



Australian Parachute Federation

Senior Instructor Guide



VERSION 01-2023

STATUS: EDUCATIONAL/ADVISORY

Warning***Parachuting and flying in parachuting aircraft can be dangerous.***

This guide is not a do-it-yourself guide to skydiving instruction and should only be used while under the supervision of a qualified APF Course Trainer.

IMPORTANT: Version Control

It is important that members refer to the current version of this Guide. Current Version number is shown on the front cover and in the below table. As this Guide is administered exclusively by the APF, it will be updated and amended when and as required.

Significant changes made from the previous version are shown in Amendments.

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01-2023	01 April 2023
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AMENDMENTS

VERSION	AMENDMENT DETAILS
Initial Issue:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minor wording adjustments

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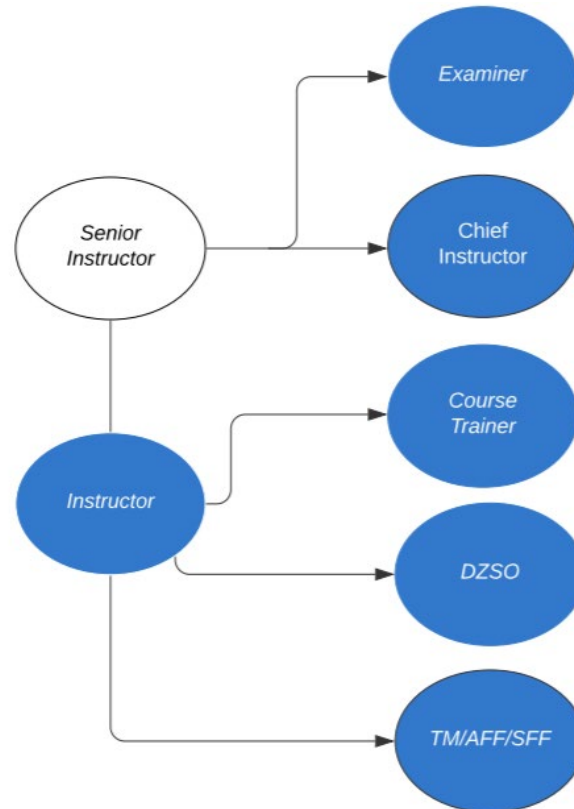


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PART 1 – THE SENIOR INSTRUCTOR

The APF Senior Instructor Rating is the highest instructor qualification available and is a prerequisite for the position of Instructor Examiner or Chief Instructor. Chief Instructors administer Group Members and centres throughout the country and have considerable influence on APF policy through their involvement in various conferences and other legislative meetings.



1.1 Responsibilities

Senior Instructor

- To ensure Students receive safe and competent instruction
- To set a good example
- To have a sincere interest in the student's progress
- To have an active self-improvement program; be proficient as a sport parachutist; examine your attitude as a jumper and as an instructor regularly
- Make reasonable efforts to ensure you are operating at a “world’s best practice”
- Always be mindful that Senior Instructors, by the attitude they convey or the knowledge they communicate, hold a degree of control over the student's wellbeing and safety.

Instructor Examiner (Trainer and Assessor)

- Responsible for the training and assessment of skydiving and parachuting instructor candidates
- May only assess candidates for instructor ratings and endorsement as authorised by the APF
- Must conduct all assessments for instructor ratings and endorsements in accordance with the Instructor Examiners Manual and the APF Operational Regulations and Regulatory Schedules.

Chief Instructor

The appointed CI of a Training Organisation is responsible for ensuring that:

- an adequate and appropriate Safety Management System is documented and implemented

- all parachutists involved in parachuting activities conduct themselves in accordance with the organisation's Safety Management System and comply with all rules and regulations of the APF and
- all rating holders and persons appointed to those positions as defined in OR 6.1.4:
 - (i) operate within that organisation's Safety Management System and comply with all rules and regulations of the APF; and
 - (ii) ensure students, novice parachutists and certified parachutists under their supervision conduct themselves in accordance with that organisation's Safety Management System and comply with all rules and regulations of the APF.

