
From: RegReform (ANF)
Sent: Monday, January 25, 2016 1:28 PM
To: Dixon, Lisa (ANF)
Subject: FW: RETAIN Section 702 4.16(1) for SAFER SKYDIVING
Attachments: AR11-30 FAA Review PLA Standards.pdf

From: Margaret Tompsett
Sent: Monday, January 25, 2016 11:02 AM
To: RegReform (ANF)
Subject: RETAIN Section 702 4.16(1) for SAFER SKYDIVING

Dear Ms. Dixon

Retain Section 702 CMR 4.16(1) Unchanged.

702 CMR 4.16(1) provides that “the area used as a Parachute Landing Area (PLA) shall be unobstructed and with a distance of at least 150 yards from the target to the nearest obstruction or hazard.”

FAA researchers recommended minimum distances for safe landing areas plus an additional 40ft from hazards, but there are currently NO official FAA regulations defining an appropriate landing area for skydivers. The UK and Ireland both require a 820 feet radius circle, free from hazards and bordered by a suitable overshoot/undershoot area. (AR11-30 [5.3])

The United States Parachute Association (USPA) has lobbied for small landing areas, but their Director of Safety, Jim Crouch, has identified wind turbulence as a major safety issue. “After crossing over trees, tall buildings or other structures, jumpers under canopy may find that smooth winds suddenly turn chaotic. The stronger the wind and the higher the obstacles, the worse the effect will be. Skydivers Information Manual Section 4, Category C, provides general guidelines regarding turbulence. “You can expect to feel the effects of turbulence at a distance as far as 10 to 20 times the height of the obstacle that the wind is blowing across. So wind coming across 50-foot-tall trees might cause turbulence as far as 500 to 1,000 feet downwind of the trees.” ie This requires more space than any so-called minimum sized PLA to prevent turbulence induced accidents, like the one that occurred at Chatham Airport in 2012.

SAFETY FIRST – Retain Section 702 CMR 4.16(1) unchanged.

Margaret E Tompsett MD
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