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Dear David

Confirmation of the Kite Flying Activities to be covered by the continuing BKFA cover

Back in 2015 I confirmed with your predecessor, Michael Farrell, the scope of activities that we understood would be covered under the two policies that are currently in force.

At the recent AGM of the British Kite Flying Association (BKFA) it was agreed that it would be appropriate to confirm that previous understanding with you, given that the wording on these policies is fairly general in respect of the sport activity covered.

Geographic limits

Worldwide except Canada and the USA

Activity – Kite Flying

At any time when part of an organised event or not, whether flying independently or with other club members, provided always that the activity is conducted in accordance with the legal requirements of the Air Navigation Order and any other relevant legislation, and any national and local laws and regulations where the activity is being undertaken. The activity must also be undertaken in accordance with the BKFA Code of Conduct although

relevant law or regulation will take precedence. Member to member cover is to be included for insured activities.

Policies

Two policies are in force. One covers the activities of the BKFA, its member clubs where they have paid the agreed premium, and members of those member clubs, provided that the BKFA has been provided with evidence of which club members are expected to be covered and that the club premium paid is adequate for the total number of individual club members who are to be covered. Cover is available at club organised and/or sanctioned events but not for members who at the time are flying independently of their club.

The second policy is known as CAIF – Club Affiliated Independent Flier – cover. Cover is the same as for the first policy but covers members when they are flying independently of their club. Cover is only available through BKFA member clubs and is only active where the individual maintains their membership of the BKFA member club.

Overarching statement of activities covered

The insurance is intended to cover kite flying. Kite is not specifically defined in the Air Navigation Order although it is referenced a number of times and the Order applies to them. BKFA defines a kite as an unpowered aircraft flown at the end of a line or lines where the position or movement of the kite in the sky is controlled by a combination of the action of air pressure (wind) on the kite and the actions of the ground-based flyer or pilot.

Free flying aircraft (gliders and the like, even if constructed like a kite) or aircraft (whether powered or not) controlled by any remote-control system such as infra-red, transmission wire or radio, however that control signal is transmitted, are excluded from this insurance.

The insurance should include risks associated with a kite related event including, but not limited to, the movement of motor vehicles (properly managed) and the set-up of the site such as tents, barrier ropes, signs, toilets, waste bins, tripping hazards such as rabbit holes etc, whether or not the event is open to more than club members. Related social activities may include fund raising activities, catering, demonstrations or entertainment.

Specific activities

It is intended that the insurance covers insured individuals and clubs undertaking the following activities.

Flying single line kites

Any number of kites launched and flown from a single line either held by the flyer or from a single or multiple lines (where such lines are provided principally to aid stability in the air) fastened to suitable fixed points, such as a ground anchor. Where more than one kite is flown from a single line these may be attached in a number of ways including secondary flying lines attached to the main flying line. Single line kites may be controllable only to the extent of altitude or may be controllable in direction, altitude and angle of flight depending on the design of the kite.

Single line kite contests and demonstrations

Competitions can take a number of forms including, but not limited to:

- Build quality and flight characteristics
- Altitude or flight duration subject to regulations in force
- Last kite flying where tipping, cutting (noting the points on kite fighting below) or pull downs lead to other kites being brought down

Flying multiple line kites

Any number of kites flown by means of two or more lines. Kites may be stacked onto one set of lines and/or the flyer may control a number of sets of lines simultaneously.

Flying multiple line kite contests and demonstrations

Competitions can take a number of forms including, but not limited to:

- Build quality and flight characteristics
- Individuals, pairs and teams flying predefined figures, freestyle routines and ballets set to music

Flying large air-filled kites

Large kites filled with air flowing into them as part of their flight where wind pressure then maintains the kites' shape. Kites may also be filled with air and sealed to maintain their shape but if lift is provided by the gas filling them (e.g. helium, hot air), these are balloons and are not covered, even if the shape of the balloon contributes to lifting forces. Kites are generally flown on a single line although multiple lines may be used where this provides greater control or as part of an aerial display using windsocks or multiple kites. Kites may be flown from hand or may be flown from a suitable fixed point.

