

SSA CHAPTER GUIDE

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SSA CHAPTERS DEFINED

For many years, SSA committees studied ways to establish a formal affiliation structure between the Society and various US soaring clubs and organizations. The intent was primarily to create stronger ties between the national organization and the "grass roots" of the sport, and secondarily to encourage SSA membership and growth. In 1959, the SSA bylaws were amended to create a new membership in the Society as follows:

"There shall be a special class of membership designated as a Chapter. A Chapter shall be an approved organization that has at least seven (7) voting members of the SSA and in which all other members hold some grade of SSA membership."

This booklet is intended to be a resource for all SSA Chapters.

WHY SHOULD A SOARING CLUB BE AN SSA CHAPTER?

SSA CHAPTER BENEFITS

Advantages of being an SSA Chapter include:

1. Participation in the Chapter Rebate Program for group renewing chapters.
2. Discounts of up to 40% on volume purchases of selected SSA merchandise (including the highly popular SSA calendar).
3. Participation in the SSA Group Hull and Liability Insurance Program, subject to underwriter approval.
4. Being identified on the Society's interactive "Where to Fly" website map. Prospective new members will readily see location and contact information while viewing this useful map.
5. Participation in the SSA's FAST (Fly A Sailplane Today) national glider lesson program.
6. Receipt of two (2) free monthly copies of *Soaring* magazine for the Chapter Library, or any other use.
7. Upon request, up to twelve (12) free sets of mailing labels per calendar year, listing members of the Chapter.
8. Consideration for a credit account with the SSA for purchase of Society merchandise.
9. Sharing and exchanges on social media channels.
10. Although not a direct benefit, several chapters have successfully included their chapter affiliation with the SSA, a (501(c)(3)), as part of the justification with their application for a similar tax determination. Chapters cannot claim exemption under the SSA's determination.

POLICIES & PROCEDURES FOR CHAPTERS

HOW A SOARING CLUB BECOMES AN SSA CHAPTER

Clubs may apply for SSA Chapter status by having a club officer submit a request to that effect, along with a complete listing of all club members, including name and SSA membership number (if not an SSA member, address and telephone number), to the SSA office in Hobbs, New Mexico. Each individual's SSA ID number will be associated with his or her Chapter. Any club member who does not already belong to the SSA MUST become a member (by submission of an SSA membership application and payment of dues) as a condition of Chapter approval.

Once a club attains SSA Chapter status, SSA staff will mail the Chapter leader that made the application to the SSA a thank-you letter, a questionnaire for providing information to SSA for the Chapter's listing on the "Where to Fly" website map, and other information specific to and for use of Chapters. When the "Where to Fly" map questionnaire is completed and returned to the SSA, the Chapter will be listed on this important online resource, and contact information about the Chapter will be included in all mailings the SSA sends to persons requesting information about the sport of soaring (prospective Chapter members).

HOW AN INDIVIDUAL SSA MEMBER JOINS AN SSA CHAPTER

An individual SSA member with no prior Chapter affiliation (or a person who moves from one SSA Chapter to another) may choose to join one, and must be associated with that new Chapter in SSA's database. This is accomplished when the person submits a "Chapter Member Input Form," available on the SSA website or from office directly. Once processed, SSA staff will confirm with both the members and the Chapter that he or she has been associated with the Chapter in the SSA's database. All members of a Chapter using the group renewal method (see below) have the same common SSA membership renewal date. At the time of joining a group-renewing Chapter, the SSA member will pay any prorated SSA dues (or be entitled to any appropriate credit, which will be carried forward) to make his/her membership renewal date the same as the common Chapter renewal date.

HOW A NEW CHAPTER MEMBER JOINS THE SSA

By definition, every member of an SSA Chapter must also belong to the SSA. A new Chapter member with no prior SSA affiliation MUST join the SSA. To do so, such a person must submit to SSA office in Hobbs, New Mexico:

1. The standard SSA membership form (available on the SSA website, or by calling SSA office);
2. A completed "Chapter Member Input Form" available online or directly from office;
3. If joining a group-renewing Chapter, payment for prorated SSA dues that will cause the new member to have the same common renewal date as the Chapter. SSA staff is available to assist in this prorated dues calculation by telephone or email during regular office hours.
4. If joining a Chapter using the individual renewal method, payment for one full year's SSA dues.

