

IAOPA World Assembly backs IMC rating

The International Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association has thrown its weight behind the IMC Rating and is asking EASA to ensure its preservation, if necessary by allowing countries to offer such ratings unilaterally.

IAOPA, which represents half a million pilots in 68 countries, resolved at its World Assembly in June to impress on EASA the value of the IMC Rating and the importance of allowing it to be retained. Furthermore, IAOPA resolved to encourage other States, not just in Europe, to consider the safety benefit of such a Rating.

Knowledge of the IMC Rating across the world is scanty. AOPA UK, which proposed the rating and wrote the syllabus in 1967, has never sought to have it introduced elsewhere – it was designed as a lifesaving qualification to cope with Britain's capricious climate. But delegates from many countries expressed an interest in the Rating. Even in the United States, where the full Instrument Rating is far more accessible and some 50 percent of private pilots have an IR, continued VFR into IMC remains a major killer, and there is no IMC equivalent.

The Rating has, however, been adopted in some countries – the Botswana delegate reported that he had obtained his in his home country, and that it was accepted for flight in South Africa.

A debate on the future of the IMC Rating was initiated by Geoffrey Boot, Chairman of the AOPA UK Instructor Committee, who told the delegates that the loss of the Rating would be the result solely of an administrative change from national to EASA authority. There had

never been any suggestion that the Rating was unsafe – indeed, it was a proven lifesaver which unquestionably improved flight safety, and its continuation was supported by the UK CAA.

The purpose of the IMC Rating was outlined – it equipped the non-instrument rated pilot to keep control of an aircraft in IMC, and to land safely by whatever instrument approach was available. Delegates heard that it comprised a rigorous flying course of at least 15 hours which included those elements that might be encountered on inadvertent entry to IMC, such as recovery from unusual attitudes on partial panel. In teaching basic instrument approaches, it tended to concentrate on those available at or near the student's home base. Unlike some instrument rating qualifications, it was renewable only by flight test every two years. The IMC Rating was seen as a major part of the reason why the UK's fatal accident rate was far lower than comparable European countries, despite Britain's maritime climate and less predictable weather.

With EASA seeking to harmonise many regulations across Europe, the IMC Rating was under threat because a few European countries did not allow flight in IMC outside controlled airspace, which meant the Rating could not be taught or practised for. To confuse the issue, it had been wrongly claimed that the Rating was "an IR with 20% of the training", which had coloured some attitudes in Europe.

After the debate, delegates expressed surprise that a Safety Agency would contemplate the loss of the IMC Rating, but it was explained that instead of cherry-picking

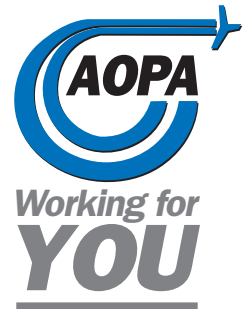
the best of each European country's safety practises, EASA tended to follow a line of least political resistance towards harmonisation.

European AOPAs were fighting strongly at the political level to preserve the IMC Rating in the UK, and awareness of its benefits was growing across Europe.

World Assembly delegates resolved unanimously to communicate to EASA the value of allowing national authorities to continue with ratings where there was a demonstrated safety benefit and where no equivalent was available through EASA regulation, and also to encourage their own states, in Europe and beyond, to consider the benefits of an IMC equivalent.

After the debate, Geoffrey Boot said: "We are very pleased to have the full backing of international AOPA, which further strengthens our case not only with our own UK CAA, whom we hope are already on side, but at EASA level and the European Commission.

"The International Conference was an opportunity to talk about the benefits of our valuable IMCR with other European delegates who, it seems, were in many cases misinformed that such a rating was simply unacceptable in their countries, when in fact quite the contrary seems to be true in terms of support. There seems to be growing support, not only at European level but internationally, for the IMC ■



Strasser wins CAA Safety Award



From left: AOPA Chairman George Done, Today's Pilot editor and award judge Dave Unwin, Charles Strasser, and the CAA's Chris Finnigan

AOPA's Channel Islands Region Chairman Charles Strasser has won the Civil Aviation Authority's General Aviation Safety Award for his work on the widely-acclaimed 'Strasser Scheme' under which aerodromes waive landing charges in case of genuine emergency or unplanned weather diversion.

Over the past 12 years Charles Strasser has put thousands of hours of his time into signing airfields up to the scheme, monitoring its operation and arbitrating in case of dispute. His work has now been officially recognised by the CAA which conferred on him their 2010 GA Safety Award, presented by the Manager of

their Flight Operations Inspectorate Chris Finnigan at Aero Expo in June. Although it is understandably difficult to quantify, the award judges said the Strasser Scheme "had had a remarkable influence on GA flight safety since its inception".

Indeed, Chris Finnigan has himself reason to be thankful for the Strasser Scheme. As he explained, "I was almost back at my home airfield after a business trip to Suffolk when the forecast thunderstorms arrived earlier than expected and closed in ahead and behind me. The nearest airfield to the north was one that I wouldn't normally go near because it is a very busy training airfield and has high charges for GA, but that day I needed to be on the ground without delay and didn't have to think twice about making an emergency diversion, because of Charles Strasser's campaign."

The purpose of the Strasser Scheme is to remove the cost of landing as a factor in a pilot's decision-making when he or she is running into trouble. It's often difficult to think perfectly clearly in such stressful situations, which sometimes leads to a dangerous decision to press on with an intermittent fault,

into unexpected bad weather, or in the face of some other emergency.

In fact, the CAA itself recognised the nature of the problem when in 1997 it published a review of GA fatal accidents 1985 to 1994, and made a recommendation in CAP 667, where paragraph 9.2(c) reads: "There were a number of fatal accidents where a timely diversion or precautionary landing could have avoided an accident. In the UK there is a 'culture' of pressing on and hoping for the best rather accepting the inconvenience and cost of a diversion. This 'culture' needs to be changed, firstly by educating pilots and secondly by persuading aerodrome owners that there should be no charge for emergency landings or diversions. It is recommended that all aerodrome owners be persuaded to adopt a policy that there should be no charges for emergency landings or diversions by general aviation aircraft."

