



AERO CLUB OF INDIA (NAC-India)
Established: 1927
(Member: Fédération Aéronautique Internationale, Switzerland-NAC-India)

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE (SOP)

FOR GLIDING / SAILPLANES
FAI-ALIGNED | NASG-ALIGNED | DGCA-INTERFACED

1. Purpose and Regulatory Context

This Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) establishes the regulatory, safety, and operational framework for Gliding / Sailplane operations in India. This SOP is issued by the Aero Club of India (ACI), the National Air Sports Control of India (NAC-India), in alignment with the Fédération Aéronautique Internationale (FAI) Sporting Code, National Air Sports Guidelines (NASG), and applicable provisions of Indian aviation law.

2. Statutory Authority

This SOP is issued under the authority of:

- Article 246 read with Seventh Schedule, Union List Entry 29 of the Constitution of India
- Bharatiya Vayuyan Adhinyam, 2024
- National Air Sports Guidelines (NASG)
- Designation of ACI as National Air Sports Control of India (NAC-India)
- FAI Sporting Code – Gliding / Sailplanes

3. Scope of Application

This SOP applies to all Gliding / Sailplane activities conducted within Indian territory, including:

- Recreational gliding
- Training and instruction
- Aerotow and winch launch operations
- National and international competitions
- Participation by Indian and foreign pilots
- Demonstration and Promotional activities

4. Definitions and Classification

Gliding / Sailplanes refer to fixed-wing aircraft designed for unpowered flight, launched via aerotow, winch, or self-launch systems.

Operations are classified as:

- Recreational
- Training
- Competition / Cross-country
- Demonstration

5. Roles and Responsibilities

Aero Club of India (ACI – NAC-India):

- Apex authority for governance, licensing, and sporting oversight
- Issuance of FAI Sporting Licences
- Event sanction and safety oversight

Gliding Clubs / Training Organisations:

- Compliance with this SOP and approved operating procedures
- Maintenance of aircraft, launch equipment, and safety systems

Pilots:

- Valid licence, medical fitness, and currency

State Governments / Aerodrome Operators:

- Infrastructure support and facilitation

DGCA:

- Aircraft certification, airspace, and flight safety interface

6. Eligibility and Licensing Requirements

- Minimum age as prescribed by ACI
- Valid medical fitness declaration
- Completion of ACI-recognised gliding training
- Valid FAI Sporting Licence issued through ACI
- Compliance with currency and recency requirements

7. Aircraft and Equipment Standards

- Sailplanes compliant with FAI and manufacturer standards
- Valid Certificate of Airworthiness or Permit to Fly as applicable
- Maintenance as per approved schedules
- Parachute, flight instruments, and emergency equipment
- Aircraft and maintenance logbooks

8. Infrastructure and Launch Facilities

- Approved aerodromes or gliding fields
- Suitable runways or launch strips
- Aerotow or winch equipment and trained crews
- Emergency services and recovery arrangements
- Airspace coordination and NOTAMs where applicable

9. Operational Procedures

- Pre-flight inspections and weather assessment
- Launch procedures (aerotow, winch, or self-launch)
- En-route and cross-country operations
- Circuit planning and landing procedures
- Post-flight inspections and logging

10. Safety Management and Incident Reporting

- Risk assessment prior to operations
- Emergency and out-landing procedures
- Mandatory reporting of accidents and incidents to ACI
- Cooperation with safety investigations

11. Event and Competition Authorisation

All gliding competitions, cross-country events, and demonstrations shall require prior authorisation from ACI (NAC-India). International participation shall comply with FAI and ACI protocols.

12. Compliance and Enforcement

Non-compliance with this SOP may result in suspension or withdrawal of licences, authorisations, or event permissions. Serious violations may be escalated to competent authorities as applicable.

13. Review and Amendments

This SOP shall be reviewed periodically by ACI to ensure continued alignment with international standards, national policy, and safety requirements.