Upon receipt of all of the above information and dues payment, SSA staff will update that Chapter's records to include the new member, assign him/her an SSA membership number associated with the Chapter, and mail a membership packet with SSA credentials and other important information to the new member within four (4) weeks.

WHAT OCCURS WHEN SOMEONE LEAVES AN SSA CHAPTER?

Because the SSA is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization, cash flow is an extremely vital area of operation. Dues income can be accrued only on an amortized basis, 1/12 each month. Expenses are accrued as they are disbursed, with no amortization.

The expenses for Membership are front-loaded upon receipt of payment. New and renewing member kits are pulled and mailed, and special measures are taken to assure that the member receives the most current magazine available.

Therefore, we have developed the following policy regarding the refund of dues payments.

Refund requests received during the first six (6) months of membership will be handled at a one-half (1/2) rate. We will refund only one-half (1/2) of the original payment. We are unable to honor refund requests received after the first six (6) months.

SSA CHAPTER RENEWAL-GROUP AND INDIVIDUAL METHODS

SSA Chapters may renew the SSA membership of their members using either the "group" or "individual" method. The majority of SSA Chapters utilize the group renewal method. Any Chapter wishing to use the individual renewal method must specifically request this in writing and receive confirmation from SSA office. All members of a Chapter utilizing the group renewal method have an identical yearly SSA membership renewal date.

For group Chapter renewal, SSA staff will review the Chapter's membership list each year, calculate the next year's SSA dues for each member, and report those individual and aggregate amounts to the person in the Chapter responsible for renewal. That person must then send one payment representing SSA dues for all Chapter members to the SSA office in Hobbs, New Mexico. Most Chapters using the group renewal method simply collect any applicable Chapter and all SSA dues from their members at the same time. Some Chapters have their secretaries or treasurers collect SSA dues. Other Chapters have found it useful to appoint one member who acts as "SSA Liaison," having this responsibility.

For individual renewal, a Chapter submits its membership list to the SSA each year, and SSA staff will send SSA renewal forms for dues to each individual Chapter member directly. Each member is then individually responsible for submitting appropriate dues to SSA office.

While it would seem easier for a Chapter to renew SSA membership using the individual technique, (all Chapter members deal directly with the SSA), there are some significant disadvantages to this method:

1. SSA bylaws require that every member of an SSA Chapter MUST also maintain membership in the SSA at all times. Using the individual renewal method, Chapter leadership cannot be certain their organization fulfills this strict SSA requirement.
2. It is critical to note that each Chapter's continued insurability under the SSA Group Hull and Liability Insurance Program can be placed at significant risk if every member of the Chapter does not belong to the SSA at all times. In 2004, the SSA began reviewing every claim to its Group Insurance Plan to establish the SSA membership status of each pilot involved in an accident. Leaders of Chapters using the individual SSA renewal method have great difficulty knowing for certain that all members belong to the SSA.

NOTE: *The most expeditious, simple, and foolproof way for a Chapter's leadership to be certain that each member of their organization also belongs to the SSA is by using the group renewal technique. This effectively removes the guesswork inherent in the individual renewal method, and easily establishes that all Chapter members actually hold SSA membership. Chapter leadership should have online roster access so that monthly reconciliation between the local and SSA rosters can be easily done and to verify changes between renewals and after leadership changes are accurately reflected. Chapter roles allow for SSA leadership and committees to reach out to and provide advice to key chapter contacts.*

STEPS TO CHAPTER RENEWAL USING THE GROUP METHOD

STEP 1: *Three months prior to a Chapter's common SSA membership renewal date,* SSA staff will provide a Chapter leader (secretary, treasurer, or SSA Liaison) with renewal document, the previous year's Chapter membership list based on SSA records (this list may well not be completely accurate due to Chapter membership additions and deletions occurring during the previous year, and is only provided as a guide). It must be returned no later than three (3) weeks after receipt. Alternately, a spreadsheet or simple list containing every member's name and SSA number will suffice. The prior year's Chapter membership list supplied by the SSA may also be modified (non-Chapter members removed and new members added). Additionally, a leader of each group-renewing Chapter will be required to sign and return a statement (supplied by SSA office) certifying that all members of the Chapter also belong to the SSA.

