



Think
Before You...

**TAKE TO
THE SKIES**

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**UK
Power
Networks** 
Delivering your electricity



WHAT TO DO IN AN EMERGENCY

If your aircraft or helicopter comes into contact with an overhead line:

- **Call the emergency services** on 999 or 112. Give them the most accurate location you can and ask them to inform the network operator.
- **Assume** the lines/wires are live, even if they are not sparking.
- **Remember** that, even if you think the power line may be dead, it can be switched back on at any time without warning.
- **Warn others** on the ground to keep well away, especially if any of the power line is touching or is close to the ground. **STAY WELL CLEAR**
- If suspended from, or tangled in wires, **do not allow others to approach the aircraft** until it is confirmed safe to do so by the electricity company.
- Do not attempt to leave your aircraft unless there is real threat of fire.
- If you must leave the aircraft **jump clear** and **stay clear**, so no contact is made between you, the aircraft and the ground at the same time.
- Never touch the aircraft once you are on the ground, **RUN WELL CLEAR.**
- The emergency services have been briefed on how to undertake rescues close to damaged overhead lines. An electrical engineer will confirm when the power has been turned off and the rescue can proceed safely.



REMEMBER

It's not just the people inside the plane who may suffer. Depending on the importance of the line, many other people could be affected because the supply may have to be switched off to deal with the problem. These could include hospitals, businesses and schools as well as homes.



LOOK AROUND
LOOK OUT



DID YOU KNOW...

Most charts and maps used by pilots and gliders show major transmission lines, but they do not show many high and low voltage overhead lines?

Keep a careful look out for overhead electric power lines. KEEP WELL AWAY



This leaflet provides a basic guide to maximise your chances of remaining safe when:

- Taking off
- Landing
- Making a forced landing

...in the vicinity of electrical overhead power lines.



REMEMBER

- Electricity systems carry voltages up to 400,000 volts. Even 230 volts (domestic voltage) can be **fatal**.
- Never assume that any electrical equipment is dead, even if it has fallen or broken.
- Power can be switched back on at any time without warning.
- Touching anything in contact with electrical equipment, even the lowest of voltages, can be fatal as electricity can jump gaps.
- Overhead power lines are often uninsulated (bare) and can carry high voltages. They can look like telephone wires, but **never** assume this is the case.
- Rubber boots **will not** protect you.
- Trees, ropes, suspension lines and water can conduct electricity.

THINK AHEAD

Before you take off

- Make sure you know where overhead lines are in the vicinity of your departure location.
- The CAA 1:250,000 air chart and Ordnance Survey 1:250,000 and 1:500,000 maps show the major transmission lines, because of their height but do not show other high and low voltage overhead lines - notably those on wooden poles which are more difficult to see from the air.

- Check carefully in the airstrip guides e.g. Pooleys for notes about overhead lines near your destination airfield.
- Try and find out as much as possible about a new airstrip destination, including the presence of power lines in the area. Consider driving there first to personally inspect it. If power lines are present could you use an alternative airstrip?
- Always carry a mobile telephone when you fly so you can call emergency services if you have to land in an emergency.

During your flight

- Regularly refer to air charts and Ordnance Survey maps looking for electricity transmission lines in your vicinity.

Final approach and landing out

- Although some lines are hard to see, look for a row of supporting poles and pylons to indicate the route, or it is sometimes possible to see shadows cast by the lines or the poles themselves.
- Poles could be hidden behind trees and a ‘tee off’ line may come away at right angles across your intended landing field.
- When ever you make a landing approach or low level pass, remember to keep a look out for overhead lines on your approach and avoid them if at all possible.

FOR GLIDING

Each year the member clubs of the British Gliding Association and British Hang Gliding and Paragliding Association provide around 400,000 winch/auto tow launches, almost all accomplished without incident. However, there have been incidents where the launching cable has come into contact with overhead power lines either as a result of the launching cable drifting across the power line after release or being dropped by the glider after a launch cable break.

Such incidents expose aviators and the public to a serious risk of electrocution and the interruption of electricity supplies to large areas.

General Guidance

- Display a map showing electricity lines near the airfield or site on your notice board, site guide or in your briefing room.
- Include the emergency telephone number of your local electricity company on the notice board, site guide and in your list of telephone contacts.
- Do not rig or de-rig within 10 metres of an overhead line as long objects, battens spars etc. could contact the line.

Winch and Aerotow operations

- Position the winch and launch point to minimise launch cable drift.
- Use an appropriately sized cable drogue parachute to minimise drift.
- Consider earthing the winch.
- If a cable should fall across an overhead line, evacuate everyone in the vicinity of the cable and winch, then inform the local electricity company urgently, giving a precise location.
- Never attempt to go near or recover a cable that is in contact with an overhead line.
- Carefully select tug aircraft landing approaches to avoid a towline catching a power line.



DANGER OF DEATH

KEEP AWAY
FROM POWER LINES



Call the network operator

0800 3163 105

www.ukpowernetworks.co.uk

If you are unsure of your network operator then
please call 105.

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