
Acthpa.org statement

1 message

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Sports Aviation Operations Suspended in the ACT Region

It is with great regret that the ACT Hang Gliding and Paragliding Association announces that flying operations are suspended in the ACT Region from midnight on 30 Mar 2020. There has been debate in our community about the moral and social impacts of flying during the coronavirus crisis and some individuals have chosen not to fly. However that is no longer relevant as we are now of the opinion that flying operations in our region would be unlawful.

On the evening of 29 Mar 2020 the Prime Minister announced measures to protect the community. NSW effected that through a Public Health Order which came into force from midnight on 30 Mar 2020, and the ACT is expected to follow suit with a similar Public Health Directive. The [NSW Public Health \(COVID-19 Restrictions on Gathering and Movement\) Order 2020](#) describes two prohibitions that are inconsistent with our operations.

In particular, the Order directs that a person must not leave their place of residence without a reasonable excuse. We do not believe that flying operations would be viewed as a reasonable excuse. Some have considered that our operations, such as hike and fly, might be considered exercise and therefore be interpreted to mean a reasonable excuse. While hiking might be, flying is not and we urge all pilots to avoid trying to interpret the Order in a way which might suit their desires but is counter to the intent.

Of equal concern is that the Order directs the closure of certain premises. Our flying sites meet the definition of 'community facilities'. Flying from our sites would constitute operating the premises by land owners, our association (through our agreements with the land owners), and the pilots flying from them. This would expose all of us and as the flying would be unlawful and our insurances would be void, further voiding our agreements with land owners which require that we are insured.

We understand that this suspension will deeply affect those of us who are addicted to flying. Once this virus storm has passed we are all looking forward to resuming operations.

Notes:

- Flying operations includes paragliding, hang gliding, powered paragliding, and powered hang gliding.
- The ACT Region means the same thing as described in the SAFA Policy on Region Boundaries. The geographic extent is defined by postcodes and includes all of the ACT and NSW Postcodes in the areas surrounding the ACT (2580-2582, 2618-2621). This includes our sites in NSW such Collector, Lake George, Spring Hill, and Pig Hill. We are of the view that the Lanyon site should be closed as well.