To appoint:

- DZSO
- Senior Pilot

To supervise:

- All training descents.
- All Instructors and Coaches registered under them and ensure their ratings, endorsements and medicals remain current.
- Any probation periods of new Instructors or Coaches.
- Instructor revalidation and Coach assessments.

Must ensure that:

- DZSO is carrying out their duties correctly
- Incident Notifications are correct and submitted in accordance with Regulatory Schedule 55
- Any variation from the standard APF Training Tables are first approved by the STM and the change included in the Training Operations Manual.

Other responsibilities include:

- Recommend candidates for and supervise the assessment of packer ratings.
- Recommend candidates for Instructor ratings and Coach approvals.
- Enforce compliance with the APF Rules and Regulations and CASA instruments.

1.2 Privileges

Senior Instructor

A Senior Instructor may be eligible to apply for the position of CI of a Training Organisation, Instructor Examiner or Master Instructor (MI).

Chief Instructor

To verify and sign:

- Certificate applications.
- Crests applications.
- Instructor ratings and coach approvals.
- Display General rating applications.

To approve:

- A course of instruction for jumping with handcam
- Cameras and mounts used
- Individuals to pack for their own use
- The training of GCAs and TAs

- Deliberate cutaway descents
- Authorise a Tandem Instructor to conduct tandem display descents

Examiner

- To conduct the examination of instructor and endorsement candidates.

1.3 Requirements for Senior Instructor Rating

Before the issue of an APF Senior Instructor rating, the candidate must have:

- At least a valid APF Certificate Class E;
- Held a valid Instructor rating with an AFF, SFF or Tandem Endorsement for at least the preceding two years;
- Have held valid DZSO and Course Trainer endorsements for at least the preceding two years;
- The approval of the STM or the Chief Instructor under whom the applicant intends to be registered and the STO;
- Taken part in at least two Instructor Assessment Panels in the preceding two years unless excused from this requirement by the STM;
- Either:
 - a) Submit a thesis or a body of work on a subject acceptable to the STM; or,
 - b) Hold a qualification approved by the STM.
- have successfully completed the course of instruction and relevant assessments approved by the STM, and
- The recommendation to receive the rating by the Examiner.

It is preferred that the candidate attend a structured Senior Instructor course.

PART 2 - COURSE TIMETABLE

The course is normally conducted over four or five days and usually the candidates are examined by the STO. There are six lecture periods with the rest of the week being taken up by seminars and guest speakers.

2.1 Preparing for the Senior Instructor Course

The recommended preparation for the Senior Instructor Course is to spend considerable time acting as DZSO on a busy dropzone. A successful Senior Instructor requires a strong commitment to the sport. It is highly recommended candidates spend considerable time with a Chief Instructor to learn about the administrative and personnel facets required from a Senior Instructor..

Candidates should have a working knowledge of the regulations governing all parachuting. A detailed knowledge of the APF Instructor Guide is required.

Completion of the TAE40116, Certificate IV in Training and Assessment (This course is superseding the original TAE40110 Certificate IV in Training and Assessment, though it is also acceptable) would be an advantage.

2.2 The Senior Instructor Rating Assessment

The assessment is divided into three parts, written, oral and practical.

Written

The written section is comprised of fifty multiple choice questions and ten short essay questions, covering the following areas: Operational Regulations, Regulatory Schedules, equipment, instructional technique, and general knowledge.

Most questions concentrate on dropzone management and the duties of a Chief Instructor.

Oral

The oral section also probes the candidate's knowledge of dropzone administration, supervision, and training requirements.

Practical

During the practical, the candidate is required to demonstrate competence in all aspects of acting as an Instructor and DZSO. The practical exercise may be chosen by the examiner and tests a candidate on dropzone requirements and suitability.

PART 3 - APF PUBLICATIONS AND WEBSITE

A SI, CI or Examiner requires a high level of knowledge of all APF documents and where these documents can be located. Every SI candidate should be familiar with the APF website and its contents and comfortable checking, retrieving and entering information into it.