Since neither the CAA nor the GASCo, the General Aviation Safety Council, acted to get this potentially lifesaving

recommendation implemented, Charles Strasser, as Chairman of the AOPA CI Region, decided in 1998 to accept the challenge. He has now signed up 203 of the 212 civil and military aerodromes to what has become known as the 'Strasser Scheme' – only nine holdouts still refuse to join. Heathrow, Gatwick and London City have not been approached.

Apart from the monumental task of contacting all the aerodromes, explaining, clarifying, cajoling and pestering them to sign up, the greatest part of the workload that falls on Charles Strasser is ensuring that the scheme remains unimpeachable. He is called on to arbitrate if there is a disagreement between a pilot and an aerodrome over whether a landing falls under the Scheme. Many of these disagreements are extremely time-consuming, involving much research to establish the facts. Charles says: "If there was any suggestion that pilots were using the Strasser Scheme in order to avoid legitimate landing charges, it would obviously severely undermine the scheme. Sometimes the circumstances are not black and white, but my

arbitration must take into account the integrity of the Scheme."

Every military airfield in Britain subscribes to the Strasser Scheme. Charles Strasser says: "I don't like to single out any aerodrome for special praise because they have all made sacrifices in order to extend this lifesaving service to general aviation pilots, but I ought to mention the special contribution the military airfields have made. Time and again, pilots in trouble have been given absolutely first-rate attention and all the facilities of a modern military base, and many people have reason to be grateful."

Charles's colleagues at AOPA praised the CAA for recognising the valuable contribution he had made to safety. AOPA UK Chairman George Done said: "We are extremely pleased that Charles has been given this award and extend to him our warmest congratulations. It is very well deserved. Without his determination and drive there is no doubt in my mind that this scheme would never have been started, and would never have been kept going for 12 years."

AOPA's Chief Executive Martin Robinson



Chief executive's diary:

Anybody not want to discuss EASA?

It's hard to have an aviation conversation anywhere in Europe now without the topic of EASA coming up; things haven't worked out the way they were supposed to, but some painful steps have been taken and the Agency simply has to be made to work. As the EC's Aviation Commissioner Daniel Calleja said to me in July, we have two choices – EASA or EASA. And as I said to him, we have two choices – good EASA and bad EASA. Everybody has to work harder to make EASA a good regulator.

It's been a busy time. Shortly after I wrote my diary for the last *General Aviation* AOPA Chairman George Done and I took part in the Royal Institute of Navigation's TopNav competition around London on May 15th; this is an excellent skill-sharpener, although I have to say that since George and I won our class three years ago we've been heavily handicapped and haven't had a sniff of the podium. Such under-achievement must really be rewarded by the handicappers, and we look forward to laying hands on silver in the near future.

On the 18th I was at the Department for Transport for a briefing on EASA, talking about the Agency's budget and its unending travails. On the 27th and 28th I was at EASA in Cologne for a meeting of its Advisory Body; working practices and budgets were the main subjects. On June 2nd I went to Brussels for a meeting with IAOPA's new Brussels lawyers Hogan Lovells, followed by a Eurocontrol workshop on June 3rd discussing Single European Sky Rules of the Air.

The main event of the year was of course the IAOPA World Assembly in Tel Aviv from June 7th to 13th – something that is comprehensively covered in these pages. As

well as the conference subjects we discuss, this is five days of bonding, networking and strategic planning. It is the global nature of AOPA that gives us such a powerful presence in Europe and at ICAO in Montreal; what struck me forcibly again in Israel was that for all our regional problems, all 68 AOPAs face the same basic obstacles; rising costs and over-burdensome regulation leading to dwindling participation. We have a lot of work to do to reverse the trend.

On the 16th we had the NPPL annual general meeting, and on the 17th I went to the LAA bash at Old Warden, which was a fun day out. On the 21st I was back in Brussels for a meeting of the European Commission's Industry Consultation Body. The importance of having a voice in the ICB cannot be underestimated as it is this body that gives advice to the Single Sky Committee and the European Commission. I again had to ask the airline group through the Chairman to refrain from using the term 'airspace users' as it could be seen to be trying to sign GA up to a position to which we had not agreed. I asked the airlines to use the term 'CAT airspace users' unless all airspace users were in agreement. GA has to be careful that we do not get signed up for a proposal to which we have not agreed. I reminded the Chairman that the ICB is a consensus body. It is very clear to me that airlines are beginning to question their representatives about the level of control they have, and what future investments they may be signing up to. They want control of the direction of SES, SESAR and EASA – not unreasonable when you consider the sums involved.



On the 22nd I had a meeting with Frank Bannister of AOPA's insurance advisors Besso to discuss the Mentoring Scheme, followed by a meeting with Chris Royle, who chairs the Members Working Group, about the AOPA Bonus Day at Duxford on September 18th. Put it in

your diary – hope to see you there.

On the 23rd I went to Istanbul for an important meeting of the European Civil Aviation Conference (ECAC), which was discussing the future supply of pilots and engineers. ICAO and ECAC studies say 330,000 pilots and 400,000 engineers will be needed between 2020 and 2030, and they're wringing their hands about where they might come from. Flying automated airliners is just not an attractive job any more, they say – how do they keep up the quality. I was able to focus their attention on general aviation and the shortcomings of the system prevalent in northern Europe where young people must self-fund their training, up to an including a type rating, paying full VAT and tax, with no soft loans and no way of claiming costs against future earnings. This situation really must change, and urgently. In places like Turkey where there is little GA the government funds a certain amount of aviation education. The very least some European governments can do is get their boot off the kid's windpipe. It's clear, however, that much of the industry is less concerned about the future as it is with the daily struggle to stay in business.

On the 25th I got the red-eye to Heathrow and went straight to Aero Expo to see Charles Strasser get the CAA Safety Award, and richly deserved it is, too. Few people know better than I how much time and energy Charles puts into keeping the Strasser Scheme going; he's a remarkable man, too, still flying his Seneca at 83 and showing no signs of flagging. Charles,

added: "Charles Strasser has been absolutely indefatigable in promoting his safety-critical scheme over the years, and very few people realise how much time and energy it costs him. There can't be many awards that are as richly deserved as this one. Well done, Charles."