STEP 2: *Prior to the 15th of the month of common Chapter renewal*, the Chapter officer MUST submit one payment to the SSA office for the SSA dues of ALL members belonging to that Chapter. Only upon receipt of such payment will the Chapter itself and all Chapter members be considered renewed with the SSA.

STEP 3: *Within two weeks of receiving Chapter dues*, SSA staff will update the SSA membership database and mail renewal credentials (membership cards and any other pertinent information) directly to each Chapter member.

NOTE: Timely Chapter renewal practices are vital to the SSA, as well as to the satisfaction of Chapter members. Late return of group renewal documents, Chapter membership lists, and SSA dues to SSA office will cause interruption of SSA services to the entire Chapter (including the mailing of *Soaring* magazine):

a) A Chapter's continued insurability under the SSA Group Insurance Program can only be assured when all members renew their SSA membership prior to or on the common Chapter renewal date. It is strongly suggested that each Chapter using the SSA Group Insurance Plan institute a policy that any member who is not also an SSA member in good standing be immediately banned from flying chapter aircraft. An accident in such an aircraft caused by a pilot who does not belong to the SSA could cause the Chapter to be excluded from the SSA Group Insurance Program.
b) *Soaring* magazine will not be mailed to the entire Chapter membership. In this situation, all inquiries by Chapter members to SSA office regarding non-receipt of *Soaring* will be referred back to Chapter leadership. Once the renewal process has eventually been completed by all Chapter members, any missed issues of *Soaring* magazine may be requested from the SSA office.
c) Late renewal may cause a Chapter's listing on the SSA's interactive online "Where to Fly" map to be removed until renewal is completed.
d) A Chapter having a gap in membership may cause individual members to lose voting privileges for the Hall of Fame, and loss of entitlement of 20-Year Member pins.
e) Any racing pilots in the Chapter may lose their contest credentials until the Chapter's SSA membership is renewed.

CHAPTER RENEWAL USING THE INDIVIDUAL METHOD

A Chapter using the individual renewal method MUST obtain prior written confirmation from SSA office to do so. Each member of a Chapter using the individual Chapter renewal method follows a procedure identical to that used for SSA members that do not belong to a Chapter. Renewal notices are mailed directly to such members from SSA office, and SSA dues are paid individually.

Each member of an individually-renewing Chapter who has not renewed SSA membership will be reminded to do so (with a copy of their Chapter's leadership) 30, and if necessary 15 days prior to their membership lapsing. Any lapsed SSA member from an individually renewing Chapter will receive notices of such (with a copy to Chapter leaders) 15, and if necessary 45 days after the common Chapter renewal date.

Once per year, SSA office will send each individually renewing Chapter a roster of their known Chapter members (this list may well not be completely accurate due to Chapter membership additions and deletions occurring during the previous year, and is only provided as a guide). It must be returned no later than three (3) weeks after receipt. Alternately, a spreadsheet or simple list containing every member's name and SSA member number will suffice. The prior year's Chapter membership list supplied by the SSA may also be modified by a Chapter leader, (non-Chapter members removed and any new members added) and returned to SSA office.

Additionally, a leader of each individually renewing Chapter will be required to sign and return a statement (supplied by SSA office) certifying that all members of the Chapter also belong to the SSA.

