

2007/2008 Incident Analysis Report

2006 was a poor flying year and just to keep up the tradition 2007 gave us the worst August on record. The poor weather merged into 2008 and yet again August gave us the worst flying weather on record! Luckily, the fact that we've had a 'proper' winter means we are guaranteed superb weather this coming spring and summer. Lots of dry, light wind days with bases in excess of 6000ft!

2007 saw 124 reported incidents while 2008 only managed 73! Though it is a welcome trend, we suspect the low number for 2008 is directly related to the poor weather throughout the year and an element of under-reporting. The percentage number of injuries was down however at 60% and 57% for 07 and 08 respectively, compared to the 78% for 2006 and 66% for both 2004 and 2005.

As in previous reports, a few things to bear in mind whilst reading this one: As mentioned above, not all reports relate to injuries. Of the ones that do not involve injury, a proportion will be lucky escapes, equipment issues, damage to 3rd party property and things of that nature. Many of the percentage figures will NOT add up to 100% as, for example, in one incident a person may have more than one injury etc.

There were no reported incidents involving Parascenders or powered PGs/HGs in either 2007 or 2008 though 2007 saw two fatal paramotor incidents involving non-BHPA pilots.

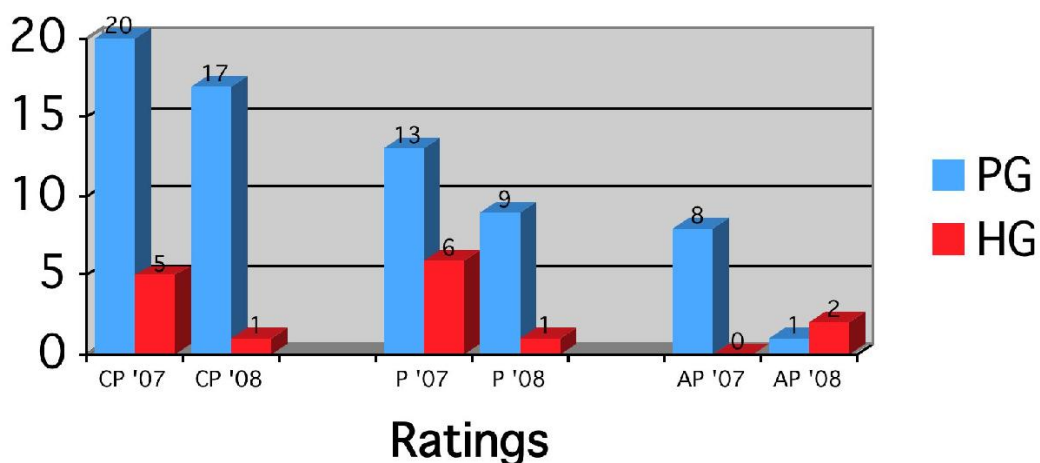
The report has been split into CP+ and Training incidents as in previous years.

Total reported incidents (inc. training);	2007 = 124	2008 = 73
Involving injury (inc. training);	2007 = 86	2008 = 54

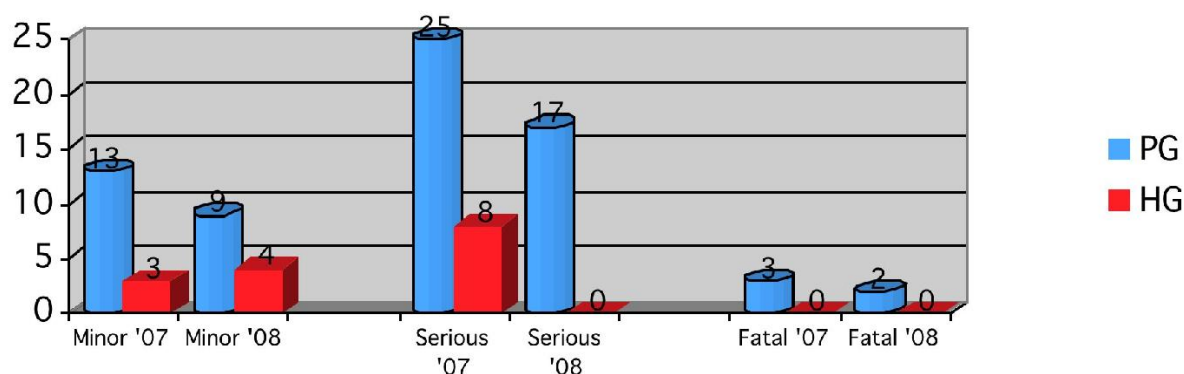
2007/8 Statistics CP+

CP+ injuries; 2007 = 52 (60%), 2008 = 31 (57%).