3.1 APF Publications

APF publications that SI's are expected to have knowledge of:

- Operational Regulations and Regulatory Schedules
- Training Operations Manual (TOM) and the Instructor Manual
- Procedures Manual, APF Constitution and Code of Ethics
- All training and endorsement guides
- The Misconduct Policy and Procedures Manual
- CASA Specifications, CAO's and legal aspects of that responsibility
- Additional APF documents

3.2 APF Website

SI's are expected to be familiar with APF Website navigation, and should:

- Have general understanding of the content
- Know where to find the contact list for APF staff and officers
- Be able to locate APF manuals and publications
- Be able to locate application forms
- Be able to perform a member look up

PART 4 - CUSTOMER SERVICE AND INTERNAL RELATIONS

4.1 Customer Service

A Senior Instructor should have the ability to deliver high quality customer service to clients and staff, understanding the importance of communication.

Techniques for good customer service are:

- a) **Listen** to your customers and staff, keep a friendly attitude towards them
- b) **Smile** when talking to people in person or on the phone
- c) **Treat them like you would like to be treated**
- d) **Be sensitive** - take into consideration skydiving is an emotional event
- e) **Train the front-line staff** how to deal with standard problems (weather, excess weight surcharges)
- f) **Show people you care**, for example: an injured skydiver, at the first opportunity, visit them in hospital and maintain communication following the incident
- g) **Timely and honest communication** to the customer is the best method to avoid complaints
- h) **Treat your staff well** and they will treat your customers well

Additional information and techniques for people management and conflict resolution are available in the DZSO guide, see Part 6 – People Management.

4.2 Sexual Harassment

The APF is committed to providing a sport and work environment free of sexual harassment, where individuals are treated with respect and dignity. The Australian Parachute Federation will not tolerate sexual harassment behaviour under any circumstances.

Sexual harassment is defined as behaviour that has a sexual element, that is unwelcome, and, in the circumstances, a reasonable person would have expected the behaviour would offend, intimidate or humiliate the person to whom it is directed.

Behaviour constituting sexual harassment can take many different forms, including unwelcome physical contact, the display of offensive materials, or sexual comments, jokes and propositions. The behaviour may be a single incident or repeated. It may be explicit or implicit, verbal or non-verbal and it may include promises or threats in return for sexual favours. Although the intent may vary, if it is unwelcome and the effect is to offend, humiliate or intimidate, the behaviour should stop.

A Senior Instructor should ensure that appropriate procedures are identified to handle sexual harassment complaints. Further responsibilities should ensure that:

- Contact Officers are identified to provide information and support
- Complaints are treated in an impartial, sensitive, fair, timely and confidential manner
- Sexual harassment reporting is encouraged, regardless of who the offender might be
- Appropriate training is provided to those who manage and implement the policy
- Widespread awareness and understanding of sexual harassment is provided
- The policy and procedures are monitored and reviewed regularly.

The most effective complaint procedures offer a range of options for dealing with sexual harassment. The APF recognizes that natural justice is the minimum standard of fairness to be applied in the investigation and adjudication of a dispute.

Sexual harassment complaints can be handled through a variety of mechanisms. The Senior Instructor should recognize that, as a highly sensitive and complex matter, sexual harassment is best dealt with informally through discussion between the parties or with some assistance from an independent third party, so as to minimize its damaging and disruptive effects.

If the complaint cannot be resolved informally, the complainant may lay a formal complaint. In this case, the complainant is required to prepare and sign a formal written complaint to the Contact Officer who, in turn will ensure the alleged harasser is provided with a copy of the complaint. Both complainant and alleged harasser may pursue advice or action from an external authority at any stage of the complaint procedure.

PART 5 – CI RESPONSIBILITIES: SMS, DZ AUDITS, INJURIES AND DISCIPLINE

A necessary responsibility of a CI is impeccable record keeping. Document everything. Policies and procedures need to be in place, reviewed, updated and crucially adhered to. It might seem an unnecessarily requirement, but the repercussions of poor record keeping can be disastrous if called upon in any legal claims. Skydiving is life and death sometimes, and as the CI, you'll be carrying a high level of responsibility if the latter eventuates.

