

# Letters to the Editor

## IMC rating abroad

Sir,

I am UK based PPL and a regular flyer with an aircraft in South Africa. I help many people understand the process of SA Validations and SA Air Law flying differences. There are lots of misunderstandings, not helped by the spasmodic changes in the SA system. Your article has led to a few people contacting me already about the IMC validity in SA. On Page 5, the 'IAOPA World Assembly backs IMC rating' is perhaps a little enthusiastic and may lead to the wrong impression. Perhaps there should be some clarification of the article, as this is one more misunderstanding.

I have contacted the South African Licensing Department and I am advised "The UK IMC Rating has not and will not be accepted in South Africa." They (CAA SA) "have not issued or agreed acceptance to any person or flight and would like to see written evidence of this".

If however the delegate from Botswana was flying an aircraft registered in Botswana on a Licence issued in Botswana then his IMC is of no concern to the South African CAA. He is flying on his own Licence and not on a SA Validation.

Also as far as I can determine the UK IMC is not an official rating in Botswana. Can you help me establish this report as it would be most interesting to know. If this is official, who is monitoring the standards?

**Nigel Craig**

The IMC Rating is taught and accepted in Botswana. AOPA Botswana's Tony Rees replies: "The Botswana syllabus is based on the UK one and the night rating and IMC rating are issued simultaneously. On at least three occasions I have been cleared to fly in instrument conditions in South Africa because I hold a Botswana IMC rating. I am not sure what their aviation law says, but ATC have been happy to let me fly for more than two hours in thick cloud as long as they can see me on radar. When asked if I have an IFR rating I tell them no, but I do have an IMC rating, and they let me proceed.

My aircraft is registered in Botswana and I fly on a Botswana issued licence, so there may be a distinction, as there is very close co-operation between Botswana CAA and SA CAA.

To clarify this I have asked the CEO of the Civil Aviation Authority of Botswana to contact his opposite number in SA and let me know their response. I will pass it straight on to your readers."

## Radio, radio

Sir,

I too am a licensed Radio Amateur. I would like to take issue with Mr. Horton (Letters, *General Aviation*, August 2010) that he thinks the £15 annual licence fee was reasonable. I totally disagree. Where is he coming from? Works for Ofcom?

I am a Class A license holder since the 1980s – the top qualification in amateur radio circles – and prior to obtaining my Class A was a Class B operator. To gain your Amateur Radio License you have to study and take and pass exams including a Morse code test at 12 words per minute to be a class A. For this we were charged £ 15 per year.

A CB operator (Citizens Band ) - no exam or technical knowledge needed - free of charge !

They had to scrap the charge years ago as they could not police the band and no-one bothered to apply for a licence – which, if I remember correctly, was £6 for five years or something very similar, not £ 15 every year AND you would lose your Class A privileges if you did not renew on time. What about that for a stick!

It's about time we Radio Amateurs were stopped being fleeced - please DO NOT ENCOURAGE Ofcom, especially as this is your personal opinion and you are

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in tiny minority – possibly, dare I say, the only one in this country with this opinion.

Amateur Radio and the Aeronautical Band have been around much longer than Ofcom and I hope this coalition of a Government will see sense and disband this revenue raising useless Quango.

Both these bands are covered by international convention and I fail to see how Ofcom can legally justify suddenly deciding that they own this spectrum and can charge users for it !

**Roy Targonski** PPL (A)(H) GO - BZT (Amateur Radio Callsign )

## Island memories

Sir,

Thank you for publishing David Ogilvy's article on the Britten-Norman Islander. It brought back memories of school.

I attended Bembridge School on the Island and remember an early flight by the Islander. To demonstrate its STOL characteristics, and from memory (I'm happy to stand corrected) justify the company's claim the Islander could land and take off in a football pitch, the school's football pitches were turned into an airfield.

The Islander took off from Bembridge airport, flew up to the school, landed on the football pitch, took off, landed on the beach at Whitecliff Bay and returned to Bembridge airport. Flying time five minutes total!

Now I have learnt to fly I enjoy the privilege of flying in and out of Bembridge airport, looking down at my old school.

**David Sharpe**  
Twyford, Berks

## Humberside prices

Sir,

Thank you very much for your visit to Humberside Airport and for the article in the last edition of AOPA's *General Aviation*.

Some clarification is required. The discounted training rate landing fee is available to anyone who telephones ATC (01652 682022) and pre-books a training slot. All approaches and landings are then charged by the airport at 50%. This does represent excellent value for such a professional service, as you experienced. We would recommend visiting pilots call Humberside International Airport to confirm the costs as these will vary according to the aircraft weight and number of approaches. There is no handling at the airport and we have great 'bacon butties' available Monday to Friday 0800-1400!

Thank you again and we look forward to welcoming all visiting AOPA members to Soloflight and Humberside Airport.

**Mel Stewart** MRAeS

www.soloflight.co.uk ■

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