

Skyleader Aircraft now available in NZ

Bruce Conway of SkyFreedom Aviation has recently been appointed as the New Zealand dealer for Skyleader aircraft and is awaiting delivery of a carbon/composite GP One.

Bruce selected this 2-seat aircraft after visiting ten aero clubs and flight schools. The GP One was seen as being affordable and of high quality - and instructors, farmers and recreational flyers liked its 600kg MTOW, fuel-efficient shape and robust undercarriage.

Bruce says that the GP One has been optimised as a trainer, having a radio, 80hp engine, adjustable prop, long-range tanks and in-built parachute. Flight schools and commercial operators will register the GP One as a Light Sport Aircraft for GA pilot training or adventure aviation, while individuals and clubs may register it as a Microlight.

About Skyleader

Since 1996, Skyleader have manufactured aircraft in the Czech Republic. Czech manufacturers, known for hi-tech gliders, durable microlights and innovative GA planes, actually claim over 25% share of the LSA market in the USA. Skyleader is not a small player. They are heavily involved in research and commercial aspects, including producing doors for the Airbus A320 airliner. They co-operate internationally on developing flight simulators and UAVs, with a key role in the record-breaking ENFICA-FC electric aeroplane project.

Skyleader's range includes the GP One, plus the all-metal Skyleader 100, 400, 500 and 600. They offer good value-for-money, including corrosion protection. Bruce reports that hundreds of Skyleader aircraft are flown throughout the world, and are known for superb flying, low operating costs, ruggedness and safety. He

adds that, "The spacious 'GA-feel' SL 600 flagship shares its beefy trailing-link landing gear with the wide-body SL 500. The younger set will go for the sporty SL 400." Options include retractable gear, Fowler flaps, constant-speed prop and glass cockpit.



Top: The Skyleader GP One. Above: Skyleader's flagship SL 600.

SkyFreedom Aviation

Bruce has had a lifelong interest in aviation and reflects that his experience in outdoor education and retail has provided him with sound business knowledge and the ability to relate to a wide range of people. He believes clients value his trustworthiness, good communication and commitment to fair pricing.

Before engaging with Skyleader, Bruce says he, "talked with their dealers and owners in other countries. Skyleader's philosophy impressed me, particularly their relationships with people. It was reassuring to find that Lubomir Vit (International Sales Manager) had lived in NZ for 18 months. He is

very willing to listen to what Kiwi owners might think."

Bruce is looking forward to introducing people to the GP One, especially at the Tauranga Air Show in late January. He is keen to talk with flight schools or clubs about subsidised leases.

For more information

A number of purchase options are offered, including rewarding Skyleader owners for demonstrating their aircraft, EarlyBird Specials, maintenance vouchers and learn-to-fly in your own aircraft. The SkyFreedom Aviation website www.skyfreedom.co.nz contains a wealth of information on Skyleader aircraft. For other questions and pricing contact Bruce Conway on 027 577 3111 or by email to: bruce@skyfreedom.co.nz



contributed by Jill McCaw

Mt. Cook Airspace no longer free

Glider pilots have forever enjoyed unrestricted airspace over Aoraki / Mount Cook, but this is soon to be no more. Needless to say they're not happy about it. Jill McCaw puts forward the Gliding NZ case:

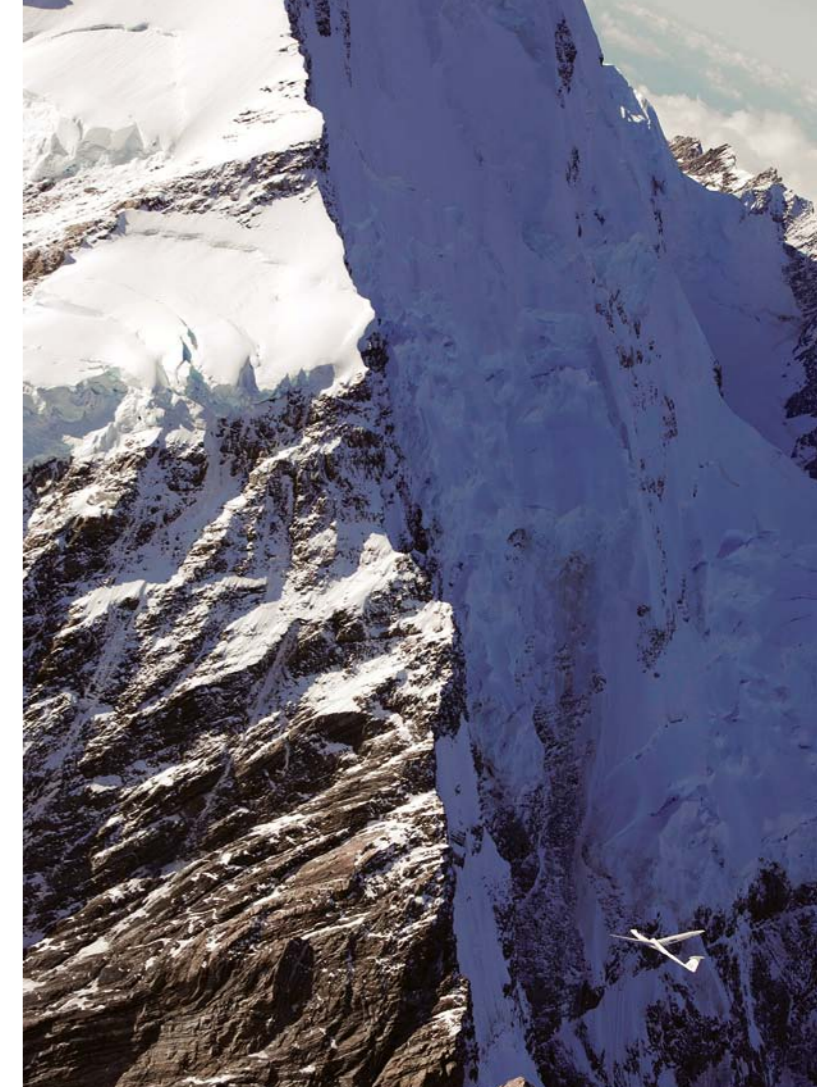
ON 14th November this year New Zealand pilots lose one of the most significant volumes of airspace which had previously been uncontrolled. In spite of 70 submissions against and two for the proposal, CAA has ruled that the airspace over Mt Cook above FL 245 should now be controlled Class C airspace. While it is true that very few pilots are ever likely to want to fly above FL 245, and as the likelihood of having an IFR flight in this area above this is also rare, we could assume that Airways would issue a clearance for a glider wanting to fly above this. However Gliding New Zealand (GNZ) sees this as another thin end of a wedge and glider pilots are up in arms. CAA also stated that it is giving consideration to lowering the floor of this airspace to FL 175, which is well below the levels that gliders commonly operate in wave conditions.