5.1 Safety Management System (SMS)

The ultimate responsibility for safety rests on the shoulders of Chief Instructors, Senior Instructors and DZSO's – those with the experience and knowledge with the ability to enforce safety concepts. A Senior Instructor should demonstrate a commitment to, and the responsibility for, a formal safety policy which flows into safety objectives. These objectives must be practical, achievable, regularly reviewed, reassessed, and communicated to other instructors and staff.

A successfully implemented SMS will:

- Establish expectations. Establish the safety standards the CI (and DZ owner) want.
- Engage somebody (preferably the CI) to maintain the SMS,
- Encourage staff/instructor involvement and commitment to identifying safety risks. Create a culture of shared accountability and responsibility.
- Perform a gap analysis and update the SMS as appropriate.

5.2 Emergency Response Plan (ERP)

An Emergency Response Plan (ERP) is an integral part of the SMS and it is to be implemented in the event of an incident (minor or major). The ERP sets out what you will do in the case of an emergency and how to return to normal operations.

Procedures in the ERP should include:

- Delegation of emergency authority
- Assignment of emergency responsibilities
- Authorisation by key personnel for actions mandated by the plan
- Coordination of efforts to handle the emergency
- Safe continuations of operations, or return to operations as soon as possible
- Planned and coordinated action to manage media attracted by an incident

It is vital that in the event of an emergency key personnel know where to find emergency procedure information.

Emergency situations create unique pressures which can be complex and unfamiliar. Accident investigations have shown how important regularly rehearsed emergency procedures and training are in preventing or minimising harm. Periodic desktop exercises, as well as live exercises, will help to make sure your emergency response plan works and is current. There should be periodic reviews and updates where necessary - having out-of-date contact details for key personnel, for example, is the last thing you need in an emergency. Such exercises are also valuable for developing more effective relationships with local agencies (fire/police/lifeguards).

5.3 Dropzone Audits

Audits are conducted of all dropzones periodically by an STO – generally every 12-18 months. The most current audit template can be found on the APF website or by contacting an STO.

General dropzone audits are conducted over the entire organisation. They will cover manifest operations, landing areas, equipment, aircraft, staff, training, SMS and emergencies. Audits may target specific areas in more depth based on findings or observation or to inspect new processes that might have developed for new rules or regulations.

Audits are conducted normally with advance warning – two weeks' notice is a reasonable expectation. When a date and time is agreed, the STO will send the pre-audit package which supplies the audit template and asks for some information, for example; equipment master log, instructor list, CJPM etc, to help reduce the time required on the day of the audit.

Audits normally take 6-8 hours. If possible, they are best scheduled on a day the DZ is operating so the auditor can see the systems and staff at work, but also hopefully on a day that isn't too busy to minimise any disruption to the operations.

5.4 Injury Claims

The APF acts as an insurer for all APF members. If a student is injured in parachuting activities and makes a claim against the organisation or individual instructors, the APF may represent in all aspects of the legal process.

Once lawyers are involved, the costs quickly start growing exponentially. It is up to CI's, DZSO's and any Instructors and staff at the dropzone to do their best to mitigate the likelihood of an issue being escalated to the legal realm. This can be done, once an incident has taken place, through continued support of the injured individual and maintaining excellent customer service protocols.

The best way to prevent legal issues from arising, and to cover yourself if they do, is to always adhere to the rules, always have a safety margin and exercise a consistent duty of care to staff and customers.

It is also important to note that sometimes injuries are first heard about weeks or months after the incident. Tandem students will often not notice an injury – or at least the severity of it – while they are still high on adrenaline. It may be a few days before they undergo an x-ray and then find out something is broken. For this reason, keeping videos and documenting any suspected injuries is vital – it is better to get TM's to jot down a quick witness statement on the off chance something may come of it rather than trying to recall the details of an incident three months later. If a claim comes in to the APF for an incident everyone has forgotten about, it is very hard to defend.

