



Flying At AMA Chartered Club Sites

The continuing growth of model aviation has generated an increasing number of inquiries regarding AMA's policy as it pertains to usage of flying sites by chartered clubs, their guests, and others. While it is not possible to state a policy that addresses every scenario imaginable, AMA has, for several decades, stressed to clubs the importance of conducting flying site activities in a manner that minimizes the risk of an accident which might result in "uncovered" liability to an AMA club, member and/or site owner.

AMA members and clubs pool their resources to obtain insurance for themselves and their flying site owners at very low rates. This is a key point to keep in mind when considering the use of club flying sites by non-AMA members. If a flying site owner were to rely on your insurance for an accident caused on his or her property by a non-AMA member, your money would be spent to finance the activities of someone who paid nothing for that benefit.

To preserve the availability of low-cost insurance to your club and your site owner, the people who fly with your club should contribute their share of that cost. They can do so by becoming dues paying members of your AMA charter club as well. In the same vein, if the landowner for your club's chartered club field has granted the club exclusive flying privileges, the club should ONLY allow AMA members to fly at the field. If your club is flying on public land and it has not been granted exclusive flying rights by the public agency in charge, your club activities should be confined to AMA members, and you are not responsible for other (non-AMA) flier's actions. Should the public agency be named as an additional insured, it has coverage only for the actions of your club, its members, and other visiting AMA members who are considered guests.

For non-AMA members wishing to experience a "hands-on" model flight, the Academy does allow this, on a one-time basis per person only, (for RC, use of a Buddy Box system is preferred. During this one-time flight, the club is protected through its liability coverage if the non-member's supervised flying is in accordance with the AMA National Model Aircraft Safety Code(s). Under no circumstance should the non-member's equipment or aircraft be used.

Only AMA members are insured during this flight per the terms of the liability policy. This coverage is never transferable to the non-AMA member during the permitted one-time trial flight.

Should an accident occur during this one-time flight, the AMA member providing the flight assistance (operating the master transmitter) must file an accident report. Under the liability policy, the airplane is never insured and the non-AMA member does not have coverage during this flight.

Can someone be insured during training at a chartered club field and not be a regular AMA member?

Under the AMA Introductory Pilot Program, a non-AMA person may receive lessons during a 90-consecutive-day period under the direction of a designated AMA Instructor. To take advantage of the full 90 days of liability insurance, register the trainee after the non-flying instructional session(s) and prior to their first flying exercise at the club field. Learn more about the Introductory Pilot Program at www.modelaircraft.org/PDF-files/917.pdf.