



SOUTH GRAFTON AERODROME  
OPERATIONS MANUAL  
2019.







## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

The South Grafton Aerodrome has existed in various forms on the same location for the past 80 years. In November 2015, the lease from Crown Lands was transferred from the Clarence Valley Council to the South Grafton Aerodrome Aircraft Hangar Owners Association inc. (SGAAHO).

On 30/06/2018 the first 10 years of the Head lease expired and the Dept of Industry, (Crown lands) exercised the option to renew the lease for a further 10 years. The current Head lease is due to expire on 30/06/2028. It is leased directly to SGAAHO who administers the sub leased hangars.

This is a not for profit incorporated association responsible for the management of the aerodrome with the mission to provide an affordable facility enabling aviation enthusiasts to fly and maintain aircraft and promote aviation generally in the Clarence Valley.

## **2.0 AERODROME PARTICULARS.**

The South Grafton Aerodrome is located at 150 Vere Street South Grafton N.S.W. 2460. It is located at the intersection of Vere Street and Cowan Street, South Grafton. It can be accessed by heading west on the Gwyder Highway towards Glen Innes and turning left into Cowan Street at South Grafton.

The Post Office Box is 184, South Grafton and the Secretary can be contacted on 0410075631. The Email address of the Aerodrome is [sgaaho@gmail.com](mailto:sgaaho@gmail.com)

Aerodrome Co-ordinates:	S29 42.5 ' E152 55.7'
Elevation:	20ft AMSL.
Runway Designation.	08/26.
Magnetic Bearing:	260 degrees.
Runway length:	1000 metres.
Fence to Fence	1230 metres.
Runway width:	10 metres.
Clearway width:	60 metres.
Thresholds.	(26) Displaced Gable Markers.
Pavement Surface:	1000 metres sealed.
Pavement Strength:	Unrated.
Taxiways.	Grassed
Windsock.	Yes.
Aerodrome Beacon:	Nil.
Runway Lighting:	Nil.
Visual Approach Systems:	Nil.
Air Traffic Services:	CTAF 126.7 Mhz. 122.6 Mhz. Brisbane Area Daylight.
Hours of Operation.	Daylight

Hazards.

Flooding, Kangaroos. Cattle

Trees on approach runway 26.

### **3.0 AUTHORITY**

Authority to manage the South Grafton Aerodrome rests with the Management Committee of SGAAHO which generally meets monthly at a place, date and time as determined by the Committee.

This manual is an official document and is issued by SGAAHO, it assumes pilots will abide by the procedures and recommendations in:

- CAAP 166-1(3) dated Aug 2014 (Ops in the vicinity of non-controlled aerodromes), and
- CAAP 166-2(1) dated Dec 2013 (pilot responsibility for collision avoidance in the vicinity of non-controlled aerodromes using 'see and avoid').

This document does not relieve airfield users from the responsibility of complying with any operational regulation implicit with their licence or pilot authorisation

## **4.0 RESPONSIBILITY**

### **4.1 Management Committee.**

Overall responsibility for operational conduct is vested in the Management Committee of the SGAAHO.

### **4.2 Hangar Owners. (Members and Non Members))**

It is a condition of membership of SGAAHO that members remain familiar with the operations manual and a copy will be issued to each member. Members are to sign and date the distribution page as evidence that they have read the current operations manual.

Members are to provide a copy of the operations manual at their own cost to other owners/operators of any aircraft stored in their hangar & get them to sign and date the distribution page at the front of the manual which will be taken that they have read it. Non member Hangar Owners will be provided with a copy of the operations manual by the SHAAHO committee. They are to sign and date the distribution page as evidence of them having read it as well.

### **4.3 Visiting Pilots.**

A copy of this manual will be available for perusal at the Grafton Aero Club. A synopsis is located in the appendices of this manual

and will be posted on the noticeboard of the Grafton Aero Club for the information of visiting pilots. It is also available on the Grafton Aero Club web site.

#### **4.4 Contact Person.**

A contact person will be nominated by the Management Committee each month and their contact details will be placed on the Aero Club noticeboard. This person will be responsible for reporting any concerns to the Committee.

#### **4.5 Event Safety Officer.**

Nothing negates any member or user of the aerodrome for not acting with the safety of all users of this facility in mind. An Event Safety Officer will be appointed by the Committee as a temporary position to liaise with stake holders involved in an event such as a fly in. It is the responsibility of this Officer to ensure adequate risk managements are carried out and to report to the Committee.

### **5.0 LEGALITY OF OPERATIONS.**

5.1 All pilots and instructors using the airfield are required to be licenced in accordance with the guidelines indicated by their governing authority.

5.2. Flying aircraft are required to be registered and insured for public risk liability insurance where available for that type of aircraft.

