

SECTION 1

CONDUCT AND CONTROL OF SKYDIVING (SPORT PARACHUTING)

1. INTRODUCTION

British Skydiving is the trading name for the British Parachute Association Ltd (BPA Ltd) and is the governing body of skydiving (sport parachuting) in the United Kingdom. British Skydiving is committed to maintaining the highest standards of safety in the sport. British Skydiving's approach to safety is established as good practice in the sport.

Since its foundation in 1961 as British Parachute Association, British Skydiving has carefully analysed accidents and injuries in skydiving. This long experience has enabled British Skydiving to build up a detailed knowledge of the risks in the sport. As risks have been identified and assessed, measures to manage and control the risks have been put in place. These control measures are documented in this Operations Manual. The British Skydiving Operations Manual may therefore be thought of as the outcome of a cumulative and continuing assessment of the risks inherent to, and associated with, skydiving. As techniques of risk assessment become more widely used across many fields of human endeavour, British Skydiving has an ongoing commitment to develop and promote the role of proactive risk assessment in the sport.

British Skydiving authorises only qualified individuals as competent persons to conduct skydiving activities at British Skydiving Affiliated Parachute Training Organisations (Clubs, Schools, Centres, Associations or Organisations) or in British Skydiving Registered Display Teams. Such activities are conducted in accordance with the procedures set out in this Operations Manual. The training and qualification of persons as competent, and the content of the British Skydiving Operations Manual, are regulated by the British Skydiving Council (Board of Directors) through its Safety and Training Committee, assisted by competent technical staff employed by British Skydiving.

British Skydiving has in place a well-established procedure for the sharing and promulgation of safety information and the reporting and collection of information and data for analysis and action. This enables improvements to be made to control measures, as necessary, on a continuing basis. As with any action sport, skydiving can never be entirely risk-free. Participants in the sport must therefore voluntarily accept an element of risk. By its regulation of the sport in accordance with this Operations Manual, and by actively promoting a positive safety culture, British Skydiving assists PTOs and display teams to manage risk in skydiving to an acceptable level.

2. CONDITIONS

All skydiving within **Parachute Training Organisations (PTOs)** Affiliated to British Skydiving must take place under the following conditions:

- 2.1. Under arrangements made by a British Skydiving Advanced Instructor (AI) who is the appointed PTO Chief Instructor (CI) and who is normally present, on a daily basis, when skydiving is taking place.

N.B.(1) Approval of the Safety & Technical Officer, the Chief Operating Officer, the Chairman of STC, or an official nominated by one of the above must be obtained before a CI may leave a Category System Instructor (CSI) or an Accelerated Free Fall Instructor (AFFI) in charge of an operation for any period of time longer than a day.

- 2.2. By skydivers with a current Declaration of Fitness/Medical/Doctor's Certificate (See Section 11-Medical) who are trained, equipped and briefed to undertake the planned descent.

- 2.3. When an adequate Ground Control Organisation is in progress (see Para 4, below).

- 2.4. With an authorised Pilot (see Section 9 - Flying) and a Jumpmaster (see Section 3 - Jumpmaster) who is qualified to take charge of the skydivers on board the aircraft.
- 2.5. With skydiving equipment in good condition, correctly packed, well fitted, and checked before enplaning (see Section 6-Equipment).
- 2.6. From an aircraft that is correctly documented, suitably equipped and prepared for skydiving (see Section 9 - Flying).
- 2.7. When weather conditions are suitable (see section 8 - Parachute Limitations)
- 2.8. Onto an approved Parachute Landing Area (PLA), and within an approved Dropping Zone (DZ), (see Section 7 - Parachute Landing Areas/Dropping Zones).
- 2.9. With all documentation in order and up to date (see Section 12-Documentation).
- 2.10. According to the conditions laid down in the British Skydiving Operations Manual.
- 2.11. When the PTO is in possession of a valid Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) Permission.

N.B.(2) Para 2.11. above, applies to PTOs operating within the United Kingdom.

3. RESPONSIBILITY

- 3.1. Overall responsibility within British Skydiving Affiliated PTOs for ensuring that the conditions laid down in Paragraph 2 above are observed, will be vested in PTO Chief Instructors (CIs).
- 3.2. It is the CI's responsibility to make available to every employee or person who is or may engage in skydiving activities conducted by the PTO, the British Skydiving Operations Manual and local Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). CIs must also ensure that any amendments are obtained and incorporated.

N.B.(3) Guidelines for producing Standard Operational Procedures (SOPs) can be found on British Skydiving Form 172.

- 3.3. Student Skydivers (see Section 2 - Designation and Classification of Skydivers) may only skydive under the control of a British Skydiving Affiliated PTO and under the supervision of a CI or British Skydiving instructor authorised by a CI. Such instructors will be responsible for their training and skydiving activities.

4. GROUND CONTROL ORGANISATION

All PTOs will establish a satisfactory Ground Control Organisation to control skydiving, which must be continuously operational when skydiving is in progress and which will meet the following minimum requirements:

4.1. Briefing and Checking of Skydivers

- 4.1.1. All skydivers must be briefed and checked before enplaning.
- 4.1.2. All persons conducting 'Flight line Checks' should be holders of Grade JM1 (see Section 2 - Designation and Classification of Skydivers, Paragraph 6.1).
- 4.1.3. All Student Skydivers must be briefed and checked by at least a Basic Instructor before enplaning, including checking the equipment fitted is an appropriate system (ripcord, BOC etc) for the planned descent. These checks must be recorded for each individual Student Skydiver, signed by the instructor who carried out the check, and the jumpmaster is to refer to this record before accepting responsibility for the skydivers.

