rely on the brakes to stop you. They do not always work, and the use of brakes on wet grass causes ground damage.
- Always drive slowly particularly over grass. There are holes. Avoid the use of full steering lock, which will damage the grass, and can easily overturn a tractor.
- ALWAYS keep a **VERY GOOD LOOKOUT**, particularly if crossing landing areas.
- Do NOT allow children to ride on the back of tractors.

## Towing a Glider: (This applies whatever vehicle you are using)

- Understand that the vehicle driver has the most control & therefore the most responsibility for the safety of this operation. Windows should be opened if not using a tractor.
- The tow rope must be at least a wingspan long.
- Start towing when the glider crew signal to do so, first check clear ahead, then start moving **SLOWLY** forward in the direction the glider is pointing, while looking **BACKWARDS** at the glider. Look backwards for most of the time while towing, watching for signals from the glider crew, and also to judge an appropriate walking speed.
- Generally retrieve gliders parallel to, but clear of landing areas and launch lines. Then make a gentle 90 degree turn when abeam the launch point to complete the retrieve.
- Keep **WELL CLEAR** of obstructions which the glider will hit if it follows you, and you must assume that the glider will follow you between your tyre tracks. STOP if the glider goes wide of your tracks or if the tow rope angle becomes oblique. Then wait until the glider is re-aligned before continuing.
- Be careful crossing winch cables etc, gliders with tail skids can pick them up. Keep clear of holes in the ground, landing lights etc, but advise the wingtip holder of any such obstructions if you spot them.
- Never turn tightly to align the glider with the launch direction at the launch point. It is better to approach the launch point at right angles to the launch line & stop. Then release the rope and rotate the glider through 90 degrees by hand.
- Be aware of landing gliders, they can come from any direction. If a glider is approaching and looks likely to land near to you STOP. Signal to the glider crew to put the wing down to indicate to the pilot that you have stopped.
- After the retrieve, **DO NOT** assume that the rope has been released from the glider. This causes serious accidents. Drive off very slowly watching to see that the rope is free from the glider.