

## NOTAMs and CANP

A Notice to Airmen (NOTAM) is issued to alert pilots to any temporary activity that may constitute a danger to flying. Some warnings may be of little interest to you: you probably don't care much that a radar service is limited, or that a crane has been erected somewhere. But you do need to know if temporary danger areas have been activated, or if there is a military exercise or an air display nearby. You must check the NOTAMs for the area that you intend to fly in as part of your pre-flight planning for both safety and legal reasons. You may also find that an "obstacle" to your flying has been temporarily deactivated.

The official source of NOTAMs is the NATS Aeronautical Information Service (AIS) website at [www.ais.org.uk](http://www.ais.org.uk). Register, or use 'BHPAuser' and 'password' to gain entry. But it's clunky. The lack of a graphical display means that it's a tedious task to wade through the long list to find anything relevant to you. There are graphical alternatives such as Dave Massie's excellent NOTAM Info at <http://notaminfo.com/ukmap> that uses the same source data, with colour coding, and the ability to select and save your local area. SkyDemon also offers an alternative. As well as the subscription service there is a free one at [www.skydemonlight.com](http://www.skydemonlight.com). Currently all the graphical display services should come with a health warning that they may miss something that is displayed on the NATS AIS website.

As is often the case, the devil is in the detail with NOTAMs. They require careful consideration, but always include a contact telephone number to allow you to de-conflict. With a 28 day lead-in time for most NOTAMs you may even find that the activity has been cancelled. Recently the north of England has been plagued with something along the following lines, taking place over some of our best flying sites for several days. Would you fly within this?

FIGHTER EVASION EXER.UP TO 2 HEL AND 2 FAST JET AIRCRAFT WILL CONDUCT HIGH ENERGY MANOEUVRES WITHIN AREA BOUNDED BY (...). AIRCRAFT MAY BE UNABLE TO COMPLY WITH RAC. OPERATIONS CONTACT (...).

Personally I wouldn't let a NOTAM like this stop me flying, although I'd always think carefully about it. I guess it depends on your

## Pre-flight checks

A pilot reported launching his U-Turn Blacklight with an un-noticed tangle that had shortened his right brake line by about 10cm and the right outer C line by an unknown amount. A lot of left weight-shift and brake was required to maintain course. Intending to gain height to try and sort out the problem, the pilot released the left brake and centred his weight to turn right to take advantage of some lift. The right wing immediately fell back; assuming the glider was about to spin the pilot chose to throw his reserve rather than try to sort out the wing. The reserve deployed in about eight seconds, and four seconds later the pilot landed, unhurt. The tangled lines were discovered on packing up. The pilot also noted that the right brake line had around 12 full twists. Further inspection revealed 14 twists in the opposite direction in the left brake line. Both brake handles were fitted with rotating anti-twist connectors. The pilot believes that he had not checked his lines adequately before launching.

attitude to risk, but don't forget it's just a warning (a bit like a MATZ or an AIAA). The military is giving notice that their pilots will be less likely to be able to see and avoid you. But some of our best flying sites lie within military low flying training areas. Lucky us - we get to play with helicopters and fast jets every weekday and, having been a military pilot myself, I'm not entirely assured of their ability to miss us by an adequate safety margin on a normal working day.

We do have a defence against military activity, if we choose to use it - the Civil Aircraft Notification Procedure (CANP). The procedure is outlined on the BHPA website (I won't repeat the article I wrote for Skywings in July 2014). I know that CANP isn't perfect, but it's all we have for the time being. Please use it if flying midweek. Do it the night before even if you're not sure where you are going. Don't be frightened to list several sites. And assume that there will be at least five of you. It doesn't cover XC flying but, armed with a wind direction, a smattering of hang gliding and paragliding notifications might just give the RAF a clue about what they could encounter.

I recently did a CANP for two sites within the above mentioned NOTAM with a comment to say that I was aware of the NOTAM. It was accepted without question. Whilst the Low Flying Booking Cell (LFBC) don't have any responsibility to de-conflict our activities, it illustrates that these sort of NOTAMs, like our CANPs, are just warnings. Treat them with respect, but don't think of them as avoids.

Tom Hardie sits on a CAA working group that considers the efficacy of NOTAMs and would be particularly interested to hear of any that do not help, or even hinder, you. 'Air grabs' like the one outlined above certainly fit into this category. The working group is currently working on a CAA NOTAM 'bible' which should improve things in the future.

*Martin Baxter, BHPA Sites Officer*

## Packers' Conference

A BHPA Packers' Conference will take place at Derby Conference Centre on Saturday November 28th. It is aimed at all licensed EPS packers, and other BHPA members who wish to update their knowledge of emergency parachutes and their use. In the last ten years the type and variety of such systems has widened to include 'Rogallo' and other designs, and the emergence of cut-away systems. The conference will cover the full range of systems; talks and practical demonstrations will ensure that all participants are fully briefed on current practice. The cost of £40 will include a full 9 - 5 programme, lunch, tea/coffee and parking. To book a place contact Stef Blankley at the BHPA Office: [stephanie-blankley@bhpa.co.uk](mailto:stephanie-blankley@bhpa.co.uk).

## Paragliding fatality

It is with regret that we report the death of CP-rated BHPA member Lily Lim, 48, in a paragliding accident at Algodonales in Spain on Sunday June 21st. A BHPA Informal Investigation has been convened to investigate the circumstances of the accident and a report will appear in due course. We offer our sympathies to Lily's family and friends.

## BHPA Coach and Instructor courses

Sep 29-30	BHPA Senior Instructor	TBA	<a href="mailto:stephanie-blankley@bhpa.co.uk">stephanie-blankley@bhpa.co.uk</a>	01162894316
Oct 17 - 18	BHPA Club Coach	TBA	<a href="mailto:stephanie-blankley@bhpa.co.uk">stephanie-blankley@bhpa.co.uk</a>	0116 289 4316
Nov 21 - 22	BHPA Club Coach	Avon Club	<a href="mailto:chrisjonesbath@gmail.com">chrisjonesbath@gmail.com</a>	07966 170014
Nov 28	BHPA Packers Conf.	Derby	<a href="mailto:stephanie-blankley@bhpa.co.uk">stephanie-blankley@bhpa.co.uk</a>	0116 289 4316
Dec 5 - 6	BHPA Club Coach	Southern Club	<a href="mailto:sue.si@btinternet.com">sue.si@btinternet.com</a>	07880 686653
Jan 16 - 17 2016	BHPA Club Coach	D & S Condors	<a href="mailto:viv4acre@gmail.com">viv4acre@gmail.com</a>	07966 230206
Feb 13 - 14 2016	BHPA Club Coach	TBA	<a href="mailto:stephanie-blankley@bhpa.co.uk">stephanie-blankley@bhpa.co.uk</a>	0116 289 4316
Mar 5 - 6 2016	BHPA Club Coach	Lanark & Lothian Club	<a href="mailto:nickyshi@hotmail.com">nickyshi@hotmail.com</a>	07935 938976

