



SSF/OSTIV Convention Activities
By the SSF Trustees and Advisors

Next month the SSA biennial convention will be held at the Reno NV convention center. As always, the Soaring Safety Foundation (SSF) and Organization Scientifique et Technique Internationale du vol a Voile (OSTIV) will play a major role in the lead up to and during the convention.

While most SSA members think the convention starts on Thursday Nov 5, 2026 for the SSF it starts the previous Tuesday. That is when the SSF conducts its national Flight Instructor Refresher Course (FIRC). As every CFI knows, their instructor privileges expire every 24 calendar months. To remain a certificated instructor they must use one of the methods described in FAR 61.197(b)(2) to reset this privilege. The SSF has a glider focused FAA approved FIRC that any CFI (glider, airplane, helicopter, etc) can use to comply with this regulation. Instructors and pilots interested in becoming instructors are welcome to enroll in this class. There is a \$150 charge for the class and you can register/pay through the convention registration form.

The SSF also hosts the FREE Wednesday evening Safety Seminar to kick off the convention activities. This is a FAA WINGS certified safety seminar. Presentations on a variety of soaring topics will be covered by speakers like Burt Compton (DPE/SSF Trustee) discussing accidental canopy opening accidents, Ron Ridenour (DPE/SSF Trustee) who will discuss using the MESA concept in everyday cross-country flying. Steven Dee (DPE/SSF Trustee) discussing transitioning to motorgliders, and Robert (Bob) Wander (CFI/SSF Advisor). The SSF has also arranged for Henrik Svensson (OSTIV TSP co-chir) to discuss aerotowing with the Eurofox and Swedish soaring safety programs. A full agenda will be posted as we get closer to the event.

Don't forget to stop by the SSF booth while you are walking around the exhibition hall. Chat with a SSF trustee or advisors, Ask questions, and learn about the various in-person and on-line resources the SSF has to help you have a safe and fun soaring career.

As usual, OSTIV, the international Technical Soaring community, will have a major role at the convention. They will host a speaker track all 3 days covering a wide array of topics.

Some topics that will be covered include:

Lou Glaab, will give a presentation on a Human Factors study dealing with the risks involved with low-altitude premature termination of the launch (PTL) events. Lou will discuss the results of piloted Condor simulation experiments being performed with a variety of pilots. Pilots are briefed on what to expect and then they fly a series of PTLs. Software is then used to analyze the flight and the pilot answers a series of questions to get a quantitative and qualitative analysis of the risks and stresses involved in those flights.

Glenn Collins, will give a presentation on how CFI's can do a better job of teaching students and pilots how to handle a failed launch. NTSB data shows that from 2020-2025 23% of the total number of accidents occurred during the launch phase of the flight. More concerning is that 38% of those accidents resulted in fatal injuries to the pilot! Glenn will discuss how using Condor with a highly detailed landscape can better train pilots to respond appropriately to a failed launch. The presentation will walk you through the steps that you can use at your club or commercial operation to help reduce the severity of this type of accident.





Richard Carlson will give a presentation on how your club or commercial operator can gather the data you need to improve your organizations' operation. One of the major challenges facing every soaring operation is understanding when things are going right and wrong. The challenge is not recognizing a situation, but in recalling it several days or weeks later when you want to take follow-up actions. Having a written record of what pilots saw, when they saw it can help with this follow-up task. This presentation will walk you through the steps one club took to capture 'Observations' and show how this reporting led to real change in the clubs flight safety environment.

The SSF has inserted knowledge and flight activities into the FAA Pilot Proficiency Program, better known as WINGS. The SSA's ABC/Bronze badges now all qualify for WINGS credits, as do all 3 launch endorsements. Other SSF created activities include advanced in-flight maneuvers like Chandelles and Lazy-8's and practicing cross-country aerotows. Attend a presentation to learn more about how you and your pilots and students can benefit from a glider focused WINGS program.

Henrik Svensson will expand on his Wed evening Safety Seminar presentation with a talk on using the EuroFox Light Sport Airplane as a towplane. He will also discuss how Swedish Soaring Safety programs have reduced both fatal and non-fatal accidents in that country.

These are just a few of the talks that will happen during the 3 days of the convention. Come and hear your favorite speaker and learn more about the technical side of soaring.

Don't forget that OSTIV hosts the Friday evening banquet. An engaging speaker will be present so come and enjoy the evening.

There are lots to see and do at the SSA convention. Don't be someone who missed out on this event.