5.5 Disciplinary Matters

The powers to discipline a member at dropzone level was discussed in depth in the DZSO Guide, please refer to the Disciplinary Matters section of that guide for more details.

A CI should also have a sound understanding of the Misconduct Policy and Procedures Manual (MPPM) before taking any action against a member. Any action taken should follow the procedures in the MPPM.

Contact your STO for any help with the MPPM.

PART 6 – THE ROLE OF EXAMINER

Examiners are the highest level of instructors within the APF. The role of examiner is not an endorsement to be achieved, but rather an approval that is applied for. And as such, it can be taken away at will.

The chief purpose of an Examiner is to conduct examinations for APF Instructor courses. Examiners are intended to be non-partisan to dropzones and able to move between organisations to ensure uniformity of standards. As an Instructor or endorsement course is organised, the STO must be notified and supplied with a syllabus for their approval. If the STO is happy with the course syllabus and trainer, they nominate an Examiner and have the appropriate paperwork issued.

There is an Examiner's Manual which explains the rules and processes of examinations within the APF system, however it is not for general circulation.

A SI may apply to the STM to be approved as an Examiner after they have held the SI rating for two years. There are endorsement specific conditions a candidate must fulfil, refer RS 53 for complete details.

The list of examiners is reviewed annually by the STM and inactive examiners are removed from the list.

PART 7 – STARTING A NEW DROPZONE

7.1 Introduction

The following information describes the requirements, procedures and problems associated with starting up a parachute Group Member or dropzone from scratch. It may be useful to two groups of people:

1. Those who want to set up an organisation which will conduct parachuting operations at a dropzone, and
2. Those who wish to set up a "social organisation", connected with parachuting but not actually running a dropzone.

It does not attempt to go into details – for which reference to APF manuals or discussions with officials may be necessary.

7.2 Terminology

In the early days, most parachuting was conducted by clubs – groups of jumpers who banded together to form clubs. When the APF Constitution was written, it referred to “Group Members”. Since then, commercial organisations have sprung up, and use U.S. terminology “centres”. They've also been referred to as “Member Organisations”. All very confusing! The modern day terminology is ‘Group Member’ and this term is now used throughout all APF documentation. Group Members can be either a "training organisation" or a "non-training organisation". See Regulatory Schedule 50 for definitions.

7.3 APF Membership

Classes of membership

The APF has two classes of membership: individual Members and Group Members. Most parachuting organisations in Australia are Group Members of the APF.

Do you need to be a Group Member?

If the dropzone is going to deal with students (including tandem passengers), or novices (Certificate Class A holders) - yes, membership is mandatory.

If you are not going to be running a dropzone, or if the dropzone is going to be dealing with Certificate Class B holders and above only, membership is optional. There are certain advantages to having membership, and you should weigh these against the disadvantages (e.g. the membership fee!)

Advantages of membership

Parachute Council membership.

Each Group Member is a member of the Area Council and is entitled to send delegates to Council meetings and to vote on the issues that the Council considers. Having an influence in the conduct of local matters or selecting representatives to the APF Board may be important to you.

Insurance

In recent history Australia has been embroiled in problems with insurance, litigation etc. At present, APF, and its members (including Group Members) are covered by insurance (details available from the APF Office). Apart from any other cover you might need, if you will be running a dropzone, it is likely that the land owner will insist that you do have adequate insurance cover. Membership of APF may be a simple (and cheap) way of achieving this. However, you should check carefully to what extent the APF insurance covers all the areas in which you need cover. There is no guarantee that APF will be able to maintain its insurance cover in the future.

Listing by APF

Group Members are listed in the APF's database. The database is used to create lists of Group Members on the APF website and in the APF's publications. This may be important if you are hoping to attract members of the public to your organisation.

Procedures for becoming a Group Member of the APF

Who may become a Group Member?

Any legal entity other than a natural person. In other words, any legally constituted company or association, but not a person. The applicant must provide an ABN and the legal name of the entity. This is so that the APF has a record of what entity its insurance is covering.

