

29/10/2021

Dear fellow EMC flyers,

New Flying Rules for Chapel Farm

Having been elected as Air section secretary at the last AGM, probably my most important role is to oversee the safety of our activities. I must say that I feel rather like the poacher turned gamekeeper!

In my opinion the old rule set had become cumbersome, and contained repetitions and omissions. So a group of us have spent a fair amount of effort trying to improve them. These have now been accepted by a majority vote at the recent air section sub committee meeting. We have to regard these new rules as being a living document. It seems that however many people look at some wording, another interprets them in another way. So I fully expect to revisit the document for further refinement.

The most important thing about the rules is what is not included. This is because we as EMC accept the BMFA's "Members handbook" as being the starting point of our rules; anything written by us is an extension to the BMFA's guidelines, which to us are now our rules. (rule 6) These include references to relevant CAA legislation.

One of the primary recommendations of the BMFA is that a club should have a Safety Officer. This I regard as being the primary role of the Air Section Secretary. As I am unable to be there all of the time, our system of "Duty Officers" are the Safety Officers on the day. I think that we should change their job title.

We have also voted to accept a second document, which attempts to lay out the role of the "Duty Officer"

I know that blokes do not read instructions, but I strongly recommend you all to become fully conversant with the above documents, and also the BMFA and CAA documents. It is in your personal interest to do so!

This is because:

The pilot in charge is legally responsible for the safe operation of their model aircraft.

The club safety officers are there to assist you, and to protect the interests of the club as a whole.

If the unthinkable were to happen, and your actions with your aircraft led to an injury or fatality, you are the one who would stand in the dock, with your model as exhibit A!

As a very young flyer I had the unpleasant experience of "staring down the barrel of that gun", and it has stayed with me ever since. So as they say prevention is better than cure, and preparation is key.

One of my next tasks, following on from the above, is to actively seek out as many prospective Duty/ safety officers as I can from our membership. I have an initial short list that has been approved by the sub committee to begin with. It is my hope that having as many people on the list as we can, who of course would all be key holders, we will be able to open the field much more regularly in the future, for all of us to enjoy more **friendly flying fun, in safety.**

All the best,
Charles Smitheman