Multiple world record holder, glider pilot, Terry Delore says, "For the gliding movement air space is the most important resource we have and it is being steadily eroded so bureaucracy can grow and jobs can be justified. Since the introduction of transponders in the '90s controlled air space has increased over 2000%. They told us transponders would reduce the amount of controlled air space. 'Yeah Right'. This air space in the vicinity of Mt Cook is not

"... It is in New Zealand's economic interest to retain the Mt. Cook uncontrolled airspace."

theirs to give away or take from us, it is a national resource and Gliding is by far the biggest user.

In reply to the proposal to change this airspace, Trevor Mollard on behalf of GNZ stated: "The Uncontrolled Airspace at Mount Cook is Unique. The consultation document completely underestimates the impact controlled airspace at Mt Cook would have on the gliding community. We view it as an aerial extension of the National Park which lies beneath it and an area worthy of World Heritage status. This strong emotional response occurs because the area is very special with just the right combination of mountains, wind and sun to generate enormously



A GlideOmarama.com Duo Discus approaches the South Ridge of Mount Cook. Picture: Marty Taylor/Gavin Wills - Soaring Landscapes

powerful lee wave systems on a regular basis. The availability of uncontrolled airspace at all levels; a safe operating environment located within a politically stable country makes this area unique in the literal sense."

And also: "It is in New Zealand's economic interest to retain the Mt Cook uncontrolled airspace. This unique combination of features attracts glider pilots from all over New Zealand and the rest of the world and makes a very real contribution to the local and national economy far in excess of the alleged benefits to be derived from the proposal. Imposing controlled airspace would materially harm this wonderful aeronautical asset and diminish its economic value to the nation."

Safety issues regarding the extension of Class C airspace are also of concern. There is no evidence that there would be any improved

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safety for commercial flights in this area as Air New Zealand has already taken the deliberate decision to route west of the main divide in the interests of crew safety and passenger comfort. They are experienced operators and are well aware of the hazards associated with the rapid onset of clear air turbulence caused by mountain lee waves. Gliding safety however would be compromised with controller workload increased. The introduction of numerous VFR gliders into the airways system will generate a workload an order of magnitude greater than is saved by the reduction associated with IFR deviations from track. A particular challenge will be the provision of mutual traffic information between ten or more gliders all utilising the same energy line. At present glider pilots chatter amongst themselves passing on soaring information, position reports, visual sightings and intentions to achieve a safe soaring environment. This chatter would be most unwelcome on a control frequency. With the best will in the world a ground based controller cannot hope to equal the safety standards gliding achieves on its own.

Recent new Performance Based Navigation, Arrival and Departure procedures into and out of Queenstown came into use in 2012. These tracks which have received world acclaim do not infringe the area in question. The only regular use IFR track that is impacted is the one between Christchurch and Melbourne which has an artificial dog leg to track north of this airspace. This dog leg is small and has traditionally been in place and accepted by users.

GNZ asked CAA for the details of the two submissions (Qantas and Airways NZ) in favour of the change. The Qantas submission was just a very short email, the substance of which was, "We are seeking this upgrade to ATS services to allow our scheduled B747 Sydney-Santiago operation to traverse the airspace with controlled

separation." A quick look at the great circle route for this flight shows that the flight passes well to the south of the South Island and nowhere near Mt Cook. The Airways argument used incorrect assumptions and overstated any benefits to be gained. Both submissions were effectively addressed by GNZ's submission.

In light of this GNZ President Nigel Davy has approached the Director of CAA, asking him to personally review the Qantas and Airways submissions versus the GNZ submission and the airspace policy document. The Director has agreed to do this, but he couldn't say when.

In recent years GNZ has fought battles over airspace in the Waikato with mixed results. This 'Airspace Grab' in the Waikato was instigated by the activities of flight training organisations rapid expansion of their operations and the (apparent) inability of the Air Traffic Control system to manage this without 'grabbing' more uncontrolled airspace.

Gliding relies on reasonable volumes of uncontrolled airspace in areas where there are appropriate lift sources to operate. Cross country gliding is the essence of the sport. The squeeze created by reclassifying uncontrolled airspace to controlled, is insidiously killing our sport. This is even more galling when we see the beneficiaries of these reclassifications are foreign based companies.

In a country that has relatively few commercial air movements it seems ludicrous to restrict operations by recreational pilots to the degree being applied. We believe CAA NZ are being unduly influenced by commercial operators who lobby for controlled airspace. Glider pilots would like to see GA pilots get behind our attempts to regain or retain uncontrolled airspace. If you are interested in the issue or want to help, please email GNZ President Nigel Davy at nigeldavy@clear.net.nz

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