

Utah Soaring Association

Heber City Orientation

SOP for Heber City Municipal Airport / Russ McDonald Field – ICAO Identifier: KHCR

Heber City, Russ McDonald Field is a multi-use airport at the southern edge of Heber City, UT. The airport location is N40.4818 W111.7666; elevation is 5637 MSL. The airport is owned and operated by the Heber City Corporation. It is a fairly busy airport used by a wide variety of aircraft and as such requires vigilance and traffic awareness. Typical aircraft in and out of 36U includes single engine land, experimental aircraft, ultralights, gliders, corporate jets, and vintage aircraft (e.g., Stearman and AT-6). IFR arrivals are generally from the north entering a left pattern or a right base leg to RUNWAY(RWY) 22, three to four miles northeast of the field.

Facilities

Airport information is found at the FAA digital –Airport/Facilities Directory website: http://aeronav.faa.gov/index.asp?xml=aeronav/applications/d_afd.

Restrooms

Located in the Heber City Maintenance Building south of OK3Air. The combination for the door in the Heber City Building is 121.5.

Oxygen

is available from the USA supplied oxygen tanks. Tanks are located in Tom Meecham's hangar #6, on the Old Hanger Row (abeam from TWY A2). Prior arrangement must be made with either Paul Schneider, Jack Corneveaux or Tom Meecham for the O2. Phone numbers are listed in Aircraft Clubs.

Food

Not available on the airport but restaurants are close by on Heber City Main Street.

Courtesy vehicle

Not available.

Communications

The Heber City airport is an uncontrolled field. All traffic advisories are communicated on the CTAF on 122.8. Due to the busy nature of the airport CTAF is a crowded frequency. Keep transmissions to a minimum. For air-to-air communications once off tow and out of

the airport area, use 123.3, not CTAF. For all radio transmissions use the last three characters of your ship number, preceded by "glider" (e.g., Glider 46Y). If your ship has highly visible contest numbers, use those (e.g., Glider Gulf Sierra).

On takeoff, the tow plane pilot will make all radio calls. When landing, make your initial inbound call 3-4 miles out. Indicate bearing and distance from the field, local landmarks (discussed later in this document), altitude, and intentions. Make your second call when entering a crosswind or 45 degree left downwind. Make additional calls as needed.

Runways, Taxiways and Windsocks

Heber City Airport has one runway; 6899 feet by 75 feet designated RWY 4/22. A left-hand traffic pattern is used on both runways. Helicopters fly a right traffic pattern.

A single taxiway (Alpha) runs parallel to the entire length of the runway. There are seven taxiway exits from the runway, designated A1 thru A7.

There are two windsocks. The primary windsock is located in the segmented circle and is clearly visible during staging and takeoff roll when using either runway. The secondary windsock is on the grass strip to the northeast.

Tie-Downs

USA has created a permanent tie down spot on the grass at the northeast end of the airport. Soar Utah has a golf cart available for transporting your glider to and from the tie down. Call Soar Utah for the use of this cart and for information regarding private vehicle use within the secure area of the field – 801.580.9310.

Private owners are allowed to place trailers at the same tie down area. Heber City Corporation has no charge to store trailers on the Heber City Airport. Contact the Heber City Airport Manager at to make arrangements for your glider placement – 801.678.0549. Heber City also has airport gate access cards for private owners for vehicle access inside the fence. These cards can be purchased from the Heber City Airport Manager for a one-time \$20.00 fee.

Staging and Towing

All towing operations are conducted by Soar Utah. Expect a high level of safety awareness from the tow plane pilots and Soar Utah employees.

Because Heber is a busy airport, the tow plane pilot will determine when your launch occurs. If possible, while still on the ground communicate your flight intentions to the tow plane pilot prior to your launch and tell the tow plane pilot if you are heavy. Based on conditions the tow plane pilot may recommend a specific tow pattern to a specific location. The tow plane pilot may also offer familiarization information if you are new to the Heber Valley. It's a good idea to review a local sectional chart and be familiar with local landmarks (discussed later in this document).

