

# Balloon Aviation Association of New Zealand

Code of Conduct for Balloon Pilots and Landowners / Occupiers

## **Code of Conduct**

This Code is a guide for the conduct required of **all pilots and crew**.

As a general principle, all balloonists must adopt an approach to the local community and landowners which is at all times courteous, friendly and sensitive, and which in no way causes any inconvenience or ill feelings.

If we balloonists are to continue to enjoy our sport, it is vital we retain the good will of the farmers and landowners. Balloonists are reminded that the countryside is the farmer's livelihood. Grass is a crop, stock are easily frightened, and farmers depend on electricity supplies for many purposes. Certain responsibilities follow from this, the most important of which have been listed here.

It is expected that all Pilots, Crew and those involved in any way with Ballooning in New Zealand will come with a positive attitude, acceptable physical condition, able and free from the affects of Alcohol or Drugs, and an acceptable standard of appearance.

Pilots under the scope of the Medical Declaration will self report and stand down from flying if abilities either Cognitive or Physical are not compatible with those expected of Flying.

Regarding Competition, participants and crew - will always abide by the rules of the Competition Organiser, maintain an attitude of respect and politeness to opponents organisers and officials.

All BAANZ members will abide by the rules of the CAA Rules, BAANZ Constitution and Rules, Rules specifically in the BAANZ Ops Manual, and Aviation Event Rules.

Members must also refrain from

- (a) any behaviour which might reflect unfavourably on the Ballooning in general, the Sport, BAANZ, another Pilot, or Team or its management bringing them into disrepute, or
- (b) making any comment to the media that could do the same, or
- (c) any discriminatory practices based on race, religion or ethnic background.

## **Introduction**

It is vital that co-operation and goodwill between farmers (includes landowners, lessors, sharemilkers and other occupiers) and balloonist (pilots, crew and passengers) is maximised. It is hoped that smooth relationships can be maintained if both parties adhere to the recommendations listed in the Code of Conduct, which requires mutual respect, co-operation and communication.

## **A. For Pilots**

### **1. Insurance**

Pilots can only participate in an organised event with evidence of adequate insurance. Event organisers' check that all Pilots have the minimum required cover of \$500,000 third party liability (NOTE THIS CAN BE MORE DEPENDING ON THE ORGANISERS). This insurance is dependant on a current balloon inspection – Certificate of Air worthiness.

### **2. Flight Planning**

1. Pilots should not fly unless they are reasonably certain that the flight path will be over land, which is suitable for landing. Pilots should avoid flying over farmland during calving and lambing time – July to September. The exact timing of this activity depends on geographic location and individual farmers preference.
2. All Pilots should have relevant maps marked with up to date Sensitive Areas (SA) and Prohibited Zones (PZ) covering the planned flight area.
3. Organisers of balloon meets should include a reference to this Code of Conduct in their pilot and crew pack literature and should explain the main requirement at pre-flight briefings.
4. Pilots new to an area should contact local Pilots to determine a list of Local PZ's and SA's and area conditions – prior to flight.

### **3. The Launch**

1. Always obtain permission from the landowner before driving on to the property.
2. Check that during the climb-out immediately down wind of the take off site, the balloon will not fly low over livestock, remember that animal in adjacent paddocks can be easily frightened resulting in injury that may not be apparent at the time and therefore cause the farmer to suffer loss.

3. Climb to 500 ft above ground level as soon as possible to comply and avoid unseen animals downwind.
4. Pilots should brief their crew regarding the position of paddock gates etc for leaving the launch field.

#### 4. In the Air

1. CAR Part 91.311 requires that an aircraft (balloon) must not fly closer than 500 ft to any building, vehicle or structure except when in the process of taking off or landing. Use of the quieter burner is recommended when coming below 1000 ft to find a suitable place to land. Pilots should also avoid flying low over livestock and respect all 'SA, 'PZ areas' and 'No Fly Zones'.
2. If it appears that livestock have been disturbed for any reason, note the location and check the cause and effects with the appropriate farmer as soon as possible after landing. If the pilot cannot locate the farmer, then they should approach the local Landowner Relationship co-coordinator.

#### 5. The Landing

1. Pilots should select a landing place that should cause the least possible inconvenience to the farmer  
Particular care should be taken during the spring and summer months when crops (including long grass for making hay or silage) cover large areas of the countryside. Remember the fire risk when landing during the summer months and extinguish pilot lights before touchdown.
2. Ensure that the ground below and ahead is clear of livestock, power lines, and that it is not a SA, PZ or No Landing Area.
3. If an emergency dictates a choice between landing in a crop or disturbing stock, opt if possible for the crop as any damage is likely to be easier to assess and settle.
4. Discourage onlookers from coming onto the property – advise them to wait at the roadside. Their vehicles must not be brought onto the farm. Farmers have OSH rules and regulations, which must be obeyed.
5. Upon landing, only one vehicle – the retrieve vehicle is to be taken onto the property, having sought permission from the farmer to do so. When permission is granted, crew should also seek advice on the best route to retrieve the balloon, and **follow instructions given** – the race or paddock may be extremely wet or the balloon may be on an adjoining property.

6. Pilots should not make tethered flights, or re-inflate in the landing field or carry out an intermediate landing unless they have obtained permission to do so from the farmer.