NOTE: Timely Chapter renewal practices are vital to the SSA, as well as for the satisfaction of Chapter members. Late return of any individual's renewal documents and/or SSA dues to SSA office may cause interruption of SSA services to the individual, and possibly the entire Chapter (including the mailing of *Soaring* magazine):

a) An entire Chapter's continued insurability under the SSA Group Insurance Program may be placed at risk if even one Chapter member does not renew SSA membership. It is strongly suggested that each Chapter using the SSA Group Insurance Plan institute a policy that any member who is not also an SSA member in good standing be immediately grounded, and not allowed to fly Chapter aircraft. An accident in such an aircraft cause by the pilot who does not belong to the SSA could cause to be excluded from the SSA Group Insurance Program.
b) *Soaring* magazine will not be mailed to the individual who fails to renew SSA membership on time. Once the renewal process has eventually been completed, missed *Soaring* magazines may be purchased individually by prepayment of $5 per issue, which includes postage.
c) Late SSA membership renewal by any individual Chapter member may cause a Chapter's listing on the SSA's interactive online "Where to Fly" map to be removed until renewal has been completed.
d) A gap in membership may cause the loss of voting privilege for Hall of Fame, and loss of 20-Year and Life Member pins.
e) Racing pilots may lose their contest credentials until SSA membership is renewed.

GENERAL POLICIES

It is extremely important that Chapters inform the SSA in writing by snail mail, by e-mail to membership@ssa.org, or by FAX (575-392-8154) of any additions or deletions to their Chapter membership throughout the year. Such updates will only be accepted from Chapter officers or the designated SSA Contact.

Equally important is for SSA office to be kept informed of any changes in Chapter contact information, particularly regarding the person responsible for SSA group membership renewal.

SSA membership and dues are non-refundable (both to the individual and to the Chapter) and non-transferable, and CANNOT be backdated in the event of a lapse.

SSA staff will be available during regular business hours to respond to any questions and concerns by individuals or Chapter leaders regarding renewal of SSA membership.

THE SSA FAST PROGRAM

All SSA chapters are encouraged to participate in the FAST national glider lesson program. This package consists of a voucher redeemable for a minimum of one glider flight lesson with a CFIG lasting approximately 30 minutes, 30 minutes of ground instruction, a copy of the FAA Glider Flying Handbook, a glider pilot logbook, and a three-month Introductory Membership in the SSA, including *Soaring* magazine. The intent of this program is to introduce people to soaring, and there is no charge to Chapters for participation. The SSA has a nominal charge of $10.00 for each FAST Package purchased or redeemed.

Chapters that participate in the program and accept FAST vouchers for glider lessons have special listing on the SSA online "Where to Fly" map. FAST packages are sold directly to the public through SSA office, and are also available for Chapters to stock and sell on-site.

For information on how a Chapter may participate in the program, please contact SSA office. The SSA Clubs & Chapters Committee has suggestions for leveraging the SSA FAST Program and SSA Introductory Membership for chapter growth, please contact the committee for more information.

THE SOARING SAFETY FOUNDATION

The Soaring Safety Foundation is that part of the SSA entrusted by the SSA Board of Directors with managing all soaring training and safety issues. The SSF offers a multitude of services, all outlined on its website, www.soaringsafety.org. Outreach activities include safety seminars, FAA-approved Flight Instructor Refresher Clinics, Soaring Site Surveys, and various online soaring safety courses and information.

SOARING ASSOCIATES/SSA BUSINESS MEMBERS

What if a soaring organization can't qualify as an SSA chapter? This usually happens because a club or group can't or won't manage their membership's affiliation with the SSA, lack sufficient SSA voting members, or are newly formed and working towards becoming a chapter. One alternative is to become an SSA Business Member. This gets the club placement on the SSA Business Member page with links to their web site and other contact information. It also includes placement on the SSA Where To Fly maps. However, it doesn't include an online member roster or assistance with membership renewal. In 2015, the SSA board adopted an opportunity to associate with soaring groups that were not eligible for chapter membership. Soaring Associates will be included on the SSA Where To Fly maps, access to online roster access, and social media engagement. This involves signing a letter of agreement with the SSA to provide a complete membership roster, including contact information, to the SSA Membership Staff twice annually.