There is one tow plane available at Soar Utah -- a Piper Pawnee, registration number N50TP. This tow plane is equipped with a retractable tow rope. Reservations are not required; normal operations are from 0900 to 1700 the days Soar Utah is open. Please call Soar Utah for their current operating schedule – 801.580.9310.

The preferred runway for glider launch and recovery is RWY 22. The second taxiway from the approach end, TWY A2, is wider than the others and is normally used for glider staging and recovery operations. RWY 4 is seldom used for glider launches due to the long tow out to the staging area.

The staging process at TWY A2 follows a prescribed procedure. Typically, there is at least one person available, either another glider pilot or a Soar Utah employee, to help push you out and stage. Gliders waiting for tows are lined up facing the runway with the tail of the glider backed to the row of hangers (Old Hangar Row approximately hangar #6). Do not park too close to the hangar doors – if the doors open they might strike your glider. Also remember that you are standing/staging on a busy active taxiway. Stay alert. Always chock your glider and remove tail wheel dolly along Hangar Row – unexpected gusty winds are quite common.

When you are next in line for a tow pull your glider to the hold short line on the south side of the taxiway with the tail pointed to the north. In the hold short position, pilot and passengers should be in the glider with appropriate checklists completed. If the tow plane is on the field, it will taxi past you at the hold short area. Your glider will then be pushed to the launch position with the tail pointing northeast. If you are not using a wing runner the right wing will be placed on the ground. Tell the ground crew if you wish to use the centerline for departure. When you are hooked up and ready, waggle the glider rudder to indicate to the tow pilot you are ready. No radio call is necessary or desired. Remember that the Pawnee has a retractable tow rope. The tow plane will slowly move into position on the runway and will stop when the rope is taught. If the tow plane is returning to the pattern from a tow he may call "stop and go." If so, your glider will be put into the launch position after the tow plane has landed.

Premature Tow Termination

Runway length combined with Pawnee performance allows for sufficient runway in the event of a premature tow termination shortly after liftoff. If the runway is not a viable option, there are several other possibilities for landing.

There is an alfalfa field immediately off the departure end of RWY 22 on the west side of US HWY 189 (the busy highway paralleling the runway). This field has an active irrigation system that must be respected. Look for the pipe. The alfalfa field to the west is an option as well. This field has power lines bisecting the field. You must either land long, over the top of the wires, or land short. There is also a ditch and power lines to the north of this field. Use caution.

Tow Patterns and Operations

Tows from Heber City follow a predictable pattern. The actual tow depends on what you want to accomplish for the flight (i.e. pattern vs extended flight), and the weight of your ship.

Pattern tow: Depart RWY 22 and make a right 360 degree climbing turn to re- enter an up-wind leg to RWY 22 at approximately 6800-7100 MSL. Release in a right-hand turn and setup to a left crosswind pattern entry to RWY 22.

3000' AGL tow: This is a training tow. Depart RWY 22 with a right climbing turn. Expect to stay on a northeasterly heading until reaching 7000' MSL then make a climbing left hand turn to a southwesterly heading. Climb to 8600 MSL and release.

Ridge tow: This tow is for a soaring flight. If you are in a heavy glider, expect to depart RWY 22 with a right climbing 360-degree turn heading toward the Deer Creek Reservoir. Once you pass the point of the ridge make a left climbing turn and remain on the south side of the ridge -- the first set of mountains just to the south of Heber airport. Typical release is between 8000 and 9000 MSL depending on aircraft, WX, and pilot experience. If you are flying a single seat glider expect to do all of the above except the left 360 climb over the airport. Singles are light enough to just head out towards Deer Creek Reservoir and climb.

Cascade Springs tow: This tow is used early in the day, late fall and on rare occasions when a north wind prevails. Depart RWY 22 with either a right 360 climb or straight out depending on whether or not you are a single seat glider. Climb to the west to Cascade Springs (6 miles west of 36U) or Terrace Mountain (7 miles west of 36U) between 9500-10,000 MSL.

Landmarks and Position Reports

There are several prominent landmarks in the area used for position reporting. For inbound calls always state the local landmark, distance from and bearing.