Charles Strasser is still an active pilot at the age of 83 – he flew his Seneca II from Jersey to Israel for the IAOPA World Assembly in Tel Aviv in early June; see separate article in these pages – and his autobiography, 'From Refugee to OBE', tells of a remarkable journey from childhood in Czechoslovakia, escape from the Nazis and asylum in Britain. At the end of World War II he fought with the Czech Independent Armoured Brigade attached to the British Army but arrived home to find most of his family had perished in the Holocaust; later he was part of the Czech War Crimes Delegation at the Nuremberg Trials. With a loan of £350 he started a photography business in Stoke-on-Trent, Photopia International, importers and distributors of Japanese cameras and electronic equipment.

Ofcom update

Ofcom has backed off from imposing a stealth tax on nav aids for the foreseeable future, although it is continuing with its proposal to charge thousands of pounds for VHF voice frequencies. In a statement in June, the telecoms regulator said some of the spectrum used by nav aids was wanted by commercial companies and could be shared – but before that happened, a feasibility study and research programme would have to establish how best to do it. AOPA understands that this means ADF, VOR, DME and ILS installations will not attract the new tax, at least for the moment.

Charles retired in 1980.

Charles now hopes the CAA safety Award will spur the nine aerodromes which have not so far joined the Scheme to sign up. Those who have declined to participate are Belfast International, Biggin Hill, Birmingham, Cardiff, Carlisle, Filton, Leeds-Bradford, Luton, and Manchester. Charles says: "I hope that this recognition by the CAA will encourage the directors of the nine remaining non-participating airports to look again at the Scheme and to recognise the importance of

this potentially life saving scheme, to put aside their fears of a minor loss of revenue and join the scheme.

"I hope that also it will encourage pilots to join AOPA, which works for the benefit of all GA pilots. It should not be forgotten that an important part of CAP 667 9.2(c) reads 'firstly by pilot education'. The work of educating pilots to avoid situations in which they might have to take advantage of the provisions of the Strasser Scheme goes on and needs your support." ■

we're all in your debt.

I spent Saturday and Sunday at Aero Expo – the AOPA stand ran very smoothly, thanks to all those volunteers who came and helped out. Well done, everybody! I went to Brussels on the 28th for a meeting with the General Aviation Manufacturers Association and the European Business Aircraft Association. We are moving closer to a joint approach on many topics, and with GAMA and EBAA we are partnering with organisations that can fund and shoulder their share of the work, which is absolutely vital. On the 29th I had to be back at Gatwick for a meeting of the CAA's Finance Advisory Committee, at which I pointed out rather forcibly that all promises of relief for small AOC holders – so badly hurt by the CAA's shift of fees onto them that many AOCs have been given up – have come to nothing. Something has to happen on this, and now! The CAA's income has been badly hit by the recession, exacerbated by the Icelandic volcano, and it looks unlikely to make the six percent 'return on investment' the government demands of it. I again asked for a proper review of which regulations actually require CAA safety oversight. The CAA responded by saying that the CEO has requested a new in-depth review that will eventually involve all of industry. I fear it will come too late for many small AOC holders. New PPL issues continue to decline year on year, although professional licenses and examinations remain quite robust – it's possible that there is some lag in the system.

In the afternoon I went to the Home Office for a meeting about the reconstitution of the UK Border Agency as they try to get to grips with their brief on a limited budget that's only going to shrink further – and with the Olympics looming, they've certainly got their work cut out. Partnering with GA is the only solution; we were joined by the yachting organisations, who can put the 'threat' from GA into perspective – 250,000 sailors,

thousands of miles of coastline, carrying capacity far greater than any GA aircraft. They know where their challenges lie. That evening I met with an AOPA member who has a problem with an infringement; perhaps more on that in a future magazine. Then I got the Eurostar back to Brussels for a breakfast meeting on the 30th with Hogan Lovells ahead of our 8:30am meeting with the EC's Aviation Commissioner Daniel Calleja Crespo. I've had many meetings with Snr Calleja and we know each other quite well – and it was a pleasure to hand over to him the IAOPA President's Award for services to GA – but we do not have the relationship he has with Hogan Lovells; he greeted Jeff Shane like an old personal friend, which in fact they are. And our meeting was all the more productive for that. We went on to a meeting with Brian Simpson, who chairs the European Parliament's Transport Committee, and again, our legal team knew him personally, and his response was all the warmer for that. He was well briefed on the IMCR and FCL008. I found Brian to be someone who was willing to listen to and support a case based on fact. Perhaps understandably, I fell asleep on the train home.

On July 1st I met with CAA Chief Executive Andrew Haines and Director of Safety Regulation Gretchen Burrett at the CAA. I've been heartened by the openness with which they've approached their jobs. On this occasion I mentioned among other things AOPA's long-standing request that examiners be allowed to issue licenses as soon as candidates pass their tests – it would save money, delay, waste and bureaucracy. It's not a popular standpoint in certain circles. Despite EASA, the CAA has as many staff now as it had when it was running UK aviation – about 900 – and they need things to do. We discussed where the CAA sees itself five years from now, and what its relationship with GA might be – all of which

will come out in the review that CAA is about to begin.

Next day I was at the Airspace Strategy Steering Group, and on Saturday 3rd I had another fun day out, this time at the Goodwood Festival of Speed as a guest of Loop. On the 7th I went to an Aerodrome Operators Association reception at which Transport Minister Theresa Villiers reiterated that there would be no new runways in the South East. The Government is to set up a number of working groups to look at how the existing capacity in the South East can be improved without the need to build additional runways. Will places like Biggin Hill and Southend Airports benefit from this government policy to the detriment of GA?

Next day I had a telecon with Dr Michael Erb of AOPA Germany and others about SESAR, and in particular the mounting political pressure from the airlines to get some control over the programme. At the moment they just don't have the money to invest in SESAR. The estimated cost of improving air traffic management over the next 30 years is €30 billion, and it's unlikely that the airlines will be able to earn or borrow that money. But SESAR is a research programme rather than an implementation programme, and that is sometimes forgotten by those most directly involved. Europe and America have now signed memoranda or understanding on the interoperability of SESAR and NexGen, its American equivalent. The airline group inside SESAR is making it clear it doesn't want GA to be involved. IAOPA represents all of general aviation at SESAR, and we need to be quick on our feet in order to ensure GA doesn't lose out.

That evening I welcomed Blazej Krupa, President of AOPA Poland, who was in London to discuss the future of avgas. We're often so engrossed in fighting today's problems that we can't devote enough time to the problems we know will come; avgas is one we can't ignore, and we're working on it.

