

Competitor's Licences, Competitions and Insurance

By Tim Shirley

Most pilots who have been involved with the gliding competition scene or who are owners of gliders will know that the insurance requirements have changed considerably over the last few years.

In the old days, we were free to decide our own level of insurance – the risk was ours and we decided whether the risk was worth the premium. Perhaps unfortunately, those days are past.

This is not the GFA's fault, or a choice GFA made. Rather it is a change that has occurred across the board in society. We will all have an opinion about whether it is a good thing – but good or bad we cannot ignore it.

One of the concerns that Sports Committee had was to ensure the protection of Competition officials from the possibility of litigation arising from accidents during a competition. Although there has never been such a case in gliding in Australia, there have been cases in other sports. The GFA consulted OAMPS – the most experienced glider insurance broker – and arranged for special cover to be available to competition pilots which would give protection to officials when the glider was being flown in a competition.

This involved a requirement for the competition to operate to certain basic standards, which were set in consultation between Sports Committee and the insurers. As a result we now have a concept of “endorsed” competitions. The endorsement is done by the Sports Committee. Organisers need to request the endorsement from the [CSC](#) or [NCC Convenor](#), which will be provided by email.

The requirements for endorsement are:

- Competition Director (CD) to be approved by CSC or delegate
- Safety Officer to be approved by RTO/Ops
- CD and Safety Officer to be different people in Nationals and State Comps
- Insurance to include the General Competition Endorsement on all policies, and a minimum of \$1M Third Party Liability cover for all pilots.
- All pilots are required to have an FAI Competitors Licence.

This applies to all major competitions – Nationals, State Competitions and other events whose scope goes beyond a normal club operation. Club Regattas do not need this endorsement because they are run under the control of a club operation and are therefore protected under insurance which covers instructors.

While we would probably all prefer that it wasn't necessary, this endorsement process is a fact of life. The requirements are not excessive - in fact most gliders already carry the necessary insurance and most pilots who compete at this level hold an FAI Competitor's Licence.

If you have any questions about this, you can contact the [CSC](#) or [NCC Convenor](#) via the GFA web site.

FAI Competitors Licence

An FAI Competitors Licence can be obtained from the [FAI Certificates Officer](#) by sending the completed [application form](#), two passport size photos with the name printed on the back of the photographs in pencil and the appropriate fee. Contact details via the GFA web site

N.B. The initial application must also be signed off by the applicant's club CFI.

Renewals are also done by [FAI Certificates Officer](#) by sending the Licence plus appropriate fee to the above address.

Licence Fees

An F.A.I. Sporting Licence is issued at a charge of \$20 for a new licence valid for two years and subsequent renewals are charged at \$10 for 2 years made payable to the GFA.