

# Paragliding

(Guidelines & Regulations)

The Department of Tourism,  
The Administration of Union Territory of  
Ladakh



## PARAGLIDING IN LADAKH

Ever dreamed of flying? then the activity of paragliding in Ladakh is the one you should try. Breath-taking mountains and valleys sprawl under you as you soar high. Ladakh is a perfect mix of mesmerizing mountains, high altitudes, and gushing winds. Experience the scenic view of the lush green landscapes, the cool breeze blowing across your face, and the blue shining sky above as you paraglide here. It is one of the most appreciated and adventurous activities in the region. Ladakh is appropriate for paragliding experiences for adventure enthusiasts and attracts a lot of tourists from across the globe for paragliding activities.

## BACKGROUND

The Department of Tourism, Administration of Union Territory of Ladakh to streamline and promote adventure activities in Ladakh in a regulated manner is issuing the Guidelines & Regulations for carrying out Paragliding. These guidelines shall extend to the whole of the Union Territory of Ladakh and come into force from the date of its notification.

The Department of Tourism, Administration of Union Territory of Ladakh recommends following the guidelines & regulations for Paragliding, issued by the Adventure Tour Operators Associations of India (ATOAI) and endorsed by the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India.

These guidelines will act as a defining force with respect to the procedures to be followed, mandatory trainings for guides/instructors, equipment to be used, Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), necessary documentation, risk mitigation processes, addressing medical concerns, emergencies, rescue operations, safety briefing, etc. All Adventure Tour Operators (ATOs) shall follow these guidelines while conducting Paragliding in the Union Territory of Ladakh.

## VALIDITY

The 'Guidelines & Regulation for Paragliding' will remain valid for five (5) years, from the date of its notification. All Adventure Tour Operators (ATOs) are advised to strictly adhere to the terms and conditions of these guidelines and follow its best implementation for the sustainable development of the adventure tourism ecosystem in the Union Territory of Ladakh.

## ENCLOSURES

- Annexure 1 – Guidelines & Regulations for Paragliding in the Union Territory of Ladakh
- Annexure 2 – Implementation Framework for the Union Territory of Ladakh

# ANNEXURE 1

## GUIDELINES & REGULATIONS FOR PARAGLIDING

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Paragliding and hang gliding loosely come under free flying, along with Gliding. Unlike gliders, both are very light and can be launched on foot, creating a separate category of foot-launchable gliders. Hang gliding started in the late 1960s while paragliding evolved in the early 80s. Since it is an adventure activity, instructors/guides must be qualified, and the equipment used should be of the highest standard.

**Paraglider** is a glider that achieves its aerofoil structure without any solid reinforcement; from RAM air pressure between two layers of fabric.

**Hang Glider** is a delta wing that has a fabric aerofoil with an aluminum frame and inserts.

### 2. ADVENTURE GUIDES: BASIC MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

#### Tandem:

1. Pilots must have minimum P4 level training as a solo pilot, achieved 100 hours of solo flying, and a minimum of 100 km xc flight. A conversion course to tandem pilot must be undertaken.
2. 50 non-commercial flights as a sports tandem pilot before converting to commercial flying.
3. If available, a pilot should be duly certified by an accredited National Association.

#### Instructor:

1. P5 solo rating on FAI safe pro levels.
2. Worked as trainee instructor with a reputed instructor for 2 years.
3. Taken instructor certification from an accredited association.

#### Equipment Required:

1. EN /SHV/DHV/AFNOR certified wing and reserve parachute.
2. Certified harness and helmet.

### 3. EQUIPMENT CARE AND MAINTENANCE

A logbook of equipment and maintenance is to be kept.

### 4. INSPECTIONS & MAINTENANCE PROCEDURES

All commercially used equipment must be inspected for fabric porosity and line length annually.