## **6. The Retrieve**

1. Always contact the farmer, or in his/her absence a responsible agent (close family, or an employee), and obtain details from them giving authorization, and best method to retrieve the balloon. Remembering, you are an un-invited guest and your courteous manner is very important to your team, the landowner and other balloonists.
2. If the retrieve is from a field, the chase vehicle should drive around the edge of the paddock to reach the balloon from the shortest distance across from the edge. If the paddock is very wet, then the crew may have to carry the rig to the trailer to save the pasture from damage.
3. If the pilot is unable to contact an appropriate person, then they should leave their Landing Card in a sensible place and enquire at a neighbour/s to obtain the farmer's name, address and phone number. Rural areas are very security conscious and observant.
4. The Pilot / Crew Chief should ensure that all farm gates are left as they were found and nothing is left on the field.
5. Call in on the farmer as you leave the property. Firstly to check that all is well with the retrieve, secondly to exchange cards so that each can contact the other, and thirdly, so that the farmer knows you have left the property.
6. If the retrieve is difficult, the Pilot or the Crew Chief should talk with the farmer one to one, being courteous, tactful and co-operative. If you require assistance from the farmer be prepared to wait, be prepared to reimburse the farmer for time and use of equipment to assist you.
7. If any damage has been done to the farm either on landing or during retrieve, it should be assessed and agreed at the time. Pilots should make good any damage done, come back and help fix a fence, or pay for it to be fixed. It is recommended to take good photo evidence.
8. Any incidents or accidents should to be reported to the Landowner Relationship co-ordinator, The Aviation Event Flight Director (Balloon Miesta), BAANZ President or Vice President and CAA if required.

**REMEMBER WHEN RECOVERING THE BALLOON**

- \* **DO NOT** drive onto private property without first getting permission from the land owner/tenant.
- \* **DO NOT** cut fences to gain access to a balloon. Leave all gates as you find them.
- \* **DO** park the chase vehicle with the doors closed and out of the way of traffic.
- \* **DO** wait until the vehicle comes to a stop before getting out.
- \* **DO** get permission to recover the balloon from a farm before going onto the property
- \* **DO NOT** allow spectator vehicles onto farm land

## **B. For Farmers**

1. When approached by a balloonist to seek permission for the crew to take the vehicle onto the farm to retrieve the balloon, the farmer is given an opportunity to direct the crew on the best way or preferred route to recover the balloon, and to give instruction on what to do and which house or shed to report to when they are ready to exit the property. (Some farming families want to come and have a look at the balloon and the children have questions, others prefer that packing up be done quickly).
2. It is also important to be courteous and professional in dealing with the pilot or crew chief.
3. If the retrieve is difficult, and the pilot asks for assistance, a farmer should endeavour to give reasonable assistance to ensure that the balloon recovery takes place as soon as possible and without damage. Any extra expense that is incurred in helping the balloonists should be reimbursed on a reasonable basis and should be set at the outset.

If any damage has been caused then the farmer and balloonist should attempt to agree a statement of facts as to the alleged damage that has been caused at the scene of the landing. It may be possible to discuss settlement there and prevent future delays through correspondence depending on the value being discussed.

# **LAND OWNER RELATIONS**

Good landowner relations are essential to the future of ballooning. It is important that you make the landowner's experience is a positive one.

- \* Always be courteous and friendly
- \* If at all possible obtain permission prior to landing
- \* Always get permission before driving on to private property.
- \* Be aware of and respect pets and livestock.
- \* After landing, keep spectators out of the area unless the landowner is present and has given permission,
- \* Make sure that fences and gates are left as you found them  
DO NOT cut fences or force locks to obtain entry
- \* Check the area for litter and take it with you.
- \* If a dispute with the landowner does arise, be calm and exchange names address and phone numbers.  
To avoid any problems, good landowner relationships are essential.

When landing, spend a few minutes explaining the equipment, flight planning process and steering to landowners. Invite locals to upcoming events.

## Online Etiquette

Comments on BAANZ's website become public and they are governed by the laws relating to libel – and not just those in force in New Zealand.

The basic rules for comments here are simple: be legal, be decent and be honest. Be polite. Do not be offensive or malicious, do not break the law and do not try to post advertising messages outside of the sphere of Ballooning.

We will not censor messages because of the opinions expressed, but the moderator will check contributions and may reject, remove or modify comments without explanation. **Some comments have a short shelf-life and posts can rapidly become out of date. The moderator will probably delete any content that becomes irrelevant or outdated.** No correspondence will be entered into in this respect.

Do not post outrageous or pointless messages merely intended to provoke a response from others. Repeat offenders will be banned.

To maintain a positive atmosphere, no personal attacks or insults are permitted. While discussions may become heated, this is no excuse to resort to abuse, whether directed at a person or an organisation. Any abuse in any form will probably result in immediate and permanent suspension.

Any posts found to contain advertising in any form will be may be erased.

If you SPAM members in any manner your subscription will be disabled. Soliciting business through this site may only occur with agreement of the BAANZ Committee.

Opinions, advice and all other information expressed by participants in discussions are those of the author and not BAANZ. Readers rely on such information at their own risk. Participants are urged to seek professional advice for specific, individual situations and not rely solely on advice or opinions published on the website.

Any posts that encourage illegal conduct will be removed and the account disabled. Participants may not link, in any manner, to sites or images containing pornography, sexually explicit images, any reference to gross violence, or any material which is judged by moderators to be socially undesirable.

No one may make any comment on this website unless they have registered as a subscriber, and have logged in.

To protect your privacy, we will not release any subscriber's information unless under a court order to do so.

Please direct any questions to the BAANZ Secretary in the first instance  
[balloonaviation@gmail.com](mailto:balloonaviation@gmail.com)