CP + injuries 07 and 08



Severity of injuries 07 and 08

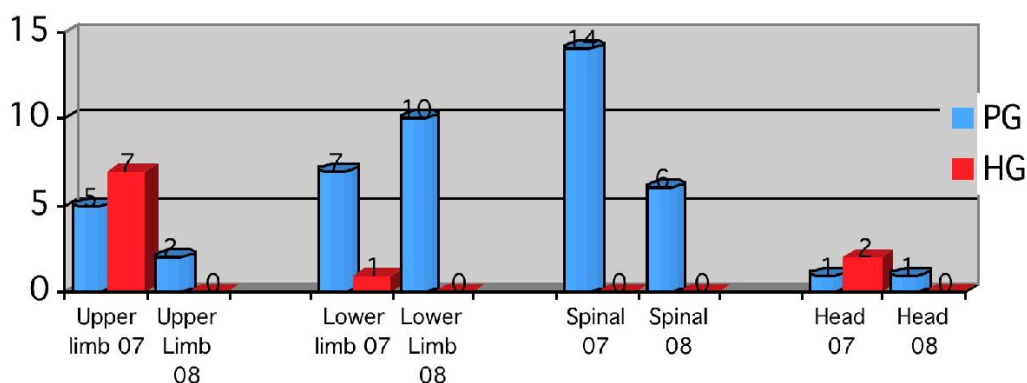


It is important to note that the descriptions ‘Minor, Serious and Fatal’ are recognised EU terms for the purpose of accident investigation. Not all ‘Serious’ incidents are actually that serious e.g. a broken limb (inc. wrists and ankles but not fingers or toes) is classed as serious. Clearly there is quite a range within the term when comparing a fractured wrist to a badly crushed vertebra.

Of the serious PG incidents upper limb injuries accounted for 20% (07) and 12% (08); lower limb 28% (07) and 59% (08); and spinal 56% (07) and 35% (08).

Of the serious HG incidents head injuries accounted for 25% (07); lower limb 12% (07); and upper limb 87% (07). There were no ‘serious’ category HG incidents in 2008.

Breakdown of serious injuries



Causal Factors

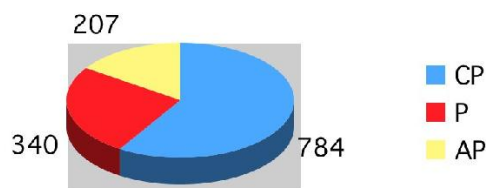
The database has the facility to record the causes of the incidents and accidents. The table below shows a selection of the causal factors common to our incidents. The figures are once again, very similar to previous years. The major causes of paragliding and hang gliding accidents are still glider handling errors and misjudgement of the weather (often a combination of the two).

Human Factors	CP 07	CP 08	P 07	P 08	AP 07	AP 08
Pre-flight Check (omission)	0	0	1	1	1	0
Controlling Glider (error)	17	15	21	13	7	2
Judgement Position (error)	9	10	5	5	0	1
Awareness (lack of situational awareness)	7	4	4	7	1	1
Environmental Factors	CP 07	CP 08	P 07	P 08	AP 07	AP 08
Unsuitable Site	2	1	0	0	0	0
Judgement Weather (error)	11	5	8	8	4	3
Judgement Orography (misjudging airflow around terrain)	6	7	8	5	0	2
Judgment Wind Gradient (error)	0	0	0	0	0	0

Ratings

The following charts and tables are to enable a quick visualisation of membership breakdown per rating. Due to the low number of reported incidents these figures should be read with a pinch of salt (if you have any left). The actual number of incidents can be seen in brackets in the ‘% accidents’ columns. As you can see, a small change in the numbers can make a big difference in the percentages.

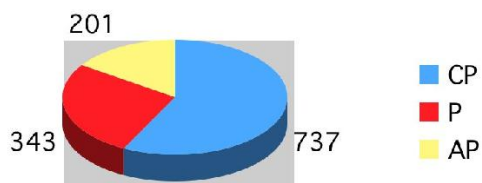
HG pilots by Rating 2007



1,331 total ratings
1,296 pilots

HG 07	% HG membership	% HG accidents
CP	59%	45% (5)
P	25%	55% (6)
AP	16%	0% (0)

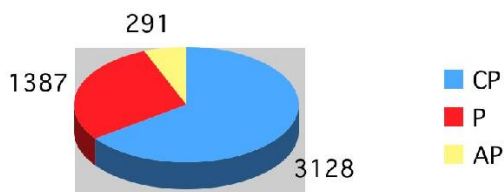
HG pilots by Rating 2008



1,281 total ratings
1,226 pilots

HG 08	% HG membership	% HG accidents
CP	57%	25% (1)
P	26%	25% (1)
AP	17%	50% (2)