Martin Robinson

Legal firm opens doors for IAOPA

A series of meetings with senior European officials is the first tangible result of IAOPA's retention of the international legal firm of Hogan Lovells in Brussels to bolster its lobbying programme. Europe's Aviation Commissioner Daniel Calleja Crespo and the Chairman of the European Parliament's Transport Committee Brian Simpson sat down with IAOPA representatives in separate face-to-face meetings as a result of Hogan Lovells'



work, and IAOPA has been invited to participate in a new impact assessment study of slot allocation at EC airports.

The retention of Hogan Lovells takes IAOPA's political campaigning to a new level. It's costly, but it's been made possible by the participation of AOPA US, which has joined the European AOPAs and IAOPA to fund the firm's retainer. Martin Robinson, who took part in all the meetings, says: "We have to live in the real world where access and influence is in the hands of those who are politically astute and well connected, and having your voice heard is a matter of using the right tools.

"The days are gone when the well-meaning volunteer could turn up at a meeting and be taken seriously, especially in Europe. Hogan Lovells is hard-wired into the European political structure and can open doors, sniff out new legislative proposals long before they ever get to the 'meeting' stage – at which point they're often difficult to change – and make sure GA's standpoint is understood from the beginning. All AOPA members are contributing financially to this, and I thank them for that; the more members we can get to contribute, the more difference we can make."

At the first meeting with the Aviation Commissioner Snr Calleja agreed that next year, the ground handling rules for general aviation will be reformed, something IAOPA has been complaining bitterly about since they were introduced. Compulsory handling was imposed at many airports as a security measure, but the Commission recognises that it's crucifying GA, with stories of €150 bills for 30-metre trips in the handler's minibus being an illustration of the problem. Martin Robinson says: "Snr Calleja accepts that these undesirable monopoly operations have contributed nothing to security and that most of these airports now have dedicated GA areas which obviate the need for compulsory handling, and the EC will be revisiting the legislation in 2011. We will be asking members to provide specific details to help in this process.

"As with most of what AOPA does, the members pay for it and all of GA benefits. More GA pilots must realise what's at stake and make their contribution. If you can sign up a new AOPA member, please make a special effort to do so."

Hogan Lovells' report for the month highlights Snr Calleja's acknowledgement of IAOPA's role in creating the GA sustainability paper, and his approval of IAOPA-Europe's initiative to work together with the General Aviation Manufacturers Association (GAMA) and the European Business Aviation Association (EBAA). Snr Calleja spoke to expecting progress on general aviation in the second half of 2011, under a Polish Presidency; his air policy official Mikolaj Ratajczyk is a Polish national. Martin Robinson initiated debate on the Single European Sky,

SESAR, security, ETS, airport policy, and slots.

With regard to the lack of data on GA in Europe, Craig Spence of AOPA US proposed the use of AOPA's extensive database in the US. As an example of the importance of GA he said that after September 11, the first air services that became available following the closing of US airspace were provided by general aviation; GA aircraft were called upon to move money to and from the US Treasury, assist the FBI, and make medical flights among other things. Snr Calleja indicated that he had been unaware of these critical roles. Discussion also covered the work of EASA,

Hogan Lovells also reported on the meeting with Brian Simpson, Chair of the Committee on Transport and Tourism at the European Parliament, which was also attended by Martin Robinson and Craig Spence. The 90 minute meeting focused on the way EASA is fulfilling its regulatory tasks, with Mr Simpson leaving no doubt that he was a defender of the European Parliament's rights in the legislative process, effectively trumping EASA in important matters. Hogan Lovells also reported on a meeting with Eurocontrol's Director General David McMillan, who indicated his interest in establishing a more robust dialogue with IAOPA.

Hogan Lovells is also monitoring Europe's co-operation with the US on civil aviation research and development; EASA's most recent regulations; and environmental issues, including those arising from Eurocontrol's airspace changes. The firm gives advance notice of aviation issues to be discussed in upcoming European committees, impending changes in legislation, moves towards Open Skies, and highlights any issue that must be addressed by GA. ■

State objection to kill PPL instructor plan?

Some European states are pressuring EASA to abandon the idea of re-introducing the PPL Flying Instructor and want it to continue to insist that PPL instructors either hold a CPL or have 'demonstrated a CPL level of theoretical knowledge'.

There is near-unanimous demand for change from the training industry and widespread political support for EASA's original positive stance, but the Agency is being forced to compromise by European member states – unnamed by EASA but said to include Austria.

Any compromise would come as a blow for the flight training industry, which wanted to get the experienced, high-time PPL back into instruction, perhaps part-time when he's winding down his day job ahead of retirement. Pilots with decades of flying and thousands of hours behind them balk at taking a CPL course costing somewhere over £15,000 in order to instruct ab initio students. Instead, a 19-year-old pilot with 150 hours total time, but who has passed the CPL exams and can express himself in UTC when crossing the international date line, can instruct PPLs.

AOPA's Martin Robinson says: "A few grey hairs is a more valuable asset for a flight instructor than much of what's in the CPL syllabus, and the high-time pilot with some experience of life makes a safer instructor than the kid who's not long out of ab initio instruction himself."

EASA had been entirely positive about the PPL instructor. The change to delete the requirement for CPL Theoretical Knowledge as a pre-requisite for an applicant for the FI Course was agreed at the final meeting of the main EASA FCL.001 Working Group in 2009. A small FCL.001 sub-group chaired by Matthias Borgmeier, an EASA Rulemaking Officer, was formed to finalise a number of outstanding issues regarding FIs. This group met in January this year, and there was a further one-day meeting of the group at the beginning of February when the Chairman confirmed that FIs holding a PPL would be remunerated for instruction. An IAOPA representative was present at each of these meetings. Mr Borgmeier re-affirmed his February statement in mid-June.

In June, however, EASA announced it had dropped the proposal. Martin Robinson says: "I'm hugely disappointed that EASA is being forced into a compromise. I had high hopes of the PPL instructor, and a lot of the CPL knowledge is largely irrelevant to the PPL. Instructors should be chosen on the basis of their ability to teach.

"What is the gain in getting PPL instructors to do CPL exams? We will end up with a LAPL instructor who can't be paid, then some very expensive EASA instructors who've got all the tickets but charge heavily for their time. You'll have two instructors with different qualifications, charging different amounts to teach exactly the same thing on the same aircraft. Where's the sense?

