

Slope Soaring Etiquette

Slope flyers are a unique breed made up of many nationalities, disciplines and opinions. Because of the changing nature of slope sites and different owner's requirements, it is hard for everyone to agree and implement a set of rules for slope flying. Thus, here we try and develop a set of guidelines for all to follow that will help us fully enjoy our sport.

We invite comment and constructive input into these guidelines as we see that they are ever evolving, just like the slope sites they refer to. Should you wish to add to these ideas, [please feel free to contact us](#).

You can help promote the exciting and enjoyable R/C experience known as slope soaring by practicing and promoting the following common sense behaviours:

Respect the site:

Some slopes are public and some are on private land. It can take a considerable amount of time to secure agreements to fly on these properties. *It is a privilege, not a right* to have access to these sites, so please treat them with respect.

On private land – observe all requirements to contact the owners before flying. They may have valuable information regarding access or conditions. Accurate information regarding site contact requirements and the like are available from VARMS. Unless specifically otherwise instructed, If there is no one there to gain approval to fly, assume that you **DO NOT** have approval to enter the property.

When leaving any slope, make sure you have left it in a better state than when you arrived. It is sad to see birds nest made of electrical tape and rubber bands ...no matter how sturdy you may think it makes it!

Make sure the experience is ENJOYABLE for all participants:

Length of flights

Everyone deserves a fair share of the airspace so limit your flight times accordingly. Unless you are participating in an organized combat, flying in a crowded sky can be difficult for all. Take turns in the air, and to be each other's spotters ...sometimes you may even have to help clear cows off the landing area.

Aerobatics – where & when

Unlimited aerobatics is great fun if you are the only flier at the site. When others are sharing the airspace avoid aerobatics from the area directly in front of the slope, launch, approach and landing areas. Even better, nominate a specific area for aerobatics and stick to it. As the aerobatic pilot, it is your responsibility to be aware of others rather than everyone trying to avoid you.

Number and type of models in the air

It doesn't matter whether a \$50 foamy takes out a \$1,500 scale beauty, or a \$2,000 speed machine destroys a \$100 floater, if they come together, there's going to be grief. Make an effort to allow similar types of models to fly together. It is very dependant on the size of slopes, types of models and skill level of the flyers, but if you are starting to feel crowded in the air – then that is probably an indication that there are too many models.

Speed & Distance

Allow other pilots to concentrate on their models – fast close passes are a huge distraction – more so if unannounced.

Mutual assistance (launching, landing, observer & general help)

It is much better to get help with a launch or landing than end up being the victim of a solo mishap!

Pilots stay together

When sharing the slope with others, stay in relatively close proximity to each other – that way you can talk to each other.

Calling out your intentions

You are the only one on the slope who knows what you are going to do next. To help others flying with you, make sure that you call out any major changes in your flight pattern. Launches, aerobatics, speed-runs and landing approaches should all be clearly announced to all the other pilots. You should also announce when you are walking on and moving clear of the landing area.

In Trouble?

Finally, if you are in trouble, let everyone else know as soon as possible, that way they can move out of the way and let you have more space to deal with your situation.

Make sure it is a SAFE experience for all participants

Frequency control

Observe the same levels of diligence at the slope that you would at a club field. Always use some form of keyboard and never switch on before your key is in the board. If a keyboard is not available, then use a car's windshield and make sure everyone on the slope knows where it is. When arriving at a slope where people are already flying – make it a priority to know where the keyboard/frequency keys are located. And talk to others who are already on site before you set up and fly – don't assume, ask!

Insurance

Flying on private property (and some public spaces) requires that **ALL** flying there have valid insurance to do so. It is not rude to ask someone you do not know if they are a current insured member of a club. If they are not, they are not only putting you but also your insurance cover at risk... not to mention the risk of losing the flying site for everyone.

Observers

If you have ever lost sight of your model you will understand the value of a second pair of eyes. Spectators, vehicles and farm animals are also a significant issue at many slope sites – an observer will help manage the risk.



...or even paragliders ... a lucky escape

Conditions Vs Model type Vs Pilot skill

If it looks or feels risky it almost certainly is. Don't be afraid to ask for assistance from more experienced pilots and if in doubt, wait for more suitable conditions.

Launching, Landing & Pilot areas

Use a common launch point and pilot area that have a reasonable separation. Many slope sites have very restricted approach and landing areas – follow the procedures in use at the site or agree the procedures before flying commences for the day. As a rule of thumb, pilot areas are usually behind the launch point and clear of the landing area.

Landing Areas

Once you have landed, make sure you retrieve your model as quickly as possible making the landing area available for the next pilot. Do not spend time on the landing area “fiddling” with your model – you may just have an unexpected encounter with another model, or be the cause of someone else crashing.

Too close - Too fast

If you are only a glitch away from injuring others or damaging their property, you are flying too close/fast. Take the case of a 6kg model hitting a person or a car at 150km/h then the model would hit with an impact of approximately 3.54 tons!