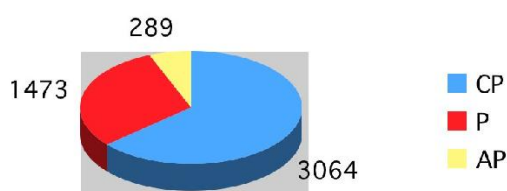
PG pilots by Rating 2007



4,806 total ratings
4,553 pilots

PG 07	% PG membership	% PG accidents
CP	65%	49% (20)
P	29%	32% (13)
AP	6%	19% (8)

PG pilots by Rating 2008



4,826 total ratings
4,560 pilots

PG 08	% PG membership	% PG accidents
CP	63%	63% (17)
P	31%	33% (9)
AP	6%	4% (1)

Fatalities

In 2007 there were 3 fatal incidents, 2 PG and 1 P rated paraglider pilots. There were also 2 fatal paramotor incidents involving non-BHPA pilots.

In 2008 there were 2 fatal incidents both of which were P rated paraglider pilots.

Mid Air Collisions

In 2007 there were 5 reported mid-air collisions. 3 were PG/PG and luckily all escaped injury. Interestingly, all 3 involved members of the Dales HG and PG club. There was 1 PG/HG mid-air where the paraglider sustained minor injuries landing under his emergency chute. There was also 1 mid-air involving a paraglider and a model aircraft and again, luckily, no one was injured.

It must be stressed that this represents only those that were reported. We know there were far more that went unreported. Please report mid-air collisions as they form an important part of the stats.

Emergency Parachute Deployments

There were 9 intentional deployments reported in 2007 and no unintentional. 8 of the 9 deployments involved injury to the pilot and 4 of the 8 involved very serious injuries. Please don't be blasé about your emergency chute. Make sure it's big enough, can be deployed from an 'in-flight' position and that you know how and when to throw it. Don't leave it too late!

There were 4 reported deployments in 2008, 2 of which involved minor injuries to the pilots concerned.

Tandem Incidents

There were 3 reported tandem incidents in 2007, 2 paraglider and 1 parascender. The two paragliding incidents involved minor injury to the passengers. The parascending incident involved serious injury to both participants.

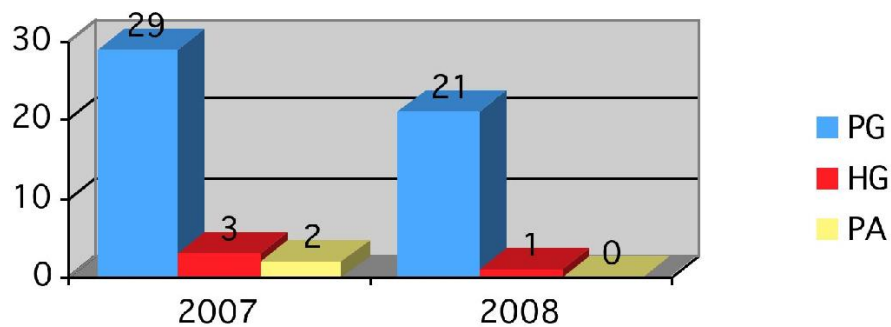
There were 3 paragliding tandem incidents reported in 2008, none of which involved injury.

Incidents/accidents occurring in schools

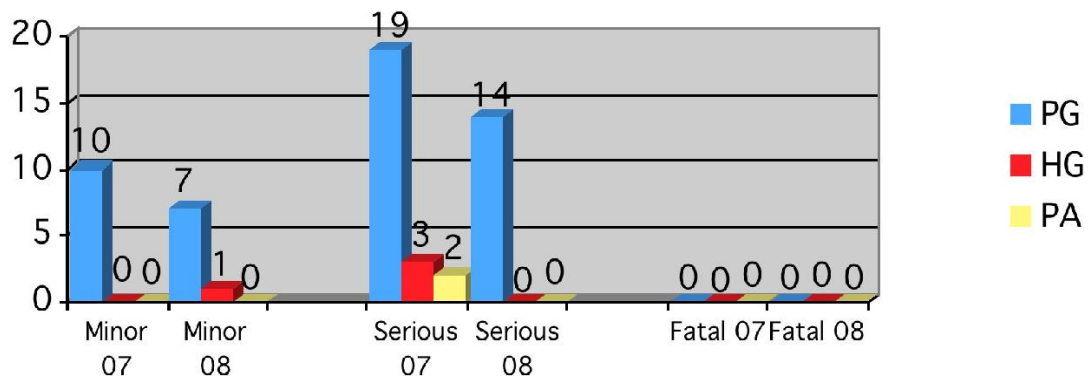
There were 34 and 22 incidents reported in schools in 2007 and 2008 respectively that involved injury to the student. There were no reported 'power' injuries.

