

## Learning from Experiences & NATO Summit 2025

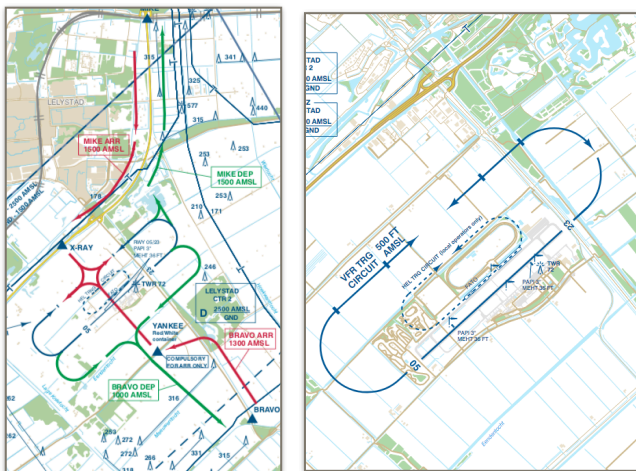
At our flying club, safety is always a priority, and there is much to learn from the experiences of others. Recently, our hangar mates encountered some valuable lessons regarding circuit flying, challenging weather conditions, and aircraft parking. While these situations did not happen to us directly, we want to use these events to raise awareness and prevent similar occurrences happening in the future.

### 1. Circuit Flying - Behaviour Under Scrutiny

ATC at EHLE has raised concerns about pilots' circuit behaviour, particularly involving home-based aircraft. Although this does not directly involve our club, these situations are familiar and could happen anytime.

What went wrong?

- **Incorrect direction when turning into downwind:** Some pilots turned in the wrong direction when entering downwind. This is a simple mistake but can have serious consequences. Make sure you have listened to **ATIS** before requesting clearance and **verbally confirm** the direction before and at **X-RAY**.
- **Turning to base too early:** Some pilots turned from downwind to base without receiving a sequence number from ATC. **Remember: no number, no turn!**  
If ATC instructs "continue downwind" you must wait for explicit clearance before turning to base.
- **Cutting short circuit legs:** Some pilots flew shorter circuit legs, increasing the risk of conflicts with **helicopters flying their own circuit** or other aircraft following the correct procedures. Always fly the full length of upwind and downwind as specified in the Visual Approach Chart/VFR Procedures from the **AIP**.



#### Lesson learned:

Let's ensure we follow circuit procedures correctly. This helps prevent misunderstandings, airspace conflicts, and unsafe situations.

### 2. MAYDAY Call Due to Unexpected Weather - Making Safe Decisions



Another experience from our hangar mates involved a flight where the weather deteriorated unexpectedly. The pilots had to declare a **MAYDAY** because the cloud base dropped below the legal minimum required for Night VFR (1500ft), and diversion options were limited.

What happened?

- The **TAF** and **METAR** indicated good conditions at departure, but local weather **changed rapidly**.
- **Special VFR** was required but not allowed outside UDP. The only alternative was a distant diversion airfield, which the pilots deemed unsafe under the circumstances.
- A **MAYDAY** call was made, and ATC **granted clearance** to return via BRAVO, allowing the pilots to land safely.

#### Lessons learned:

- **TAF** and **METAR** only reflect conditions **at the airfield** - weather can be very different nearby.
- **Don't hesitate to declare a MAYDAY** when necessary. A fuel emergency due to insufficient fuel for your alternate could indicate poor flight planning, but deteriorating weather, technical issues, or medical problems on board are perfectly valid reasons to declare an emergency. You may have to explain your decision afterward, but you don't want to create a situation where investigators later question why you simply didn't make a MAYDAY call. **Safety always comes first.**
- Always thoroughly plan your **diversion options**, especially for Night VFR.

### 3. Hangar Parking - Precision Matters

Incorrect aircraft parking inside the hangar caused significant issues for our hangar mates. Due to one aircraft being parked slightly off position, several others could not fit in their designated spots. This led to a time-consuming rearrangement of the hangar.

What happened?

- A DA40 was parked off the orange markings.
- This caused a domino effect, preventing other aircraft from fitting properly. The two Aquilas could not be parked inside the hangar anymore. Luckily one of them was in Texel at that time.
- Rearranging the hangar took at least half an hour of physically moving heavy aircraft.



#### Lessons learned:

- The hangar layout is precisely measured for optimal space usage.
- Orange markings are for the DA40s.
- Yellow/Black markings are for the Aquilas.
- Always park precisely on the markings -even if you are the first one back and the hangar seems empty. This saves time and effort for everyone.

For more information, click the link to our club's website:  
[How to Maneuver Aircraft in the Hangar DA40 & Aquilas](#)

### 4. Upcoming NATO Summit -Airspace Restrictions & Mandatory Flight Plans



On **June 24-25 2025**, the NATO Summit will take place in The Hague (Den Haag). This event will bring major airspace restrictions:

- A 50 NM airspace closure around The Hague. **Lelystad airport is at 51 NM**, so flying is allowed, but restrictions apply.
- A mandatory flight plan for **ALL** flights in the Netherlands during this period, including VFR **between two uncontrolled airfields** (such as flights between Hoogeveen and Texel, etc.)
- Strict enforcement: Any deviation from your flight plan will be **monitored**. Even minor route changes (e.g., sightseeing) may result in fines (€€€€).

#### Advise:

Plan your flights carefully during this period. Read the latest NOTAMS. We will provide updates as more details become available.

More Safety Briefs to come, stay tuned...

Keep Flying Safe Fellow Aviators!

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