

Glider Operation Procedure for Pierce County Airport - Thun Field

Outline:

This procedure guide is designed to facilitate glider operation at the Pierce County Airport - Thun field by Puget Sound Soaring Association. This guideline is to clarify the operation, but is in no way replacing or changing existing rules and regulations.

Airport description:

Field elevation:	538 feet
Traffic Pattern Altitude:	1,500 feet
Frequency:	122.7
Runway:	16 / 34
Runway length:	3,650 feet, paved
Airspace:	Class B floor at 5,000 feet overlying the Airport

Operation Description:

To ensure that there is a minimal inconvenience to general aviation, tow plane and glider should not move on to the runway until the aircraft, pilot, and if applicable, passenger/student are ready to go. No preflight checks on runway. All preflight checks have to be conducted in the staging area. Glider Pilot and passenger/student have to be strapped in and ready to go in the staging area. When ready, tow plane and glider will move on to the runway at the same time. (Note: glider will be moved by ground crew). Tow plane will announce: *"Pierce County traffic, 3TM moving on to runway 16/34 for staging"*. Ground crew will hook up glider and tow plane. Tow plane picks up slack as soon as signaled, making radio announcement: *"Pierce County traffic, 3TM picking up slack"*. When signaled, tow plane takes off with glider, making announcement: *"Pierce County traffic, 3TM taking off on runway 16/34 glider in tow, eastbound"*. Climb to the assigned altitude to the east of the Airport, clear of the traffic pattern.

After release, tow plane returns for landing using left hand pattern for runway 16 or 34, dropping rope to the east of the runway, making the customary announcements, including: *"Pierce County traffic, 3TM on short final, dropping rope"*. After landing, tow plane exits runway, making announcement *"Clear of runway"* and returns to staging area via taxi way.

Gliders will fly to the east of the airport, up to but not including 5,000 feet ASL (Seattle class B airspace floor is 5,000 feet)

Gliders will use a right hand traffic pattern for landing, making all necessary radio announcements. For landing on runway 16, glider will cross mid-field, 500 feet above pattern altitude, and then enter the downwind right for landing on 16.

To facilitate expedient clearing of the runway, all gliders are required to land in as short as possible but safe roll out. The ground crew will be there to assist with the clearing of the glider from the runway. Ground crew or glider pilot will make announcement *"Glider clear the active"* as soon as the glider is clear of the runway.

Emergency:

Emergency landing field in case of a rope failure below 200 feet AGL is straight ahead, extension of runway. Above 200 AGL, turning and landing back to the runway.

Important points to observe:

- Tow Plane
 - No back taxiing on the runway at any time, always use the taxi way.
 - Always drop the towrope, do not land and taxi with the towrope attached to the tow plane.
- Glider
 - No pushing glider back to the end of the runway on the runway, always use the taxiway.
 - Ensure that staged gliders are well clear of runway.
 - Caution, staging area will be close to the run up area for airplanes. Stay well clear of airplanes conducting their run up.
- Ground crew and passengers
 - A club member must accompany a passenger from the “airport terminal” to the staging area. The same applies for returning passenger back to the “terminal”.
 - Keep passengers well clear of the runway.

Required Ground Crews:

- One overall event manager. The event manager is responsible for the safety of the event. He must be equipped with a hand held air band radio to monitor the traffic at the Thun field. The event manager is responsible to cancel or temporary suspend the operation if he deems that there is a safety concern such as weather or heavy general traffic. The event manager is also responsible to ensure a NOTAM will get published for the day of the operation.
- Three ground crew plus one ground crew chief. The ground crew chief is also equipped with a hand held air band radio to monitor the traffic at the Thun field. He will advise incoming and outgoing general traffic of the glider operation in process. He will also provide the gliders with traffic advice.
- In case of offering glider intro rides, four PR persons to answer general questions from the public and sign people up for glider rides. PR persons are responsible to ensure all passengers are escorted from the “terminal” to the staging area and back to the “terminal”.