Trading name

The trading name of the Group Member is frequently not the same as the official name of the legal entity. The APF will accept (almost) any trading name notified to it by the legal entity and will use this name in

dealing with the Group Member/centre. A trading name which is obscene or confusing (perhaps too similar to a name used by an existing Group Member) may be rejected by the APF.

Nominated person

The legal entity making an application for membership must nominate a person (the “Nominated Person”) with whom the APF communicates with on business relating to the Group Member. (Where the Group Member has a Chief Instructor, the APF will deal with the CI on appropriate matters.)

Making application for membership

Application must be made on the appropriate form: Form CL1 Group Member Application Form.

The form must be signed by the Nominated Person and Legal Entity representative and sent to the APF Office. If the Group Member intends to be a Training Organisation, the Chief Instructor and Senior Pilot should also sign the form.

7.4 Training/Non-Training Organisations

A Non-Training Organisation is a Group Member which provides facilities for jumpers with at least a Certificate Class B who are aged over 18 and who are not undertaking any defined training jumps. Non-Training Organisations are also unable to conduct AFF, SFF or tandem jumps. Please refer to the Operational Regulations Part 11 for more detail. Non-Training Organisations do not need a CI and can operate under the direct supervision of a DZSO with a minimum of a Certificate Class D.

Training Organisations must have a CI appointed, as well as many more layers of documentation in place, they are able to conduct all facets of training under APF Rules and Regulations.

7.5 Rules Relating to Group Members

If you are setting up a new parachuting operation, you should read and understand the following documents. They contain many details not covered in this document.

- APF Constitution
- Operational Regulations and Regulatory Schedules (particularly RS 58)
- Training Operations Manual
- Training Guides and Booklets

7.6 Group Member Fees

Basic fee

The basic fee for annual membership is: Training Organisation \$650 and Non-Training Organisation \$250 (July – June) (at May 2020) all inclusive of GST.

Audit fee

Each training organisation is also charged an additional \$250 per year for each dropzone which is required to be audited (these are essentially dropzones used for students or novices). The STM determines which dropzones require audits.

Chief Instructors supervision over more than one dropzone

CI's will normally only be appointed to one Training Organisation. It is possible, however, in consultation with the STM and STO, for a CI to demonstrate mitigating circumstances that would allow them to become CI of two organisations at the same time.

7.7 Audits

Before any dropzone may be used for regular student/novice operations, it is subject to a safety inspection by the STO. You should expect that the dropzone itself will be inspected for hazards, size etc, and that your facilities and equipment to be used for student training will also be checked.

7.8 Relation with Area Council, APF and Other Bodies

The Area Council

The Area Council must be consulted by the STM for the approval of a Chief Instructor to an organisation. Some Area Councils have local rules which have a bearing on the operation of dropzones. If you are setting up a new dropzone you should seek advice on local rules from the Area Council.

APF and CASA

In the past, CASA delegated its powers of enforcement in parachuting matters to the APF and was not usually involved in the surveillance of the day-to-day conduct of parachuting operations.

The APF exerted control over parachuting operations through the Operational Regulations, the Regulatory Schedules and the Training Operations Manual, and to a lesser extent through various other manuals referred to in the Regulations. The APF's regulations were largely mirrored by CASA Instruments, including "Authorisation and Specification for Parachute Descents" and "Conduct of Parachute Training Operations", which have the force of the law.

Some aspects of Parachuting aircraft operations are overseen by the APF. More information on this area can be found on the APF website.

With the advent of Part 149, the APF has become an Approved Self-Administering Aviation Organisation. Rather than operating under complex exemptions provided by CASA, the APF (and other sport aviation federations – gliders, gyrocopters, recreational aviation etc) now effectively have full control of their own decision making, without rule changes needing to be approved by CASA. There are complex requirements the APF is to maintain, but the certificate issued to the APF – the first organization to be awarded one – is the result of more than a decade of work.

Student Membership

Each jumper is required to be a member of the APF, so every new tandem passenger, AFF or static-line student must complete a student membership application and waiver. For new student applications, all Group Members use the APF form M2 (Group Member membership/APF waiver). The waiver affords some protection for the APF against litigation. It has been tested in court and shown to be effective, although it is not totally litigation proof.