### 5. SOPs & OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS

1. Passengers should be briefed on the basics of flight and the risks involved.
2. Staff introductions and their training.
3. Passengers should sign liability release waivers.
4. Passengers/pilots should wear appropriate clothing that is safe and comfortable for the task and weather.
5. No aerobatic maneuvers are to be done with clients.
6. No overloading or underloading of equipment.
7. Should fly conforming to VFR and in VMC. Cloud or night flying is strictly prohibited.
8. Any incident is to be fully documented and reported.

### 6. DOCUMENTATION

1. Pilot certification and logbook.
2. Equipment logbook and service record.
3. Liability insurance, pilot insurance.
4. Emergency Action Plan.

### 7. RISK MITIGATION

1. Operations are to be undertaken at sites judged to be safe for paragliding/hang gliding operations.
2. Selected sites should not have any turbulence sources or hazards.
3. Life jackets are to be mandatory if operating near water.
4. Wing should be inspected annually for porosity and line lengths.
5. A first Aid kit, stretcher (spinal board), and qualified staff should be available at the site.
6. Pilots should be First Aid/CPR certified.
7. Emergency response time (ambulance) and distance to the hospital should be conveyed to the passenger and emergency numbers available at the location.

8. A detailed Emergency Action Plan should be in position and training for the same provided to the staff periodically.

## 8. EMERGENCIES AND RESCUES

1. First aid and proper equipment for stabilization and removal from a life-threatening situation.
2. Contact numbers for an ambulance and other emergency services.
3. Evacuate at the very earliest.
4. Get witness statements before debriefing them.
5. Write your report.
6. Submit reports and follow up on the injured.
7. Take immediate action to improve any weakness in equipment or staff exposed by the incident.

## 9. SAFETY BRIEFING

All instructors and guides should be able to give a thorough safety briefing that covers all safety aspects and detailed instructions about a safe flight. This briefing must be clear and given in English, Hindi, or the local language that the passenger can understand.

1. Passengers should be briefed on equipment and the clip-in, and clip-out process.
2. The briefing should cover emergency procedures.
3. Any sensitive parts within reach of passengers should be marked and briefed upon appropriately.
4. Essential communication terms/signals should be explained.

## 10. MEDICAL CONCERNS

There should be a clear declaration of medical conditions that are not suitable for paragliding or hang gliding the operator. Any flight taken with differently abled passengers should be well planned, documented, and reported in advance. All instructors and guides must be able to ensure that a question regarding medical issues is asked before the activity is conducted. It is recommended that heart patients, those with spinal issues, recent surgery, or any other medical issue of concern, expecting mothers, and underage children do not undertake the activity. It is also recommended to check for epilepsy and asthmatic patients, on the extent of their ailment. Asthma inhalers must be carried by clients and preferably handed over to the guide.

## 11. BASIC MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR GRANT OF RECOGNITION TO OPERATORS

It is highly recommended that any outfit, entity, establishment, or company seeking a grant of recognition for paragliding must fulfill the following criteria:

1. The entity must have qualified personnel (Minimum two full-time qualified staff) on their payroll. This person must have the requisite experience in the activity and have valid First Aid & CPR certification. Proof of trained staff.
2. The entity must own specialized equipment commensurate with the needs of undertaking and running such an operation.
3. (Specified above) Proof of good equipment, certification where applicable, and inspection of safety equipment.
4. The entity must operate with the required permits/licenses.
5. The entity must have at least one certified and experienced person on its Board.
6. It is recommended that the entity is registered with the State/UT Tourism Department / recognized by the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India.
7. The entity must have a registered office.
8. The company must follow a strict 'leave no trace policy and conform to high sustainability standards.
9. Inspection of site and permission/ right of use of the site.
10. Declaration of conforming to flight rules, risk mitigation, and airspace rules.
11. Declaration to follow existing association rules and new ones that might be introduced.
12. The entity must follow a strict 'leave no trace policy and conform to high sustainability standards.