The graphs that follow give the breakdown of the injuries and type of injuries that occurred in schools in 2007 and 2008.

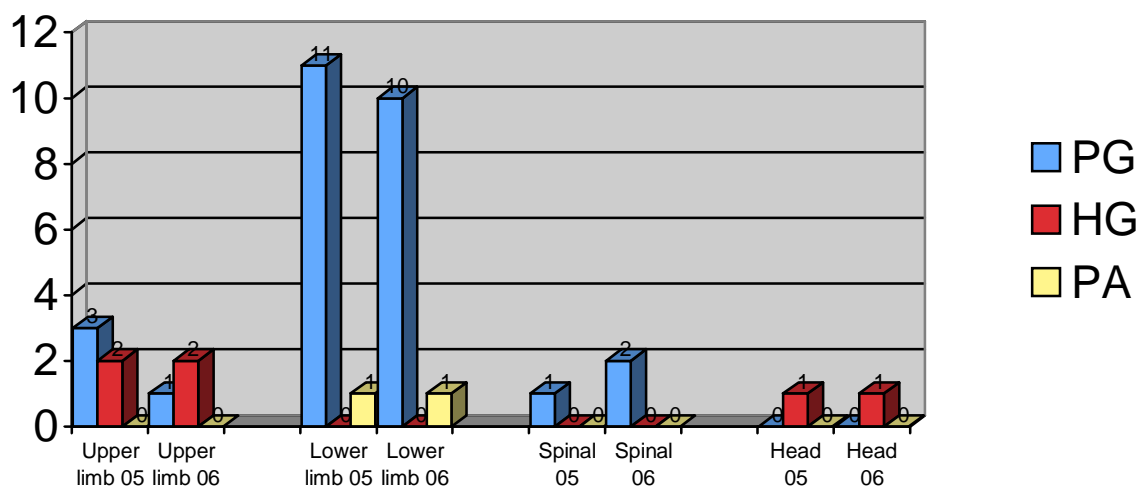
Total incidents in schools 07 and 08



Severity of injuries 2007 and 2008



Breakdown of Serious injuries



Once again, as in previous years the most noticeable figure is the number of 'serious' lower limb injuries in paragliding. The majority of these injuries tend to be relatively minor ankle and lower leg injuries where the student goes on to make a quick recovery. 20 out of the 22 'lower leg' 'serious' incidents from 07/08 fall into this category. They are classed as 'serious' in line with EU definitions rather than the actual seriousness of the injury.

Again as in previous years the majority of the incidents stem from the student failing to properly control the glider and/or tripping and falling whilst ground handling or landing.

Numbers Involved

In 2007 and 2008, there were 4047 and 3958 new memberships sold respectively (intro + training + full + concession). This is an improvement over 2006 both in terms of overall memberships sold and CPs processed, though down on 04 and 05 in terms of new CPs processed. Interestingly paragliding CPs were up on previous years at the expense of hang gliding.

During 2007 572 new CPs were processed; 91% were PG, 8% HG, 1% PA and power <1%.

During 2008 480 new CPs were processed; 91% were PG, 7% HG, <1% PA and power 2%.

When attempting to compare the accident rates of the PG schools and HG schools there are some important factors that need to be considered.

1. There are 44 active paragliding schools and 7 hang gliding – approx 6 to 1.
2. There are approx 110 PG instructors and approx 26 HG – approx 4 to 1.
3. There were 956 (07+08) new PG CPs awarded and 80 (07+08) HG CPs - approx 12 to 1.

To finish

Finally I'd like to thank all pilots who submitted Incident Report forms. We suspect that the overall reporting rate has fallen over the last few years and I'd like to stress the importance of sending in a report. They are not used to chastise or humiliate and are confidential. These forms are our only means of identifying incident trends, and so enabling us to keep the membership informed when hazardous equipment or procedures come to light. With this in mind I'd like to remind all of the importance of completing the form as fully as possible. It may appear that many of the fields on the form are insignificant or irrelevant; they do all make a difference when compiling the data. Please note that the report form itself has undergone a bit of a makeover in order to make the data easier to handle. It is hoped

to make it totally email friendly at some point in the near future. In the mean time it now comes with an SAE rather than the 'fold and send' format.

For comparative purposes (and to avoid large graphs and tables) this report and all the previous reports are available to view on the BHPA web site.

Here's to a great 2009 (think 'high clouds' and 'big distances'). Happy flying and please don't become one of the statistics!