Incident Notifications and reports

Incident Notification forms are available on the APF website and are submitted online. It is the CI's responsibility to ensure that a notification is made of incidents and injuries. All completed incident notifications must be submitted online within 7 days of the occurrence.

See RS 55 for more Incident Notification details and information on which Incident types require more timely notification.

Calendar of Events

APF publishes a [Calendar of Events](#) on its website. You can organise an entry in the Calendar by contacting the APF Office.

Use of APF logo

The APF logo may be used by Group Members in their promotional material, but not in any way which is misleading or that could be construed as implying a relationship which does not exist. Consult the APF Chief Executive Officer if in doubt.

APF's function

APF's main function is to set and maintain safety standards. The APF cannot offer assistance in business planning and you should seek assistance in matters of taxation, employment law, dealing with town councils and neighbours.

Group Member listing

Group Members are listed in the APF's database. The database is used to create lists of Group Members on the APF website and in the APF's publications.

7.9 Setting up a New Dropzone

Safety factors

If your dropzone will be used for student training, it will be subject to inspection by the area STO before you start operations.

During the early stages of starting up your dropzone, it would be wise to consult the STO, so that any problems may be discovered and rectified well before your start-up date.

Land owner's co-operation

The landowner will require the Group Member to have adequate insurance cover. The cover provided with APF membership may or may not be adequate. The APF can provide a copy of the cover document on request. It covers parachuting operations but may not cover all the areas involved with a group of people occupying the owner's land.

The APF require a copy of the landowner's permission in writing as part of the Group Member application.

Neighbours and town councils

Constant aircraft noise can be a worry to many people living in close proximity to an airport. You will probably need to spend a great deal of effort in ensuring good relations with neighbours. The footprint of noise from an aircraft is large, so there may be many people to keep on side. Possibilities to keep them on side include:

- Invite them to the dropzone
- Money coming into the town
- Airstrip available to flying doctor
- Free displays into local events

The Town Council may also require you to submit a Development Application before establishing your dropzone.

Airport users' groups

If you will be operating in the same location as other airspace users, you can expect that there will be problems to be overcome. This is especially so if you will be operating on an airport. Antagonistic neighbours on an airport may constitute a problem you do not want and have had their hands in the demise of many good dropzones over the years. Many other airspace users do not understand parachuting and subscribe to negative stereotypes of skydivers generally. They may also need help to understand how predominantly vertical parachuting operations can be integrated with their predominantly horizontal operations. Being involved in an airport users' group is usually a good way of sorting out some of these problems in a co-operative manner and offer the Organisation the opportunity to present themselves as the professional and safety aware breed modern skydivers constitute.

Nice-to-Have things

- Close to population centre
- Shelter from elements
- Reasonable toilets
- Range of accommodation options: camping, bunk house, local motels etc
- Good quality jumping resources:
 - Right aircraft
 - Right people
 - Good instructors
 - Good coaches
 - Good equipment
 - Good vibes!

Must-have things

Size

Your dropzone must have a clear landing area at least as big as required by the regulations for the class of jumpers who will be jumping there.

Refer to RS 58 for regulations on DZ Classifications.

Hazards

There are legal requirements for landing areas to be free of hazards described in the regulations. Additionally, you will need to be mindful of things that may not legally constitute a hazard such as rocky or uneven ground, livestock in nearby paddocks, fences, objects which may cause turbulence, etc. but which could still cause serious issues.

Airspace

Check out the airspace with an experienced pilot with skydiving knowledge. There are many areas where the airspace structure will make it difficult to conduct parachuting operations effectively. Specific problems with airspace use may be resolvable by talking with the officer in charge of Air Traffic Control for the area. In most cases, a Letter of Agreement (LOA) with AirServices is highly recommended.