## ANNEXURE 2 IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK FOR THE UNION TERRITORY OF LADAKH

### 1. CONSTITUTION OF THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

The Department of Tourism, Administration of Union Territory of Ladakh shall, by notification/ order will constitute a 'Technical Committee' for Paragliding with the following members:

Composition of the Technical Committee	
Director (Tourism), UT Ladakh	Chairperson
Chief Wildlife Warden / Representative, Wildlife Department	Member
Principal ISM, Kargil Branch	Member
Principal FCI/ IHM, Leh	Member
Representative of the State Disaster Response Force (SDRF)	Member
Representative of the Adventure Tour Operators Association of India (ATOAI) for Paragliding	Member
Representative of the Ladakh Association for Paragliding	Member
Assistant Director (Tourism), Concerned	Convening Member

### 2. FUNCTIONS OF THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

The Technical Committee shall meet once every year before the start of the tourist season in the Union Territory of Ladakh, and shall be responsible for the following:

- Inspect and certify the equipment with the operator from a safety point of view.
- Scrutinize the credential of the personnel responsible for conducting Paragliding, the medical fitness of the guide, and conduct their physical test to ascertain their expertise.
- Ensure that the operator and the guide shall follow all safety procedures indicated in their rules.
- Identify new areas/ routes/ tracks for Paragliding in the Union Territory of Ladakh.
- Notify the exact stretches on the identified areas/ routes/ tracks where the operation can be safely conducted, considering the area's environmental sensitivity, critical wildlife hotspots and fragile water systems.
- Formulate a plan for containing the environmental impact strictly inside the designated activity area.
- Forecast the potential ecological impacts and ensure a plan for eco-conditioning to minimize the impact and offsetting the potential environmental impact.
- Ensure preparation and implementation of a Risk Management Matrix, and Emergency & Evacuation plan.
- Ensure preparation of a plan for tourist awareness and education.
- Determine the capacity of each track every year before the start of any operation.

### 3. CONSTITUTION OF THE REGULATORY COMMITTEE

The Department of Tourism, Administration of Union Territory of Ladakh shall, by notification/ order will constitute a 'Regulatory Committee' for Paragliding with the following members:

Composition of the Regulatory Committee	
Assistant Director (Tourism), Concerned	Chairperson
Wildlife Warden or Representative, Wildlife Department	Member
Representative of the District Disaster Response Force (DDRF)	Member
Representative of the Chief Medical Officer (CMO)	Member
SHO/Choki of the Concerned Area	Member
Representative of the Adventure Tour Operators Association of India (ATOAI) for Paragliding	Member
Representative of the Ladakh Association for Paragliding	Member
Officer in-charge of the Department of Tourism, UT Ladakh at Sub-Division and Tehsils	Convening Member

### 4. FUNCTIONS OF THE REGULATORY COMMITTEE

The Regulatory Committee shall meet once every year before the start of the tourist season in the Union Territory of Ladakh, and shall be responsible for the following:

- Overall control for regulating the Paragliding operations, in coordination with the concerned stakeholders and associations.
- Surprise inspections during the Paragliding operations to ascertain adherence of the guidelines, assess the quality & condition of equipment being used and assess the ecological impact, to help develop adaptive management strategies. The Regulatory Committee shall constitute a joint inspection or verification team with the Department of Youth Services & Sports, UT Ladakh and Adventure Sports Association, if any.

- Establish a mechanism for receiving and addressing complaints, concerns, and feedback from local communities, tourists, and stakeholders.
- Any other functions concerning Paragliding operations in the Union Territory of Ladakh.

#### **5. CLAIM ON ACCOUNT OF ANY MISHAP**

The Department of Tourism, or any other Department/ Authority of the Administration of Union Territory of Ladakh shall, in no way be responsible for any claims on account of any mishap.

#### **6. SHOW CAUSE NOTICE**

If any operator, guide, or personnel responsible for conducting Paragliding operations is found to be violating these Guidelines & Regulations for Paragliding, appropriate action shall be taken by the Department of Tourism, Administration of Union Territory of Ladakh.

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