



OUTLANDING: PADDOCK SELECTION FOR AEROTOW RETRIEVE

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In the event of an outlanding, pilots may consider requesting an aerotow retrieve.

These notes are provided to assist glider pilots in the decision-making by highlighting relevant information and factors.

Once the glider is in a paddock, it may be too late to consider an aerotow retrieve, due to paddock features (size, obstructions, surface [soft, rough], wind strength and direction).

An aerotow retrieve is ideally suited to a relatively close (to the home airfield) retrieve.

CONSIDERATIONS

1. Pre-requisites

- a) Wind strength and direction – the wind strength **must** be less than the crosswind component for the Tug. For the Pawnee, this is a max of 15 Kts.
- b) No *Fire Bans* in force for the designated area.
- c) The aerotow retrieve does not unduly upset flying operations at the airfield.
- d) A tow pilot rated for outlanding retrieves is flying the Tug.
- e) A glider pilot rated for an aerotow retrieve - getting out of the paddock, cruising behind tug.
- f) **The** paddock is suitable for the conduct of an aerotow retrieve.

2. Paddock Selection

A pilot should consider whether an aerotow retrieve is likely to be a consideration well **before** the outlanding occurs, as this may influence paddock selection. The ideal features of a good paddock are,

- Large paddock, preferably aligned into wind.
- Smooth, firm surface, free from large stones, erosion gullies, trees, long vegetation.
- No long grass or stubble - unless a wingtip runner is available.
- No significant obstructions in the take-off path, i.e. fences, buildings, trees, power lines, etc.

- If at all possible, do not land in a standing crop, due to...
 - Damage to the crop.
 - Increased risk of damage to the glider (ground loop etc).
 - Increased risk of ground loop on takeoff.
 - Risk of fire ignited by retrieve vehicles
 - -Risk of introducing weeds, damage to "certified" status of paddocks.
 - Legal liability

3. Land Owner Permission

It is highly desirable that the approval of the landowner is obtained for an aerotow retrieve (in fact, this should be obtained for any retrieve).

This approval should be sought for the following reasons,

- If the paddock is "certified" for a specified aspect (weed free etc), this could be negated.
- The landowner may elect to use his own vehicle to pull the glider trailer.
- The landowner will consider the possibility of and impact of fire and consider suppression (or other) options.

The land owner is more likely to be supportive if permission is sought before the retrieve occurs.

Every effort should therefore be made to contact the land owner after landing and before arranging an aerotow or trailer retrieve. Don't overlook the fact that we as glider pilots are now interfering with another individual's livelihood and property – and this deserves respect.

4. Deciding to Request the Retrieve

Having considered all the options, the glider pilot must determine which form of retrieve is required.

5. Paddock Entry

- **No Smoking:** Ensure that none of the retrieve crew smokes while in the paddock.
- **Bushfire preparedness:** Consider the bushfire risk.
- **Vehicle Catalytic Converters:** be extremely careful in long stubble.
- **Rubbish:** Ensure no rubbish (gap tape etc) is left in the paddock.
- **Landowner relations:** It is recommended Pilots build on and cement good relations with landowners.
- **Fences and Gates:** Leave all fences and gates as they were found.
- **Stock:** minimize the disturbance of and impact to stock as far as is reasonably practicable.
- **Invitation:** If relatively near the airfield, invite the land owner and the family to visit the gliding club.

6. Aerotow Retrieve Briefing

Ensure a detailed briefing of the aerotow retrieve takes place between the glider and tug pilots. (see Briefing checklist)

7. Cost

The cost of an aerotow retrieve may be significant.

This expense may be in vain if after inspection, landing or visual observation once on-the-ground, the Tug Pilot declares an aerotow retrieve is not a safe option and departs for the home airfield – without the glider.

The Glider Pilot pays the cost of the outbound and inbound trips for the Tug, even if the retrieve does not occur.

AEROTOW RETRIEVE CHECKLIST

The following information should be provided when requesting a retrieve;

1. **Glider Type:** **Rego:** VH-.....
2. **Pilot:**
Name:.....
3. **Pilot Aerotow Retrieve Competent:** YES / NO
4. **Retrieve Required:** *Trailer* *Aerotow* (Circle one)
5. **Land Owner Approval Obtained** YES / NO
6. **Current Fire Bans Applicable** YES / NO
7. **Land Owners Restrictions**
8. **GPS Position:**
9. **Location Features**
Bearing to Home airfield
10. **Paddock Details:**
 - **Available Length:**
 - **Surface:**
 - **Soft / Hard:**
 - **Smooth / Rough:**
 - **Short grass / short stubble** YES / NO.
 - **Long Grass / Long Stubble** YES / NO
 - **How Long:**
 - **Is a wing runner required?**
 - **Stones** YES / NO
 - **Drainage Channels** YES / NO
 - **Obstructions:**
 - **Trees** YES / No
 - **Fences** YES / NO
 - **Power Lines** YES / NO
 - **Stock** YES / NO

○ **Other**

YES / NO

- **Paddock Entry / Access Details:**
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11. Retrieve Conclusion:

- No Rubbish remaining.
- All gates / fences left "as found".
- Land Owner thanked for co-operation / assistance.