Equipment & Staff

Apart from parachuting equipment and aircraft, you will/may need:

- Wind sock(s)
- Wind meter
- Communications with aircraft
- Classrooms, training aids, mock ups, etc as appropriate.
- Phone or other means of assisting help in an emergency
- Check-in system to ensure all jumpers have landed safely
- GCA and DZSO
- Instructors, manifest
- Your own organisational paperwork, including:
 - Manifesting and money collecting system
 - Waiver forms to protect your organisation

Business aspects

This document does not intend to cover the business side of running a dropzone.

Small business is governed by a multitude of Local, State and Federal regulations. If you do not have a business background, you should seek advice.

Consider:

- Employment matters
 - Employees or contractors
 - Payroll and tax matters
- Superannuation
- Worker's compensation
- Leave, sick leave, long service leave
- Development applications
- Accountancy
- Cash flow management
- Insurance and asset protection
- Contracts
- Risk management
- Advertising

Note that you will almost certainly need a contract of some sort with your clients (the jumpers). The APF M2 form waiver is designed to cover the APF and its subsidiary bodies.

Advertising

It is the domain of each Group Member to determine where they will advertise their product and any specific guidance is beyond the scope of this document.

One consequence of CASA's "private" classification of parachute flying operations is that the flying part of the operation must not be promoted as any part of the reason to undertake the activity. That is to say, the plane ride to jump altitude cannot be offered as part of the product – DZs without AOCs cannot offer "scenic plane rides" or the like without running the risk of falling foul of CASA.

You should also avoid anything in your advertising which may be interpreted as misleading under the Trades Practices Act. People have rights under this Act which cannot be removed by waivers or disclaimers. The words "safe", "soft landings", etc, may be construed as misleading by someone who breaks an ankle on landing.

7.10 Operational Aspects

This document does not intend to cover the day-to-day running of a dropzone, however:

Jumping through cloud

Until 2002, it was illegal for a parachutist to pass through cloud. This rule was widely ignored though as it was largely overkill; there were good and reasonable reasons for forbidding jumps through thick unbroken cloud, but a parachutist inadvertently passing through a thin wispy cloud did not deserve the same prohibition.

There is now provision for parachutists to jump through cloud. This is done through a dropzone specific Cloud Jumping Procedures manual. CJPMs aren't fully generic or given to dropzones automatically. They must be applied for and maintained and come with new layers of rules a dropzone must abide by.

Details about the requirements for this manual are in Regulatory Schedule 60 or on the APF website.

Dropzone Safety Officers and Ground Control Assistants

Every operational dropzone must have a Dropzone Safety Officer (DZSO) and a Ground Control Assistant (GCA) appointed before any jumping occurs and these officers must continue be present while jumping is going on.

DZSOs for Training Organisations are appointed by the CI. For Non-Training Organisations, see APF Operational Regulations, Part 6. DZSOs have wide ranging powers, but are in a position of great responsibility and stress

The GCA is responsible for communicating with the aircraft. This is a serious role, particularly if the dropzone is operating in Controlled Airspace or in a location with other airspace users.

PART 8 - SENIOR INSTRUCTOR COURSE SYLLABUS

COURSE INTRODUCTION

CODE OF ETHICS

RESPONSIBILITY OF A SENIOR INSTRUCTOR

APF STRUCTURE

APF SERVICES & SUPPORT

APF - HOW TO USE THE WEBSITE AND DOCUMENTATION LIBRARY

CI AND EXAMINER APPLICATION PROCESSES

HUMAN RESOURCES AT THE DROPZONE

SMS

AUDITS – PREPARING AND PROCESSES

MPPM

CONDUCTING TRAINING COURSES

AIRCRAFT AND AIRSPACE

PREPARING FOR THE WRITTEN AND ORAL EXAMS

Reading list for the Senior Instructor Endorsement:

- Instructor guide
- Course trainer guide
- DZSO guide
- Senior Instructor guide
- Operational Regulations and Regulatory Schedules
- Training Operations Manual
- Misconduct Policy and Procedures Manual
- SMS
- Group Member audit and risk assessment package
- AFF, Tandem and SFF guides where appropriate
- Coach Assessment and Approval book
- Member Theses where appropriate
- Equipment standards and service bulletins as per the APF website