Jordenelle Reservoir Dam: Seven miles north of the airport. It is the beginning of the instrument approach (RNAV GPS -A) and the end of the RNAV IFR departure (COOLI 1 Departure). You may view these procedures at the FAA digital – Terminal Procedures Publication/Airport Diagrams website.
(http://aeronav.faa.gov/index.asp?xml=aeronav/applications/d_tpp).

Deer Creek Reservoir: Two miles southwest of the airport.

Daniels Canyon: Approximately three miles southeast of the airport. The Pines. Approximately four miles south of the airport on the ridge -- the first set of mountains south of Heber airport. The ridge is a common tow destination for finding "house thermals." Over the pines the recommended benchmark altitude when determining whether or not to head back to the airport is 8600 MSL. A good rule of thumb is to stay on the southwest side of the ridge and work your way north as you lose altitude. Flying to the leeward (northeast side) on a windy day can result in severe sink.

The Point: Approximately two miles south of the airport on the ridge. Over the point the minimum recommended altitude before turning back to the airport is 7300 MSL. From this position you will most likely use a 45 to a left downwind pattern entry.

Wallsburg Ridge: Approximately 6 to 7 miles southwest of the airport. Recommended minimum altitude for returning to the airport from this location is 10,000 MSL. Recommended altitude for flying from the ridge to the Wallsburg Ridge is 11,000 MSL. Expect to lose approximately 1000 MSL crossing the Wallsburg valley.

Traffic Pattern

Both RWY 22 and RWY 4 use standard left-hand patterns. Plan to be in the airport traffic area at 7100 AGL (1500 AGL) and abeam the windsock on downwind at 6400 MSL (800 AGL). The preferred entry to the pattern from the west is left crosswind at 1500 AGL. From the east use a 45 degree entry to left downwind.

Initial pattern entry points are:

The Gun Club: Approximately ½ mile south of the airport. Use this in calm wind conditions and when entering a 45 to downwind for Runway 22. "Over the gun club, on a 45 entry for downwind Runway 22." Caution: occasional violent leeward rotor two miles south of the airport. RESPECT THIS WIND, IT CAN BRING YOU DOWN IN A HURRY -- 1000fpm sink is common on windy days.

The Ponds: These are easily visible square sewer ponds approximately two miles northwest of the airport: "Over the ponds, two miles northwest, inbound for landing." Cross RWY 22 over the 1000' touchdown zone bars on RWY 4 in a left crosswind. An overhead pattern descending into downwind leg is OK. Entering the traffic pattern from the ponds is preferred and it gives you the most time and visual clues to fit into the existing traffic flow. Caution: most powered aircraft enter the pattern from the ponds.

Alternate Landing Options

The overrun prior to RWY 22 threshold is acceptable for landing, but land short. Runway end lights could be obstructions. The same is true for RWY 4, but the available landing area is shorter.

Landing in the grass on the northwest side of RWY 22 (directly next to the asphalt runway) . Be aware that the field is rough and short. This is a good option if an aircraft pulls out in front of you as you turn final approach or if another glider is on the runway. Plan to land after the abeam point for the VASI lights for RWY 22 and don't land long as to run into the segmented circle. Landing on the grass on the southwest side of the segmented circle is not recommended due to rough terrain.

The infield grass between the runway and taxiway is useable. Do not use the first two areas on the northeast end of RWY 22. The four remaining areas to the southwest are good for landing. The infield south of TWY A3 (intersection abeam the fuel farm at OK3) is in the best condition. The infields south of TWY A4 are very uneven and rough. They are usable in a pinch.

Directions to the Airport

From Salt Lake City: Take I-80 East to Kimball US-40/US189 (exit 146). Drive through the town of Heber. As you approach the south edge of town, at a traffic light, turn right on to US-189. Immediately change to the left lane and take the first left onto Daniels Canyon Road. After approximately seven tenths of a mile turn right on to Airport Road. You may park in the Soar Utah parking lot (gravel).

From Provo: US189 east through Provo Canyon. Just prior to entering the south edge of Heber City, or the intersection of US-40, turn right on Daniels Canyon Road. After approximately seven tenths of a mile turn right on to Airport Road. The USA glider is parked in front of the Soar Utah office on the northeast edge of the main ramp. You may park in the Soar Utah parking lot (gravel).