## **6.0 AIRSIDE SAFETY GUIDELINES.**

6.1 Only authorised persons and vehicles are permitted airside and access is only permitted for aviation related activities and all vehicle speeds are limited to 25 kmh. All drivers must be appropriately licenced.

6.2 No smoking, alcohol or any banned substances are permitted to be consumed airside and persons are not permitted to be affected by these while airside.

6.3 Pedestrian movement on runways and taxiways or aircraft parking areas is prohibited except in emergencies or for maintenance reasons.

6.4 No parking on the airside at any time. Parking is preferable inside hangars. Hangar owners and authorised persons have a waiver to access their hangars and parking so as it does not interfere with airfield operations.

6.5 Aircraft always have the right of way over vehicles, equipment or pedestrians.

6.7. Never drive, park or stand within 15 metres of any aircraft unless you are directly involved in the servicing, loading or unloading of the aircraft.

6.8. Never approach or board an aircraft while the engine is operating.

6.9. No person or vehicle is permitted within 30 metres of a helicopter unless involved in helicopter operations.

6.10 Any unregistered vehicle such as a tractor or aircraft tug used on the airfield must be approved by the Management Committee.

6.11. No vehicle is to cross the main drain of the taxiway without an orange flashing light or the hazard lights flashing.

6.12. Other than for operational or maintenance reasons, vehicles are not to drive on the runway.

6.13. Aircraft shall only be parked in the designated parking areas such as at the front of the Aero Club. If unclear where to park, seek advice of the committee or a resident hangar owner.

## **7.0 AVIATION ACTIVITIES.**

### **7.1 Flying Training (GA and RA-Aus)**

Trainee Pilots may be in the circuit area resulting in slower, less decisive and uncertainty in operation. Heavy traffic is disconcerting to a trainee and patience should be shown.

Instructors may be conducting low level runs along the runway. Students may be on their first solo flight. Cross wind or touch and training may be occurring. RA-AUS aircraft often make steep glide approaches.

Some RA-AUS aircraft may be in a speed category that permits 500 feet circuits in accordance with CAAP 166-1(3). This could result in them being difficult to see particularly on the base leg of a circuit.

When conducting a practiced forced landing or power off approach, it is advisable to radio this intention and the pilot should ascertain that they will not conflict with other aircraft, however other aircraft should allow sufficient airspace for this to occur.

When aircraft are practicing engine failures on take-off, there may not be a radio call given but the aircraft will proceed in a normal straight ahead flight path until normal circuit height is attained.

## **7.2 Gliders.**

The Grafton Gliding Club relocated to the South Grafton Aerodrome in January 2018. They conduct winch launching operations of gliders generally on Tuesdays, Saturdays and Sundays but do operate on other days. They conduct glider training in a dual seat machine and have a single seat glider as well.

All glider operations will be conducted under the Australian Gliding Federation Rules. During operations, a sandwich board will be placed on the main taxi way to alert taxiing aircraft. There may also be a sign adjacent to the taxi way indicating for aircraft to stop at a painted line and contact glider operation on CTAF 126.7 Mhz.

Winch operators, ground handling staff and pilots will all be in communication by VHF radio and will monitor CTAF 126.7 Mhz to

alert aircraft in the area. The wind sock will be marked with the double cross to be visible from the air and all pilots are to practice airmanship and give way to a glider on a landing approach.

Glider will launch on either runway 08 or 26 depending on the wind direction. A launch on 08 will occur on the grass just to the north of the western end of the sealed runway. Five of the white marker cones may be removed to avoid a collision but will be replaced by a white disc located underneath. A launch on 26 will be conducted on the open grassed area to the south of the sealed airstrip adjacent to the soccer field.

After landing a glider is to be immediately cleared from the runway to a clear area outside the runway markers for retrieval or when this is not possible it must be placed as far as possible off the runway along a path 90 degrees to the runway centre line. If necessary, pilots are to do this by themselves.

### **7.3 Powered Gliders.**

Powered gliders do operate from South Grafton Aerodrome and can have particular ground handling issues. If they are large and difficult to move quickly by hand, they may obstruct the run way after landing. Pilots must ensure that the engine is sufficiently warmed up on landing so that it can taxi efficiently after touch down.

Powered Gliders incapable of taxiing shall be treated as gliders when on the ground.

#### **7.4 Gyrocopter Operations.**

Gyrocopters regularly use the South Grafton Aerodrome. They shall not be taxied within aircraft parking areas with their rotor blades turning unless they maintain two rotor diameters clear distance between the nearest rotor blade tip and any person, aircraft, vehicle or structure.

Gyros are able to fly very slowly and have a normal cruising speed of 50 to 60 knots. They can descend almost vertically, are very manoeuvrable and can handle quite strong winds. They may conduct 500ft circuits in accordance with CAAP 166-1(3).