- 4.1.4. British Skydiving 'A' Licence skydivers and above (see Section 2 - Designation and Classification of Skydivers) may check each other, provided they are JM1 qualified. It is the responsibility of the jumpmaster to ensure that these checks have been carried out.
- 4.1.5. Tandem Instructors must be checked by a suitably qualified and briefed JM1 skydiver. The check must include a visual check of the Automatic Activation Device (AAD).
- 4.1.6. The check for all Student and British Skydiving 'A' Licence skydivers must include a visual check to ensure that AADs, are switched on.
- 4.1.7. All Student Skydivers must have a pre-jump check. This is an equipment check made in the aircraft shortly before exit.

4.2. Manifest

- 4.2.1. The names of all skydivers and other persons must be entered on a designated manifest form before they embark in an aircraft.
- 4.2.2. A copy of the manifest must remain on the ground.
- 4.2.3. All British Skydiving 'A' Licence skydivers and above will notify the manifestor of the type of descent they intend to carry out.

4.3. Dropping Zone (DZ) Control

- 4.3.1. DZ Control must be continuously established when skydiving is in progress.
- 4.3.2. The DZ Controller must be a nominated British Skydiving 'B' Licence skydiver or above who has been fully briefed on his/her responsibilities and duties, including incident and fatality procedures, for the specific activities of the day and must be in place whilst skydiving is in progress.
- 4.3.3. The DZ Controller's responsibilities will include the following:
 - a. The setting up of and supervising the DZ Control Organisation as required by the CI.
 - b. Briefing any assistant(s) put at his/her disposal.
 - c. Ensuring that the PLA/DZ indicator (see Section 7 - Parachute Landing Areas/Dropping Zones, 1.3.) is in the correct position as required by the CI.
 - d. To ensure that the appropriate ground to air signals are displayed when necessary (see 4.7. below).
 - e. To ensure that the descents of all skydivers are monitored from the ground.
 - f. To suspend skydiving where necessary if weather conditions become unsuitable.
 - g. To ensure that the PLA is clear of unauthorised vehicles etc.
 - h. To ensure that First Aid assistance is given to any skydiver requiring it and that emergency services are contacted where necessary.

- i. Maintain a close lookout for aircraft, including gliders, and to suspend skydiving as soon as any interference with the safe conduct of skydiving becomes apparent. Particular attention should be paid to aircraft landing or taking off and to other aircraft with turning propellers or rotors on the ground, within or close to the PLA.
- j. To ensure that the PTO is equipped with a windsock, signal panels and telemeters or suitable high-powered mounted binoculars and that they are positioned at the most suitable location.
- k. To maintain communication with other aviation activities on and adjacent to the PLA/DZ.
- l. Whenever Student Skydiving is taking place to maintain radio communications with the skydiving aircraft for the purpose of suspending skydiving. If there has been a breakdown of radio communications between the DZ Control and the skydiving aircraft, Student Skydiving must be immediately suspended and will only recommence when radio communication has once more been established.
- m. To report all injuries, incidents, malfunctions or contraventions of the British Skydiving Operations Manual and/or local SOPs to the CI. It is also the responsibility of all skydivers to ensure that any injuries, incidents or malfunctions that they witness are reported in the same way.

4.4. Debriefing of Skydivers

- 4.4.1. All skydivers under instruction must be debriefed when possible after every descent.
- 4.4.2. Student Skydivers must be debriefed by an instructor.

4.5. Maintenance of Records

All skydiver' logs and relevant records must be maintained up to date (see Section 12 - Documentation)

4.6. Parachute Packing

Parachute packing by those not qualified must be supervised by a suitably qualified person. (See Section 6 - Equipment).

4.7. Ground to Air Signals

Whenever skydiving by British Skydiving 'A' Licence skydivers or above is taking place and radio communication is not used, or in the event of a breakdown in radio communication between the DZ Control and the skydiving aircraft, signal panels, which are visible by skydivers from whatever height they are jumping (which may or may not be the PLA/DZ indicator) will be used to signal instructions to the Jumpmaster as follows:

- 4.7.1. When the panels are in the form of an (X) it indicates that conditions are suitable for skydiving.
- 4.7.2. When the panels are changed to a (T) it indicates that conditions are NOT suitable for all skydivers. Thereafter only skydivers authorised by the CI/Team Leader may jump.
- 4.7.3. When the panels are changed to an (I) it indicates that all skydiving is temporarily suspended.

- 4.7.4. When the panels are changed to an (L) it indicates that skydiving is suspended, and the aircraft must land with all remaining skydivers on board.

5. OTHER ACTIVITIES INVOLVING PARACHUTES

Activities such as Paragliding, Fixed Object Jumping etc. do not come within the provisions of the British Skydiving Operations Manual. British Skydiving does not associate them with the sport of Skydiving.