"The unremunerated instructor will have to maintain these ratings and licences at some personal cost, and people are likely to try to recover their costs by the back door. If you make bad regulations, people will contrive to find a way around them."

Payment for PPL instructing also affects holders of the BCPL. Martin Robinson says: "If EASA says you need a CPL to instruct, this will affect about 400 BCPL holders, many of whom have been instructors for more than 20 years. If EASA decides instructors must demonstrate a commercial level of knowledge, the UK CAA will have to negotiate with EASA on the issue of the BCPL holders who have been earning a living as instructors for decades. This is a human rights issue – you can't arbitrarily take away people's livelihood. We will need a block acceptance of BCPL holders. If they require a CPL, then the CAA will have to agree to issue an EASA CPL restricted to instructing. We don't have a clue what the CAA plans to do about this."

There are also vague rumblings at EASA about the possibility that the right to share flying costs will be taken away. Martin Robinson says: "Some people in EASA is claiming that's an aerial work environment, and that cheap charters are being dressed up as cost-sharing. There's nothing official yet, but it gives me cause for concern. Cost-sharing is not a regulatory issue. It's unpoliceable, and will encourage bad practice." ■

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Come to Duxford with AOPA on September 18th

Make a date to be at Duxford on Saturday September 18th for the AOPA Bonus Day, where as well as visiting one of the finest GA airfields in Britain, complete with the fabulous Imperial War Museum aircraft collection, you'll be able to meet and talk to some of the most influential people in UK aviation today.

Duxford has been running special Bonus Days for the last four years. Alan Evans, a pilot, casual FISO and someone who thinks that Duxford is pretty marvellous, champions these events. And September 18th is the special day for AOPA members, and those who ought to be AOPA members but are still thinking about it, to fly in. It will be

informative, stimulating and enjoyable and offers an opportunity for you to meet AOPA staff and committee members. Bring as many non-member guests as you can and encourage them to join. On the day, anyone joining AOPA UK as a paying member will get 6 months free membership, and will be entered into the September 2010 monthly prize draw for an AWARE GPS airspace alerting system.

The day is generously supported by Besso Aviation Insurance Brokers, insurance advisors to AOPA UK.

Speakers

A keynote speaker will be one of the most influential aviation figures in Europe today, Eric Sivel, EASA's Deputy Director of Rulemaking. The UK CAA will be providing a senior



A keynote speaker, Eric Sivel, EASA's Deputy Director of Rulemaking

manager to speak at the seminars – full details will be provided on the AOPA website www.aopa.co.uk when these are confirmed. Hosting the seminars will be AOPA UK CEO Martin Robinson. Following these talks, there will be a panel discussion with pre-registered questions and questions from the floor.

You can propose an AOPA-related question at the time you book your event places using the form inserted in this month's *General Aviation*. Fill it in and pop it in the post – if it's fallen out, you can print one off the AOPA website at http://www.joinaopa.com/joomla/index.php?option=com_form&form_id=19. All completed booking forms must be received by Thursday 16th September 2010.

Seminars

The Seminar Schedule is:

- 11:30 Welcome Address; Martin Robinson
- 11:40 EASA's Relationship with GA; Eric Sivel
- 12:10 Questions from the Floor for Eric Sivel
- 12:20 CAA's Relationship with EASA and GA; CAA speaker to be advised
- 12:50 Questions from the Floor for CAA
- 13:00 Question Time; Pre-registered Questions on AOPA-related topics
- 13:45 Finish

Museum entry will be at a discounted rate of £7 for all paying categories

Seminars will be held in the Airspace Hangar Presentation Room. Space is limited and we expect that demand will be high, so pre-booking is essential using the event booking form. The seminars are only open to AOPA UK members and their guests. We'll let you know by email if you've been allocated a place at the seminars. If you are unsuccessful, your name will be placed on a standby list in the event of spaces becoming available on the day.

Prize competitions

There will be a number of competitions in the afternoon:

Concours d'Elegance – a £50 prize to the winner in each of the following categories .

- Pre 1960
- 1960 –2000
- 2000 – Present

Judging will be based on most loved, shiny and beautiful aircraft constructed within these date categories. Judging starts at 14:30 and Winners announced at 15:30.

Furthest Flown (direct from point of departure to Duxford) – £100 prize

Most Senior Pilot to fly in to Duxford for the event – One Year Free AOPA UK Membership
Youngest Pilot to fly in to Duxford for the event – One Year Free AOPA UK Membership

Meet AOPA UK

There will be stands in the Airspace Hangar in the room adjacent to the Presentation/Seminar Room where you will have the opportunity meet and ask questions of AOPA representatives from the Instructors Committee, Corporate Members, Executive Committee, Members Working Group and staff from the AOPA UK office.

You will also be able to obtain information on the range of AOPA UK products like the Aerobatics Course, Radio Navigation Certificate, Wings Awards Scheme, Mentoring Scheme and so on.

There will be indoor activities in the Airspace Hangar and outdoor activities on a reserved part of the airfield, including Aircraft and Supplier Exhibits.



Flying in

The booking form mentioned previously also contains fly-in details. On submission, you will get an email copy of your details; please print a copy of your booking details email and bring it with you to ensure entry into the event.

But you must get PPR! Contact Duxford tower on 01223 833376 to obtain a PPR number (note this and bring it with you), an arrival slot time and essential arrival briefing. A "broad slot" system will be in place to spread landing times. Call soon to get the best choice. When you call, you will also be asked for car details in case you are unable to fly in on the day and would drive in

instead.

A reduced landing fee of £7 will apply for event arrivals. Museum entry will be at a discounted rate of £7 for all paying categories.

Driving in

Drive-in details are also on the booking form. On arrival you should enter by the Visitors Gate and look for the AOPA signs. If you haven't pre-booked using the online form and given correct car details, you may be asked to pay full entrance charges.

The airfield opens at 9:30 and cars can drive in from 10am.

Hungry pilot

Lunch packs will be available if pre-booked at a maximum price of £8 each (payment on collection). More information will be made available on www.aopa.co.uk detailing the contents and where to collect your lunch packs. To avoid wastage, please only book lunch packs if you are definitely going to need them. You can cancel using the online form up to 48 hours before the event; otherwise, contact Duxford ATC on 01223 833376 to cancel your arrival and lunch pack bookings.