SSA CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP STAFF CONTACT INFORMATION

Alexa Owens, Chapter Membership Services
Soaring Society of America
PO Box 2100
Hobbs, NM 88241-2100
(575) 392-1177 (575) 392-8154 FAX
E-mail: membership@ssa.org

SSA SAILPLANE GROUP INSURANCE PLAN

The SSA Group Hull and Liability Insurance Plan may be available to a Chapter through Costello Insurance Associates. Please contact Mr. Pat Costello at:

Costello Insurance Associates, Inc.
PO Box 28280
Tempe, AZ 85285-8280
(800) 528-6483 (480) 968-7746 (480) 967-3828 FAX
www.gliderinsurance.com
insure@aviationi.com

SSA MERCHANDISE

Chapters may purchase certain SSA merchandise at discounted prices. To find out what is available, call (575) 392-1177 and speak with the Merchandise Department or email merchandise@ssa.org.

PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS

The SSA has focused attention and dollars on the creation of promotional soaring material, and makes it available to Chapters in a first-come, first-serve basis. Quantities vary based upon availability.

SOARING MAGAZINE ADVERTISING

Chapters may advertise in *Soaring* magazine, which is read around the globe. This is a perfect place to advertise an upcoming Chapter event, fly-in, or any other activity. Advertising rates are available upon request from SSA office. *Soaring* is also a useful place for want ads. Whether you are looking for an instructor, or selling an aircraft, *Soaring* is the place to advertise. Both display and classified ads are accepted for publication, and more information can be obtained from the Publications Department at the SSA office at (575) 392-1177 or email advertising@ssa.org.

FREE WEBSITE ASSISTANCE

If you haven't check out the opportunities for an awesome website go to ssanet.org and see the possibilities. Melanie Nichols is eagerly waiting to assist you in making your chapter website noticeable.

SSA STAFF CONTACTS

For all media and PR questions and information, media@ssa.org

For all advertising questions and information, advertising@ssa.org

For information on merchandise and instructor programs, merchandise@ssa.org

For information on Chapters, chapters@ssa.org

For information on fundraising, donations, and promotional material, development@ssa.org

For contest questions and information, contests@ssa.org

For submission of news, photos, or articles, magazine@ssa.org

For questions about convention, contact convention@ssa.org

For questions regarding the website or passwords, webmaster@ssa.org

For general information, suggestions, or complaints, feedback@ssa.org

To join SSA, change an address, request back issues of *Soaring*, etc., membership@ssa.org

SSA CONTACT INFORMATION

SSA CLUB & CHAPTER COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN

Frank Whiteley
POB 337081
Greeley, CO 80633
970-330-2050 7am – 10pm Mountain Time
frank.whiteley@coloradosoaring.org

SSA REGIONAL DIRECTORS

Region 1 (CT, ME, MA, NH, RI, VT) SSAregion1-3@ssa.org

Region 2 (NJ, NY-South, PA-East) SSAregion2-4@ssa.org

Region 3 (NY-North, PA-West) SSAregion1-3@ssa.org

Region 4 (DE, DC, MD, VA, WV) SSAregion2-4@ssa.org

Region 5 (AL, FL, GA, MS, NC, SC, TN, PR, VI) SSAregion5@ssa.org

Region 6 (IN, KY, MI, OH) SSAregion6@ssa.org

Region 7 (IL, IA, MN, MO-East, ND, SD, WI) SSAregion7@ssa.org

Region 8 (AK, ID, MT, OR, WA) SSAregion8@ssa.org

Region 9 (AZ, CO, NM, UT, WY) SSAregion9@ssa.org

Region 10 (AR, KS, LA, MO-West, NE, OK, TX) SSAregion10@ssa.org

Region 11 (CA-North, GU, HI, NV) SSAregion11@ssa.org

Region 12 (CA-South) SSAregion12@ssa.org