

AERONAUTICAL INFORMATION CIRCULAR 3/17

NEW TRANSPONDER CODE FOR GLIDERS

Introduction

Glider operators in Canada are being granted a unique transponder code of 1202, that they should use at all times, whenever they are operating, unless otherwise assigned by air traffic services (ATS).

Purpose of Circular

This aeronautical information circular (AIC) is to inform glider owners and pilots of this new procedure, which is effective immediately, and will be incorporated in the March edition of *Transport Canada's Aeronautical Information Manual* (TC AIM).

Background

Gliders operate with unique flight and maneuvering limitations. They may go from essentially stationary ATS surveillance contacts while thermaling to moving targets very quickly. They can also be expected to make sudden changes in flight direction to find lift and cannot hold altitude in a response to an ATS request. In addition, due to their small size and streamlined shape, gliders tend to be very difficult to see in flight and have been involved in near-miss incidents and mid-air collisions with powered aircraft.

For these reasons, it is important for air traffic controllers to differentiate between gliders and powered aircraft in order to facilitate safe separation. Providing this unique code is in response to individual requests from glider operators and pilots and is fully supported by the Soaring Association of Canada (SAC) and the Canadian Owners and Pilots Association (COPA). It also matches the guidance promulgated by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), which has been in effect since 2012.

Although not currently mandated, glider owners and pilots are encouraged to operate with a transponder on board so that they may fully benefit from the safety advantages that having a discreet transponder code will offer.

Validity

Effective 2 February 2017. For further information, please contact:

NAV CANADA
77 Metcalfe Street
Ottawa ON K1P 5L6
Attn: Claude Fortier, Manager
Air Traffic Services, Standards and Procedures

Tel.: 613-563-5738
E-mail: claudio.fortier@navcanada.ca



James Ferrier
Manager, Aeronautical Information Management