The schedule is subject to change. Keep up to date on www.aopa.co.uk. If you need to contact AOPA about the event email Mandy Nelson, mandy@aopa.co.uk.

The schedule is subject to change, and of course there's always the weather... but all being well – see you at Duxford! ■

AOPA Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting of the British Light Aviation Centre Ltd, trading as the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association of the UK, will be held on Monday 13th September 2010 at The Victoria Charity Centre, 11 Belgrave Road, London, SW1V 1RB, commencing at 2.00 p.m. The formal announcement and agenda of the AGM appears on page ??.

Any member wishing to elect another member to the Board of Management must provide notice in writing at least 35 days in advance.

A set of accounts will be provided in advance of the meeting on the AOPA website www.aopa.co.uk together with brief personal details of the members offering themselves for election and re-election. These data will also be available at the AGM.

Following the formal business of the meeting, there will be time for informal reports from the Chairman and CEO and for general discussion.

Tea, coffee and light refreshments will be available from 1 p.m. and it is expected that the meeting will finish by 3.30 p.m. In order to plan for refreshments and to provide security staff at the VCC with an attendance list, members who intend to attend are requested to please let the AOPA office know in advance, either by telephone (020 7834 5631), email (info@aopa.co.uk), or by post to AOPA, 50a Cambridge Street, London SW1V 4QQ. – *George Done*

Calling all aircraft and aircraft group owners

You will have read elsewhere that work is progressing on the new website and membership database development. Alongside this, we have been considering how this can be exploited to support new member services. If there is the member support, one area that we would like to focus on is aircraft ownership, either sole or group, and operational matters.

Some areas we would like to test support for are:

Building on the Members Working Group (MWG); should we establish an Owners Working Group, who would focus on matters affecting aircraft ownership and operation?

Should AOPA offer an aircraft group membership category? All members of a group would have AOPA membership at discounted rates depending on numbers. Obviously we would want to do our research to make sure that this had a net bonus on membership numbers, and profitable income! Currently we just don't know which members own aircraft or are members of a group.

Provide areas on the new website for aircraft owners, perhaps including:

- Purchasing and registering an aircraft
- Ownership options
- Operating an aircraft
- Selling aircraft and shares
- When things go wrong
- Maintenance
- Owners forums, perhaps including type specific areas.

Do we have enough helicopter owner members to justify separate rotary and fixed

wing sections of the above?

If you are an aircraft owner (sole or group), help shape our decision-making by completing an online form that is available on <http://www.aopa.co.uk/>, using the link from the Aircraft and Group Owners article on the front page.

Martin Robinson asks: "Please help us to improve what we do for you by giving us a few minutes of your time and completing this survey." A big response would be excellent and show that we have enthusiastic members. Cut off for submission of the form will be 21st January 2011. – *Mick Elborn* ■

EGNOS to come on stream

Europe's EGNOS satellite, which improves GPS signals to the point where they might be used for Cat 1 landings, is coming on line, and Eurocontrol has launched projects in the UK, France and Poland aimed at the starting the process of operational implementation.

It probably won't mean much to GA because while the Americans put up the satellite network for nothing and the Europeans provide EGNOS free, the CAA and its agents charge like a wounded bull to certify GPS approaches and few small airfields will lay out the money – and that's where the approaches would be most useful.

EGNOS is Europe's version of WAAS, the US Wide Area Augmentation System, which uses a network of ground stations to sharpen the GPS signal and rebroadcasts it via a geostationary satellite. Europe's satellite is over the Bay of Biscay, and Eurocontrol plans to declare it serviceable in October.

In the UK the CAA has privatised the creation and evaluation of such approach procedures, but you must use their authorised agents, who don't come cheap. Their work is submitted to the CAA, who stamp it and send you a bill. This is a good example of how costs impinge on safety, because people will continue to use home-made GPS approaches which may or may not be entirely safe. It's certainly better than a back-tracking a BBC local radio signal, which I've seen some pilots do. Further, ATC is insisting that GPS approaches only be certified where there's a full ATC system already in place, so a lot of us have no chance anyway.

Martin Robinson says: "The CAA has not been entirely sensible about GPS approaches. How many people are using the GPS overlay at places like Shoreham and Gloucester? As we've said from the start, they're in the wrong places to really improve safety. Other countries do this far better than we do. The CAA's reticence about embracing GPS approaches encourages bad practice among pilots, few of whom have the incentive to install or upgrade kit to take advantage of EGNOS." ■

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Mentoring Scheme is GO!

After much spadework the Mentoring Scheme now has papal blessing and can steam ahead, as Pat Malone reports

Yes, this is the real deal.

The AOPA Mentoring Scheme, which aims to bring together experienced and inexperienced pilots in mutually supportive harmony, has finally dotted the required insurance Is and crossed the legal Ts and can get under way. Mick Elborn, who runs the scheme, says: "With essential help from AOPA's legal advisor Tim Scorer and Frank Bannister, aviation insurance advisor to AOPA, we have now resolved the outstanding legal and insurance concerns with the scheme.

"A meeting was held with the majority of UK aviation insurance brokers to explain the Mentoring Scheme to them. The outcome is that there is now a simple process in place whereby the Mentee will arrange for the aircraft insurance to carry a clause covering the aircraft, Mentor, Mentee

and AOPA UK when it is used under the Mentoring Scheme. Full details are included in the updated Guidance Notes for the AOPA VFR Mentoring Scheme which are available on the AOPA UK website www.aopa.co.uk."

Now it's your turn

So it's time now for YOU to register either as a Mentor, a Mentee, or both. The purpose of the scheme is simple – it helps tentative pilots stretch their abilities by putting them together with those who've been around the track a few times. Some 75 percent of PPLs fail to renew their licences after five years, and one reason is the perceived difficulty of moving from being a newly-qualified, low-hours PPL to being a confident and capable flyer. Take, for instance, the low-hours pilot who rarely ventures beyond the local area for fear of complex and unknown airspace, mistrusts his own ability to evaluate the weather, isn't very good on the radio, can't confidently operate all the kit in the aircraft or unravel the Notams, or sticks to familiar territory for other reasons. For him or her flying

Aspiring Mentors at the Induction Workshop at Duxford in April

will soon pall, and there is a high risk that he will be lost to general aviation. The response is generally not to seek help, but to go and do something else.

