

# Nov '09 Safety Newsletter

Dear fellow aviators,

Welcome to the November Safety Newsletter. You may have noticed that this monthly Safety Newsletter is turning into a quarterly publication. This is good for two, nay three reasons:

Firstly, you are not being bombarded with this material every month!

Secondly, as we deal with the safety issues there should be less and less to write about. And that is good news!

And thirdly, less writing for me!

The topics for this month are:

[Lining up for take-off in the undershoot RW 11 or RW 29.](#)

There seems to be an unhealthy habit creeping in of lining up for take-off and then holding position while an aircraft flies down finals, flies overhead the aircraft in the undershoot and lands on the runway. This is not good practice for several reasons. Firstly, the aircraft on finals will be unsure of the intention of the aircraft lined up. Is he going to hold or take-off? Secondly, the aircraft lined up loses sight of the aircraft on finals.

So what should you do?

1. Do not line up for take off until you know you can commence the take off without delay.
2. If you have lined up and then for some reason you have to hold, taxi back to the position where you completed your checks so you can once again see aircraft on base leg and finals.

## **Parking position for SB.**

The second (inner) set of gates into the "X" parking area is extremely marginal for the Slingsby. The contractor made a mistake and is in the process of widening these gates. To avoid possible taxi incidents we are going to operate the Slingsby from "W" area for the time being until we can remedy the gate situation. Watch this space.

## **Helicopter on finals RW11 with fixed wing aircraft ready for take-off.**

Fixed wing aircraft have been taking off with helicopters ahead and on finals for the grass RW 11, with the result that separation has been marginal.

When the helicopter is on finals RW 11 it follows the tree line adjacent to the runway such that should it suffer an engine failure it can land on the main runway 11. While following the tree line the helicopter will be reducing speed to something like 20 to 30 kts. When the helicopter is on short finals for the grass it breaks right away from the main runway to line up with the white dot on the grass area.

So what should us fixed wing pilots be doing?

Firstly, remember that while you are still on the ground ALL aircraft in the air have right of way. So we must give way to the helicopter in this situation.

Secondly, if the helicopter is already ahead of you when you want to take off RW11 you must hold position until you see the helicopter break right away from the tree line.

When RW29 is in use there is plenty of separation.

## **Club Aircraft call signs. THEY ARE CHANGING WITH IMMEDIATE EFFECT!**

With the advent of mixed helicopter / fixed wing flying and other aircraft in Hong Kong with similar call signs to club aircraft (there are two HN's in Hong Kong now) we have decided to amend the club aircraft call signs to include the aircraft type. Also, to identify student pilots to ATC and other club pilots, such that no undue demands should be made of the student pilot, we have decided to pre-fix the aircraft call sign with

the words "student pilot". This is being implemented in the UK already and is working very well.

So, we shall only be using the last two letters of the aircraft registration together with the appropriate pre-fix. Here are some examples to make it clear:

*"Cessna RH"* for a PPL member

*"Helicopter WD"* for a PPL member

*"Student Pilot Cessna HN"* for a student

So get in that nice comfortable armchair and get practicing these new call signs!

### **Shek Kong R/T procedures**

It has become common practice for club members and instructors to make an R/T call for, "all aircraft in the Shek Kong bowl please state position" or "all aircraft in the circuit please state position".

At first glance this may seem like good practice, but it is not for the following reasons:

1. It is cluttering up the frequency such that other more essential R/T calls may be missed.
2. It is increasing everybody's workload.
3. You only need one aircraft to "not answer" and you have a false picture of the traffic situation.
4. This practice may be discouraging people from maintaining a good "listen out " and "good lookout" that is essential for good situational awareness.

So please, rather than make these calls for traffic information, work at enhancing your listen out and lookout to get the full picture of the traffic situation. There will be occasions when you need clarification of an aircrafts position and of course it is OK to ask on the radio in that situation. But it should not become normal practice.

Here are some suggestions for you:

When rejoining the VHSK bowl change frequency to 123.6 early (before Kadoorie Gap) such that you can listen out for two minutes before you reach the bowl. All circuit traffic should have made a position report within that time.

If you are holding in the overhead and you hear an aircraft entering the bowl tell them you are there. Again, maintain a good listen out and avoid any possible conflicts in the overhead.

When leaving the bowl call HK Info before you get to KDG to find out if there are any aircraft entering the bowl. This is particularly important when the cloud base is low such that aircraft rejoining may also be at 1500 ft! And just to clarify this situation, if you think you will not be able to re-enter the bowl at 2000ft DO NOT LEAVE THE BOWL.

That's all I have for the time being. We do have a couple of Safety Seminars lined up for the near future. One will be "Helicopter Operations in Confined Areas" and the other will be "Mountain Flying". Keep your eyes peeled for announcements!

One last thought, the temperatures are dropping in Hong Kong and the Relative Humidity is still high. This means we have the perfect conditions for SERIOUS CARBURETTOR ICING. Make sure you use plenty of carb heat when you fly and remember:

**Carb heat is only effective at HIGH power settings**

**Carb icing is most serious at LOW power settings**

**It takes 15 seconds of carb heat at a high power setting for it to be effective**

Happy and safe flying

Bob