

Bridgend Astronomical Society
Laser sky pointer safety document

This document applies to the use of, mostly green, high-powered laser pens used as sky pointers.

1. Such lasers should on no account be used indoors (e.g. as screen pointers) because of the danger to eyes of inadvertent specular reflections.
2. Before any use as a sky pointer is made, a thorough check for aircraft should be conducted. This should be both visual, for moving lights, and aural. If an aircraft is detected aurally, no use of a laser sky pointer should be considered before it is visually located.
3. No sky pointer should be directed closer than about 45 degrees from an aircraft. And preferably not used at all while an aircraft is in the visible sky.
4. Checks for possible aircraft should be repeated at intervals and all present should be invited to alert sky pointer users if they detect an aircraft.
5. Sky pointers should not be used at lower angles than about 20 degrees above the horizon or tops of buildings, etc.
6. Sky pointers should only be activated when pointing approximately at the object to be indicated.
7. Sky pointers should only be directed at or to closely circle a sky object being indicated. On no account should beams be swept across the sky.
8. For public “star parties” when sky pointer use might be frequent, the organiser should consider prior notification to the local police to avoid being reported.