The Mentoring Scheme will put him in touch with someone on whom he can call informally for advice and assistance – a sort of 'buddy system' which gives the uncertain pilot the confidence to tackle a flight he would not otherwise attempt. At its most basic, this might be a matter of being accompanied on a land-away by someone who's been there before. When it works, it also puts the zing back into the Mentee's flying, and the Mentor can have a lot of fun, too.

If you could use some help...

Or if you think you could give some help...

Or even if, like me, you think you might be a Mentor in some circumstances and a Mentee in others...

Then you need to register with AOPA.

Mick Elborn says we have quite a lot of Mentors, but the Mentees who expressed interest in the early stages now need to provide their details. "A further Mentor Induction Workshop was held in the Briefing Room at Duxford in April and a further six Mentors are now registered," he says. "We now have wide coverage of the UK, but with some gaps to fill with further Mentor inductions. We would really like to get the scheme off the ground, literally, before conducting any more Mentor Induction Workshops.

"What we really need now are the Mentees! We had much interest when the Mentoring scheme was first proposed, and those who put forward their names as potential Mentees now have to register. Anyone who has let us know of their interest will have been sent follow up emails. If you have shown an interest and haven't received any follow up contact, let us know by emailing Mandy Nelson; mandy@aopa.co.uk."

Everything you need to know about the Mentoring Scheme and registering as a Mentee or Mentor is on the AOPA UK website at www.aopa.co.uk under Training and Development. ■



AOPA's Airbox Aware winners

Four new AOPA members have won Airbox Aware anti-infringement tools worth £150 as part of the Association's recruitment incentive programme. From July, all new members' names go into the hat for a monthly Aware draw, and AOPA began the programme by giving away an Airbox Aware each day to new members who signed up at Aero Expo and whose names went into the prize draw.

Robert Callaway-Lewis was Friday's winner; the name of Nicola Thomas came out of the hat on the Saturday, and Eric Fors won on the Sunday. They received their prizes on the AOPA stand at Wycombe; the June winner was Rob Perrett from Liverpool, pictured here in a PA-28. Rob has a CPL, MEP, IR and MCC and did his professional training at

Stapleford – he's now doing his Instructor Rating at Liverpool. "The Airbox is very useful, particularly as I'm flying in Liverpool and Manchester controlled airspace," he says.

The Aware, designed by Airbox in association with NATS and with the support of the CAA, AOPA and others, gives you fair warning that you're about to infringe controlled airspace – a very useful aid to safety, not to mention an aid to keeping you out of the clutches of the CAA's prosecutions department. It is very easy to use – see the review in the June issue of General Aviation. See www.airboxaware.com.

All new members signed up this year will go into a monthly draw.

Airbox Aware winners, from left, Robert Callaway-Lewis, Nicola Thomas, Eric Fors and Robert Perrett



They've got your number – have you got theirs?

Somebody's going to get a call from the CAA very soon to ask what they were doing in the vicinity of Goodwood during the Festival of Speed in early July; and in particular, how they came to infringe Red Arrows Temporary Restricted Airspace during their display.

The Reds' season started late because of that unfortunate incident in Cyprus in March, but already there have been three infringements – and that's as many as they had in the whole of last year. As we said in *General Aviation* at the end of last season, that was massively down on the previous year, so well done, everybody! We crowed to soon.

Infringements happened at Goodwood, at Farnborough and at Scampton within one month. Red 10 Graeme Bagnall says: "At Farnborough we had a primary radar trace which came within four miles of the Red Arrows, and we were on the point of calling off the display when the intruder turned and flew away. In the Goodwood incident we managed to get a tail number, which we have passed to the CAA."

Do you have the AIS freephone number in your mobile? If not, put it in now. It's 0500 354 802. Call if before you take off, every time. It could save you untold grief, lots of money and a lost licence. Details of all the Reds' engagements this summer are published in AIC M024/2010, which you can look at on the AIS website http://www.nats-uk.ead-it.com/aip/current/aic/EG_Circ_2010_M_024_en.pdf.

Last year the CAA prosecuted one pilot and issued warnings to two others for infringing

Red Arrows TRAs. In almost all cases the cause is slovenly airmanship – didn't get the Notams. The AIS website is far easier to use than it used to be when it first frightened people away, partly due to the great work put in by AOPA's Mike Cross. Make use of it – and call 0500 354 802 just before you get in the plane, because once in a while there's a late change to the programme.

If there's anything you want to know about TRAs, flight planning or any other aspect of infringement avoidance have a look at the excellent website www.flyontrack.co.uk run by Irv Lee, who says: "I think it's worth drawing

specific attention to the 'Restrictions Outlook' which is always in the hot news on the main FlyOnTrack page. This not only warns pilots of future restrictions over coming months in order to keep them out of trouble, it's actually a good source for planning events that pilots might want to visit. For August, out of all the restrictions, I'd highlight the Eastbourne show from 12th - 15th August, as it lies nicely in the way of coast-crawlers enjoying a pleasant south coast bumble, or a trip to or from the pleasures of a Le Touquet lunch."

Worth adding that a couple of years ago a Dutch pilot infringed the Red Arrows RAT at Eastbourne and ended up paying some £4,000 in fines and costs.

In case you've forgotten, it's 0500 354 802. This year, don't let it be you. ■



The Reds have little spare time to scan for intruders

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2010 AGM

2.00 p.m. Monday 13th September 2010
at the Victoria Charity Centre
11 Belgrave Road, London, SW1V 1RB

The formal notice follows:

THE BRITISH LIGHT AVIATION CENTRE LIMITED

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44th Annual General Meeting 2.00 p.m. Monday 13th September 2010

1. Apologies for absence
2. To confirm the Minutes from the 43rd Annual General Meeting
3. To receive and approve the Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2010, together with the Report of the Directors.
4. The election of Directors to the Board of Management. The following Directors are due to retire by rotation: Alan Croxford, George Done, David Ogilvy and Jack Wells. Alan Croxford, George Done and David Ogilvy offer themselves for re-election. The election of other properly nominated Members of AOPA.
5. To appoint as Auditors Messrs Waller & Byford, at a fee to be fixed by the Board of Management.
6. To conduct any other business which may properly be dealt with at an Ordinary General Meeting.

