

Recommendations for the first DI after Lock-Down

When lock-down ends, gliders will have been sitting idle for several months with much reduced human activity around the hangars and trailers. Consequently, wildlife in the form of rodents, birds and insects may have taken up residence in a glider, tyres may have lost pressure and fuel in turbos may have degraded. It is prudent to carry out an enhanced DI before any glider is flown.

Carry out a thorough DI in accordance with the instructions in the front of the DI book including any extra checks required by the Flight Manual. In addition, specifically check the following:

Open every removable external access panel and look inside for any signs of bird nests or rodent activities. Also look inside the gaps around control surface hinges, airbrake boxes and undercarriage bays. Use a torch as a minimum but mirrors and fibrescopes will enhance visibility.

Inside the glider, check soft furnishings and seat harnesses for rodent damage. Harnesses and seat cushions have been removed from Club gliders and will need to be refitted. Remove seat pans and check underneath (a rodent stash has already been found under a Junior seat). Where possible, look down tail booms (a mouse nest has been found in a Pegase).

Insects may have taken up residence in the pitot static system. Look inside pot pitots and the ends of pitot tubes for any signs but a blockage may not be visible. ASIs are delicate instruments so NEVER blow directly into a pot pitot or a pitot tube to check that it is working. A pitot tube can be checked by putting a thumb over the end and rubbing the tube to heat up the air inside. A pot pitot can be checked by putting a hand over the front and gently pushing to compress the air inside. In each case, movement of the ASI needle will show that the pipes are not completely blocked but there may still be a partial blockage so stay alert when you take off.

Inflate all tyres to the correct pressure.

Holding one wing tip, flex it up and down to give the glider a shake. Listen for unexpected noises.

For those with engines, check your engine manual for actions after a period of lay-up. In particular, 2-stroke engines could be susceptible to a fuel problem. If 2-stroke fuel is left to dry out, it can turn to a varnish-like substance or separate out of suspension. This can block fine fuel filters but may not be easily visible. The best course of action is to drain all unused fuel and re-fill with fresh.

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