



EUROPEAN GLIDING UNION

Representative Organisation of European Glider Pilots

DG Flugzeugbau GmbH
Otto Lilienthal Weg 2 / Am Flugplatz
D-76646 BRUCHSAL
Attn. Mr. F. WEBER

10 January 2009
EGU/PP/HT

Mr. Weber,

On behalf of the EGU Board, I am writing to you concerning your published intention to introduce a service agreement with owners of DG and LS sailplanes on the basis of an annual fee, and the deep concern that this has raised in a large part of the European gliding community. We have received a strong groundswell of negative opinion from owners of DG and LS gliders.

Firstly let me say that we fully respect your right to recover appropriate costs for these services, some of which you are legally required to provide. We also recognise that such annual contributions are normal practice in wider commercial aviation circles. We can see that with such a wide variety of types to support this is a particular issue for DG and LS lines acquired by your business and we acknowledge that your company has obligations under increasingly bureaucratic EU airworthiness rules.

Your arrangement demands 245 Euros per year from affected owners with immediate effect, with no alternative than to see their airframes grounded, regardless of whether they are genuinely in need of your services or not. We have taken broad advice from airworthiness authorities, and we recognise that EASA rules allow you to do this, although we understand EASA has stopped short of mandating the practice of routinely revising and reissuing Service Manuals. But then EASA has no direct concern, mandate or involvement in cost recovery issues for manufacturers.

The services you offer for the fixed annual fee are diverse, some routine, some specialised. Considering the likely frequency of actions required across both new and mature, and high and low value airframes, it is our view that a flat rate charge is highly inappropriate. Further some of the offered advantages are only appropriate to owners with local access to your facilities. Others may find them less available or useful.

We believe that the approach you describe on your website under 'Looking to the Future' is more appropriate than a 'one size fits all' charge. Whilst variable and tailored cost recovery would undoubtedly be more complex than in the fixed annual charge regime you have proposed, this would be to some extent balanced by the heavy users of your services, who would pay more than the original single fee. The basic fairness of this alternative approach might make it more acceptable to both owners and the maintenance/ airworthiness community.

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Please let us clearly state again that we are not contesting your right to manage your own business and ensure appropriate cost recovery for profitability. Glider pilots and owners recognise the need for a viable glider design and manufacturing industry to survive. Our interest here is in supporting the needs of our national members and the wider gliding community. With those points in mind, we hope sincerely that you and your colleagues can quickly establish a fairer approach to these airworthiness support issues that meets the needs of owners as well as DG.

For and on behalf of the European Gliding Union



Patrick PAUWELS

President

Termikkelaan 9
BE-2530 BOECHOUT
Tel.: +32 3 454 33 34
Fax: +32 3 454 33 88
E-mail: EGU@online.be