By Order of the Board of Management

Gordon Train, Secretary

Aerodrome actions

By David Ogilvy

Firstly, I offer some helpful news. The National Regulations Manager of the Forestry Commission has confirmed in writing that most trees that obstruct approaches to an aerodrome or airstrip may be felled without the need to obtain a felling licence. The exemption includes:

'Felling trees certified as obstructing the approach of aircraft to or departure from aerodromes or hindering safe use of navigational installations.'


Also mentioned is that in this context the Commission does not require a tree safety report as 'the danger is seen as perceived rather than actual'. If any AOPA member wishes to have a copy of the exemption I will be pleased to send one.

Some confusion remains about safety responsibilities relating to training from unlicensed aerodromes. I have seen several statements that the requirements are included in the revised edition of CAP 428, but this is not correct. As mentioned in the June edition of this magazine, CAP 428 is not being re-

issued, but a new publication, with a new name and number, appeared in mid-July. The CAA has published it as CAP 793 (Safe Operating Practices at Unlicensed Aerodromes). We will have something to say about it when it has been evaluated and digested. One of the main areas of doubt has been who accepts responsibility for the safety of the site (eg obstructions on the approach) if there is an accident or incident involving a student pilot; is it the CFI, the instructor authorising the flight, the aerodrome owner or, in the case of a dual exercise, the instructor on board the aircraft?

I remember an aeroplane on a training flight scraping the top of a tree in the days shortly before the then Ministry of Civil Aviation required aerodromes to be licensed. Fortunately no-one was hurt, but this could have been serious. At that time it was the clear-cut responsibility of the aerodrome owner to ensure that the site was safe. The CAA has a duty to make clear who carries the proverbial can now.

Recently there have been a few questions about the division of responsibilities between the General Aviation Awareness Council and



most trees that obstruct approaches to an aerodrome or airstrip may be felled without the need to obtain a felling licence

AOPA. The GAAC was founded and formed by AOPA and for several years the organisation was housed in the Association's offices. It was agreed from the beginning that GAAC would deal with matters of policy and AOPA would handle issues relating to individual sites. Although today the Council is administered through the offices of the Royal Aeronautical Society, in principle that situation still stands. AOPA remains an active supporting member of the GAAC. ■

What are you doing out there?

As mentioned in the last issue of this magazine, the CAA, NATS and the other organisations that make up the Airspace and Safety Initiative are beginning a survey of some Class G airspace users to find out who we are and what we're up to. The survey, with which AOPA is closely involved, and is being undertaken because AOPA and others have long complained that airspace changes are made without considering their knock-on effect on the Open FIR – new segments of controlled airspace can have a major affect on traffic in Class G airspace, and this has not traditionally been taken into account. In announcing the survey, the CAA says that collecting accurate data "will enable bodies such as the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) to have better information available when taking decisions on issues like airspace design."

The Authority goes on to say: "The fact that the users of Class G airspace are so diverse, ranging from paragliders to civilian operated ex-military jet fighters, and are able to use the airspace without the requirement to register their flight centrally, means that there has historically been very little data collected on what actually occurs. That means decisions on airspace changes and design have to be based on the limited information available, which can result in changes to controlled airspace creating choke points for Class G users."

"In the future, if more accurate data on flights conducted in Class G airspace is available this can be used by airspace designers and will also help to provide a better understanding of areas where safety may be a concern. Better data on the amount of flying undertaken in Class G would also enable more accurate assessments of accident and Airprox data and trends, as the number of incidents can be viewed against an improved understanding of overall activity levels."

The survey will initially take the form of a

feasibility study undertaken by QinetiQ over a six month period. Using computer modelling based on the amount of flying each pilot undertakes, their average type of flight and the weather conditions, a prediction of airspace activity on a given day or time can be generated.

To make the computer model as accurate as possible, they want as many pilots as possible to provide information on the type of flights that they make. A ten-minute online survey has been put together for pilots to complete with their logbook to hand. All information is non-attributable and will only be used for the airspace model.

Phil Roberts, Assistant Director of Airspace Policy at the CAA, says: "The more information we can gather, the more accurate the model will be and the more benefit to GA in terms of influencing airspace changes and helping to remove choke points."

And Martin Robinson, Chief Executive of AOPA, adds: "Once we have the model up and running, the data it can produce will be extremely useful in showing just how important GA is. It will provide air traffic control organisations and regulators with the true levels of activity when making their proposals and decisions on airspace changes. It's therefore very important that all GA pilots complete the questionnaire."

The survey can be completed at: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/G5Z9BNB> ■

Letters to the Editor

Ofcom stealth tax

Sir,
"Will Ofcom see sense?" (*General Aviation*, June 2010)
It might be timely to remind them that they dropped the annual charge for an amateur radio licence a couple of years ago. As a radio ham as well as a pilot, I welcomed this of course, although I thought that the £15 fee was reasonable, considering that radio amateurs have access to bands within the whole of the radio spectrum from LF to EHF, and which are policed by Ofcom. Compare this to the comparatively narrow part of the spectrum which is utilised by aviation (mainly VHF/UHF), is essential for safety reasons and is policed by NATS/CAA, not Ofcom.

Martin Robinson is therefore entirely correct, in my view, in stating that the proposed charges are a "stealth tax" on: (1), a section of society whose hobby happens to be flying and (2), GA organisations who can ill afford any further diminution of their resources.

David A. Horton, Slough, Berkshire SL1 2LQ

Want to base at Rougham?

Sir,
For some years I have been advising The Rougham Estate which owns the historic Rougham Aerodrome, a former B17 and very well preserved airbase in Suffolk. The Estate have taken steps to safeguard the future of flying operations at the Aerodrome and is now considering the provision of hangarage and other facilities for aircraft upto 5700 kg MTWA which can safely operate from the Aerodromes well drained 960 metre long grass main runway.

The purpose of this communication is to encourage those of your readers who may be interested to contact me, preferably by email (2pk@peterkember.co.uk) to register their interest and to describe the type of facilities required at Rougham so that I can judge the amount of hangar space which is needed to meet the demand. I should add that the rate would have to be an economic one, comparable with other facilities in this part of the country.

Peter Kember Dip.TP, MRTPI (rtd) MRAeS,
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