Windsocks and ground displays

Structures inflated by the wind and flown at ground level or attached to a flying line supported by a kite. Structures that are filled with air and sealed that are purely decorative should be included as these may contribute to the overall display offered by kite makers and flyers. Pressure inflated and sealed structures such as 'bouncy castles' and the like are not intended to be included.

Historical recreations

Kites and related items recreating the past, particularly from the period immediately prior to the invention of the aeroplane.

Aerial photography

In correspondence by email on 13th October 2017 you confirmed that Aerial Photography (also known as KAP – kite aerial photography) and 'teddy parachuting' are covered.

Photography with cameras mounted on the kite or supported from the flying line. The camera may be remotely operated or may be pre-programmed to take photographs. N.B. This activity is controlled by the CAA with the rules applying to drones applying to any other aircraft. The GDPR regulations must also be complied with.

Dropping soft toys and sweets etc from kites

Use of kites to lift soft toys to be dropped by parachute and sweets to be dropped free fall or with a method to slow descent.

Kite festivals and other public events

Typical of the events to be covered are ones that are open to the general public to demonstrate kite flying and related activities. Such events will be subject to risk assessment and in most cases the public will be excluded from the flying area. In some cases, the kite flyer may be flying in a space open to the general public where their presence is incidental to the kite flying activity e.g. a public park, National Trust property etc.

The insurance should provide indemnity and liability insurance for all activities at the event except the activities of traders and other operators (such as fairground operators and caterers).

Tuition provided for flying kites

Tuition provided without reward in flying single and multiple line kites.

Workshops

Tuition, assistance or guidance provided to club members and/or to members of the public, either at an event or at a workshop exclusive to invited guests, who may or may not have paid towards the cost of providing the workshop, materials and the reasonable expenses of the tutor or club members, to design and/or make kites, windsocks and any other device which depends on the action of the wind for movement, sound or other action.

Related social activities

In addition to workshops, meetings etc, clubs will organise flying events typically held over a weekend at a suitable site. At such events, members will

typically camp or bring caravans/camper vehicles and will arrange communal barbeques and basic entertainment.

Excluded kite flying activities

Any kite flying where the primary intention is to provide energy to enable traction. Although this specific activity is excluded, it is the intention that someone undertaking traction or power kiting would not invalidate the insurance in respect of other insured activities at the same time and the same location.

Kite fighting where use is made of line coated in a manner to enhance the cutting action if it encounters another line. Such line is known as 'manja', 'sharp-line' or maybe known as 'Chinese', 'technical' or 'chemical'.

BKFA requires its member clubs to exclude the use of any non-biodegradable sharp line under any circumstances, even if the flyer is not using it for kite fighting at the time.

Background note:

A number of Indian State Governments banned the sale and/or use of 'Chinese manja' under the Environmental Protection Regulations 1986.

The Delhi High Court has recently directed the government, municipal corporations and the police to raise awareness about the "fatal threat" from razor-sharp manja, reported the Indian Express.

But a manja manufacturer was reported as saying that a nation-wide ban would not be effective because the government had not even defined what exactly Chinese manja is.

With that in mind BKFA is making clear to members that use of what it understands as 'Chinese manja' is not acceptable in the UK and will be adding the following to its code of conduct.

It should also be noted that some lines are coated or shrouded simply to improve the longevity of the line: Kevlar type lines are susceptible to UV degradation. BKFA is not placing restrictions on the use of such flying lines, although good kite flying etiquette generally discourages the use of Kevlar.

BKFA recognises that kite fighting with sharp line, where the objective of the competition is to cut an opponent's kite free, is a form of kite flying with a strong cultural and traditional base. However, it is not without its risks particularly to uninvolved individuals where the cutting line is at low altitude and may come into contact with people, animals, birds or structures. Traditional sharp line based on natural cotton fibre minimises these risks.

Kite flyers must not use synthetic and/or non-biodegradable sharp line, sometimes known as Chinese manja, technical or chemical, at any time and under any circumstances.

Traditional cotton manja must not be discarded except in an appropriate waste bin and must be used with due respect for uninvolved persons, animals, birds and the environment.

BKFA's insurers will not cover risks arising from kite fighting with coated lines of any type where the coating is intended to enhance the cutting action of the line.

I look forward to confirmation from insurers that they will continue to insure the activities described above.

Yours sincerely

[by email]

Jerry Swift
Chairman, The British Kite Flying Association