Gyros will normally taxi and do a normal length take off run after pre rotating the rotor. Their landing approach is quite different as it is very steep and the aircraft will stop within one or two lengths of the airframe.

Aircraft following a gyro into the circuit must allow for the low approach speed on landing. Aircraft checking for traffic before entering the runway for take off should look up as well as out due to the possibility of a gyro on a steep approach.

## **7.5 Helicopters.**

Helicopters are not to start engines or air taxi between hangars nor conduct any operation likely to cause wind blast damage to hangars or other aircraft. A Helipad is located opposite the windsock on the eastern side of taxi way (b).

## **7.6 Parachute Operations.**

There are no parachute operations conducted at South Grafton Aerodrome. This is primarily due to the presence of structures in the area which are not of sufficient distance from a landing zone as per the Australian Parachute Federation Guidelines.

## 8.0. CIRCUIT PROCEDURES.

Directions. Left hand 08/26.

Runways. 08/ (26 preferred early mornings wind permitting for noise reduction.

Heights. 1000 ft as per CASA Regulations

Landmarks. 08 .Crosswind, Grafton Bridge overfly to the north. Downwind Clarence River over Susan Island. South Grafton Aerodrome is located on left parallel with the Clarence River. Base turn left at 45 degrees to the strip.

26. Crosswind towards telecommunications tower to the south east. Downwind towards Acmena Juvenile Centre and turn base. Turn final near Bunnings.

Radio Calls. CTAF 126.7 Mhz

Straight in approaches. Are permitted but joining circuit is preferred as per CASA Regulations

Joining Circuits. Overfly Strip at 1500 ft and join downwind leg 08/26 as per CASA regulations

Overfly heights. Go arounds. 1500 ft

Touch and Go. Permitted

## **9.0. MOVEMENT OF AIRCRAFT.**

### **9.1 Starting engines:**

- Engines are not to be started in an enclosed hangar.
- Engines should not be started unless qualified person is in the control seat or the aircraft is prevented from moving forward.
- Proper care should be taken around propellers and visitors or passengers briefed to be made aware of the dangers.
- When starting an engine, bystanders should be at least 5 metres distance from the propeller.
- Maintenance personnel or pilot in the proximity of a propeller, do so at their own risk.

### **9.2 Right of way (ground handling)**

- The principle of see and avoid is an overriding principle in the movement of all vehicles on the aerodrome.
- All aircraft have right of way over other vehicles.
- Gliders landing in the circuit have right of way over powered aircraft.
- Giving way to right and turning right to avoid other aircraft or other vehicle should where possible be done.
- Larger heavier aircraft will have right of way over smaller lighter aircraft.
- Courtesy should prevail.

### 9.3 Pre-Takeoff Procedures:

- Use of radio is mandatory.
- A listening watch must be maintained prior to aircraft moving/taxiing.
- Use of the CTAF frequency on the ground and in the circuit is to be used. Currently 126.7 Mhz
- See and Avoid. Maintain a good lookout and listening watch prior to entering runway.
- Taxi ways are named: (a) Grassed taxi way heading east.  
(b) Sealed taxi way from hangars.  
(c) Grassed taxi way heading west.

### 9.4 Post Landing Procedures:

- Taxi on runway or beside on grass so as to clear the runway as soon as possible.
- Give an “all stations” call to notify your clearance from the landing area.
- Continue to maintain a listening watch until aircraft is stationary

### 9.5 Refuelling:

- Aircraft should not be refuelled any closer than 5metres to a building or hangar.
- The aircraft should not be fuelled when there are passengers on board.
- Care must be taken to ensure any source of flame or other ignition source is extinguished or turned off prior to refuelling.
- Any excess fuel spilled must be treated in such a way so as not to cause a fire or explosion risk.
- Being predominantly grass, care should be taken so as not to incur spillage as it will kill the grass. Any fuel obtained from the testing fuel check should be discarded in such a way that it does not kill the grassed areas such as throwing and spreading into small droplets that scatter rather than pour in a single spot.

#### **9.6 Radio Calls on the ground:**

- Again the Principle of see and avoid persists and radio calls between aircraft is encouraged to ensure safety.
- CTAF frequency (126.7Mhz ) to be used.
- CTAF procedures to be followed and an "all stations" call made prior to entering runway for example
- "Traffic South Grafton.....(intentions).....South Grafton"

#### **9.7 Taxiing on runway:**

- A radio call must be made, listening watch, and visual confirmation that it is clear to enter the runway must be strictly adhered to.
- Radio call has to specify "rolling runway (26 or 08) or backtracking runway (26 or 08)".
- Courtesy towards other users should prevail and not delay prompt exit from or entering of the runway.

