

2.17 Paragliding Special Skill Endorsements

A. Special Skills attainable by Novice only.

1. 360° Turns (360):

- a. Demonstrates ability to do 360° turns in both directions with constant airspeed and bank angle.

B. Special Skills attainable by Novice and above.

1. Ridge Soaring (RS):

- a. Demonstrates the ability to kite and launch safely on a slope producing sustainable ridge lift
- b. Demonstrates the ability to fly a standard traffic pattern in both isolated and traffic conditions, illustrating the ability to communicate properly with other pilots in the pattern.
- c. Demonstrates the ability to soar in a crosswind without stalling on downwind legs, and demonstrates the ability to fly at minimum sink without stalling in turns.
- d. Demonstrates the ability to perform consistent and safe top landings.

2. Light Wind Cliff or Ramp Launch (CL):

- a. Demonstrates the ability to launch safely from a shallow slope ramp or non-abrupt or overhung cliff top, where running room is severely restricted, drop off is steep, and wind is 5 m.p.h. or less, such that positive attitude control and strong, aggressive sprinting starts are required. Stalled, falling/diving launches are not acceptable demonstrations, even if flight is achieved.

3. Flat Slope Launches (FSL):

- a. Demonstrates ability to launch in less than 10 m.p.h. wind from slopes which approach the maximum L/D of the glider.

4. Restricted Landing Field (RLF):

- a. Demonstrates a landing using a downwind leg, base-leg, and a final leg approach where the entire base-leg, final, and landing occur within a 100' square.
- b. Demonstrates the ability to plan and execute consistent and controlled side hill landings on various slopes.
- c. Demonstrates the ability to plan and execute consistent and controlled top landings from various approaches.

5. Turbulence (TUR):

- a. Demonstrates controlled and un-panicked flight in conditions requiring quick, deliberate, substantial, and correct control application to reduce pendulum motion.

- b. Demonstrates proper directional control and correction of full (i.e., 50% of the wing span) asymmetric collapses.
- c. Demonstrates sustained flight in moderate thermal conditions without the aid of ridge lift.
- d. Demonstrates smooth and correctly timed surge control.
- e. Must have logged five 30-minute thermal flights without sustaining ridge lift.

6. High Altitude Launch (HA):

- a. Demonstrates the ability to launch unassisted with strong, running forward-inflation launches in winds less than 5 m.p.h.
- b. Demonstrates launches from sites with density altitude of 6000' or higher.
- c. Demonstrates understanding of high altitude conditions (e.g., air density, cloud suck, anabatic and catabatic conditions, hypoxia, hypothermia).

7. Surface Tow (ST)

- a. Must demonstrate tow system set up and preflight, including a complete discussion of all of the factors which are particular to the specific tow system used, and those factors which are relevant to towing in general. Must demonstrate complete understanding of both normal and emergency procedures, including checklists for normal procedures and the indications of an impending emergency, and convince the instructor of his/her ability to recognize and execute emergency procedures.
- b. Demonstrates successful, confident, controlled launches and flight under tow to release altitude, with a smooth transition to flying. Such demonstrations may be made in ideal wind conditions.
- c. Has discussed all Towing Discussion Topics with the issuing ST official

8. Platform Launch (PL)

- a. Must demonstrate tow system set up and preflight, including a complete discussion of all of the factors that are particular to the specific tow system used, and those factors that are relevant to towing in general. Must demonstrate complete understanding of both normal and emergency procedures, including checklists for normal procedures and the indications of an impending emergency, and convince the instructor of his/her ability to recognize and execute emergency procedures.
- b. Demonstrates successful, confident, controlled launches and flight under tow to release altitude, with a smooth transition to flying. Such demonstrations may be made in ideal wind conditions.
- c. Has discussed all Towing Discussion Topics with the issuing PL official

C. Special Skills attainable by Intermediate and above.

1. Assisted Windy Cliff or Ramp Launch (AWCL):

- a. Demonstrates ability to launch with assistance in windy conditions from a non-abrupt or overhung cliff or ramp that exhibit strong lift at takeoff. Must show proper use of release signals and confident, aggressive launch.

2. Cross Country (X-C):

- a. Must hold A.4 and A.5 above.
- b. Demonstrates ability to recognize a safe landing area from the air and determine and execute a safe approach and landing, accounting for wind direction, rotors, obstacles, power lines, ground slope, vegetation, etc.
- c. Demonstrates significant altitude gains (1000' or greater) above launch.
- d. Demonstrates flight at a site where the landing area is not visible from launch, is not the normal landing area, and cannot be reached in a glide. The flight must demonstrate the pilot's ability to locate and link thermals to reach a destination.
- e. Demonstrates knowledge applicable to cross-country flight (e.g., downwind rotors, cloud streets, detecting wires and other obstructions from the air, advancing storm fronts, convergences and shears, etc.).

3. Para-Ski (PS)

- a. Must hold A.4 above.
- b. Demonstrates the ability to correctly set up and self launch with skis on. This is a no wind skill. Pilot must have the ability to inflate the canopy in forward launch position first try.
- c. Explains conditions, weather, equipment and protocols peculiar to flight in a ski area environment.
- d. Demonstrates light wind, high altitude launches and landings with skis.