## 9.8 Loading of Passengers:

- All passenger and visitor movements are at their own risk.
- Pilots should brief their passengers prior to entering an aircraft and should only load their passengers and disembark when the engine is off.
- Exceptions to this may occur but it is strictly at the pilot and passenger's risk. (trained operators or helicopter crewmen are an example of this exception)

## 9.9 Parking of Aircraft:

- Pilots are welcome to the use of the facilities that South Grafton Aerodrome offers. The use of such facilities and the parking of aircraft is done at the owners/operators own liability and risk.
- It is the owners/operators responsibility to ensure that their aircraft is securely tied down and parked where it is not going to impede or restrict others in the use or movement of vehicles or aircraft on the airfield.
- Brakes should not be left on as in emergencies if the aircraft has to be moved it can be.
- Aircraft should be locked and anti theft, or immobilization device fitted that prevents unauthorized use.
- Generally there is to be no long term tether parking of aircraft. However provision has been made in the Bi laws under certain circumstances.

## 10.0 EMERGENCY PROCEDURES.

These procedures are to provide a timely and co-ordinated response to and initial recovery from an emergency at the Aerodrome. They detail the arrangements for this to occur.

## **10.1 Roles and Responsibilities.**

The NSW Police Force are responsible for the overall command and control of the emergency services.

The NSW Fire and Rescue Service are responsible for fire suppression and rescue.

Support Agencies may be the NSW Ambulance Service, SES, RFS and the Clarence Valley Council.

A member/ members of the Aerodrome Management Committee will liaise with the emergency services and provide assistance where required.

## **10.2 Initial Actions.**

On receipt of information of an emergency situation on the aerodrome or an aircraft approaching the aerodrome, a report should be relayed to the Police on 000.

The on call Aerodrome Management Committee member should be contacted in order to assist the emergency services. The on call phone number will be displayed on the Aero Club notice board.

Airport access in an emergency is via the “crash gate “ in front of the Aero Club building.

### **10.3 Forward Command Post.**

The Forward Command Post (FCP) is the initial focal point for the responding emergency services. The Police Commander will locate, activate and co-ordinate the FCP. Stand down for the emergency shall be determined by the Police Commander.

The FCP is established near to the accident site as a co-ordination point for all responding agencies.

### **10.4 Casualty Processing.**

The casualty processing area will be Aero Club. The NSW Ambulance Station Officer or nominee will co-ordinate the casualty processing. A temporary morgue will be located in the Aero Club hangar if necessary

## 10.5 Investigations.

Following an emergency at the Aerodrome, investigations will be required. Until investigations have been completed, or the relevant authority gives approval, the Aerodrome Operator should not commence the recovery process by the removal of wreckage or returning the facility to an operational status.

The following agencies have a statutory responsibility to investigate the cause of an emergency.

Australian Transport Safety Bureau (ATSB) in the event of an incident or accident involving civilian aircraft.

State Coroner/ Police in the event of an emergency involving death or serious injury.

RAAF Director of Flying Safety in the event of an emergency involving military aircraft.

NSW Police in the event of unlawful seizure or a bomb.

The Aerodrome Operator and its insurers.

## **10.6 Disabled Aircraft Recovery.**

Recovery is the process of returning the aerodrome to its operational status by the removal of wreckage, clean up and inspection process.

**The aircraft owner/ operator is responsible for the removal of aircraft wreckage.**

If the Owner/Operator requests assistance from the Aerodrome Operator, then indemnity in writing should be obtained.

## **10.7 Return to Operational Status.**

The Aerodrome will be inspected for suitability of return to a safe operating condition by the Management Committee.

It may be returned to restricted operations and this should be assessed according to necessity at the time.

## **10.8 Security Control.**

Site Security may be required on an incident by incident basis where an investigation is not complete. The Duty Officer of the Grafton Police Station is responsible for this function.

### **10.9. Flooding.**

South Grafton Aerodrome is located on flood prone land. Some areas are located on land that is less than 4 metres AHD. (Median sea level). If it was not flood prone land then there would be no aerodrome on the site, just houses.

There have been numerous floods over the years, the most recent being January 2012 when the Clarence River rose to over 8 metres AHD. This did not breach the South Grafton Levy wall and there was approximately 6 inches of water in some hangars. (Hangar V) for example.

The last time aircraft were moved to high ground on the Gwyder Highway was in May 2009 when the Clarence River peaked at 7.3 metres. This was a very local flood as opposed to a river event.

Some aircraft hangars are equipped with high lift devices to raise aircraft above flood water. Others choose to move aircraft to higher

ground. Either way it is an expectation that in a flood event all members of SHAAHO will help each other in the notification of a flood and movement of aircraft and equipment.