

# EC promises a better future for GA

The European Commission has produced a bold new report which seems to show that it understands general aviation, sees why it is suffering and intends to decrease the pressure of the regulatory boot on the industry's neck.

The report, titled 'An agenda for sustainable future in general and business aviation,' gives real cause for optimism that the Commission intends to remove some of the unnecessary burdens under which the industry suffers and promote its competitiveness across the world.

It speaks of the need for GA and the requirement for a level of regulation fit for the job in hand, and will begin by compiling for the first time realistic data on GA's contribution in Europe, its effects and its needs.

The report is the result of a meeting between IAOPA representatives and EC Aviation Commissioner Daniel Calleja Crespo in 2006, which was attended by IAOPA president Phil Boyer, chairman John Sheehan and UK chief executive Martin Robinson. At that meeting Mr Calleja was told of some of the problems facing the industry, and promised a 'white paper' dedicated to the industry.

Now, after almost two years of consultation and discussion, the report has been published, and it contains a lot of positive notes for GA. Says Martin Robinson: "There's a real sense that the EC understands the problems and has the will to address them.

"I'm very encouraged by this. It could be the beginning of a tremendously important process of revitalization for GA, and the Commission is to be commended on its initiative."

EC Vice President and Transport Commissioner Jacques Barot said on publication of the report: "We fully recognise the value of non-commercial aviation and intend to work with this sector in Europe, as it is a large source of employment, expertise, technology and revenues."

The Commission calls for 'proportionality' and 'subsidiarity' in rulemaking, which is Eurojargon for avoiding regulatory overkill and not charging the same for a 152 as for a 747. "Only the essential requirements are applicable to all operators," the report says, "while more stringent standards are added subsequently if justified."

It takes up the issue of EC insurance requirements, where the one-size-fits-all approach has had such a devastating effect on the air display sector. "Following board consultations the Commission is currently assessing the operation of the aviation insurance regulation and will submit a report to the European Parliament by April 30th."

The EC says that until recently, addressing the specific needs of general aviation at the Community level was not necessary. It goes on: "However, with the extension of the Community competences in the area of safety and security, upgrade of the Single European Sky and deployment of the new Air Traffic Management system for Europe, the expected 'capacity crunch' and concerns about environmental impacts of aviation, EU activities have an increasing relevance also for this sector."

It accepts that general aviation is too diverse for 'one size fits all' policy initiatives, and accepts that most businesses in the sector are SMEs with a limited ability to pay for costly regulatory demands. "The European general



**Above: Where it all started - Martin Robinson and the EC's Daniel Calleja**

and business aviation manufacturing industry is breaking out to the world markets in an unprecedented way," it adds. "That momentum needs to be sustained by proper regulation and stimulation of innovation and research."

The report says that private and business air transport will continue to grow strongly. "Key factors contributing to this trend are:

- Need for more mobility, flexibility and point-to-point services
- Increasing congestion of the main airports
- Security constraints
- Continuous efforts of enterprises and individuals to increase their productivity gains
- Development of new technologies which make aircraft more efficient and less costly."

It goes on: "General and business aviation provides specific social and economic benefits. (It) provides closely tailored, flexible, door-to-door transport for individuals, enterprises, and local communities, increasing mobility of people, productivity of businesses and regional cohesion."

The vast majority of GA flights are not registered by Eurocontrol, it says, as they are conducted in non-controlled airspace. GA made some 15 million flights in Europe in



2005, of which about one million were handled by Eurocontrol, it says. "Although privately owned or chartered aircraft are sometimes an alternative to scheduled connections, in most cases this is a supplementary service allowing reaching destinations that the airlines can not serve," it adds.

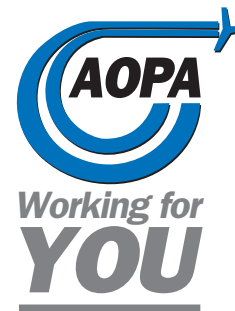
"Future discussions regarding airspace policy will need to take account of the fact that a significant percentage of general aviation traffic is relying not on instruments but on the 'see and avoid' principle. Also, air traffic management policy has to recognise that many aircraft types cannot be technically or economically fitted with complex equipment."

The report gives comparative statistics which indicate that GA aircraft outnumber commercial aircraft by ten to one, and while 30,000 airports are served by commercial connections, 100,000 are used by GA. "European aerial works companies provide high-value specialised services, both in the Community and third countries. These range from map charting, off-shore services and construction works, pipeline patrolling and conservation, agricultural flights and environment surveillance to weather research, fire-fighting, TV-Live reporting, traffic surveillance and others.

"Recreational and sport aviation is one of the big sources of qualified aviation staff for airlines and supporting services. Many of the trainee pilots and engineers, after building the number of their hours in the air or in the hangar, subsequently move to work in the airline industry.

"Aero clubs and air sports organisations

**Left: the EC is coming to terms with GA aerial work companies like Flying TV**



promote individual's qualities, technical knowledge and aeronautical skills, especially amongst the young citizens of the European Union, raising their interest in the highly demanding and motivating air sports and future careers in commercial aviation or aeronautical research and development."

In order to measure the impact and the benefits of general aviation, the Commission says it must have data which is currently not being gathered. There are no comprehensive Europe-wide statistics on safety for aircraft below 2,250 kg. "The Commission has asked the European Civil Aviation Conference (ECAC) to conduct a study on general and business aviation that would identify the sources of available data and suggest the most efficient way for its future gathering."

The report says that like the airlines, GA has noise and emissions issues to deal with, and that emissions trading may be extended to all aviation. Differential tax rates, it adds, could be used to encourage a change to unleaded fuel.

The report concludes that reliable data must be compiled on GA, that regulation must be proportionate, that GA's access to foreign markets should be facilitated, and that environmental sustainability should be the aim. ■

**Right: the report speaks of high-value specialists services provided by general aviation**



## Chief executive's diary:

### Groundhog Year

New Year, new resolutions, same old problems. My first meeting of 2008 was the CAA's Finance Advisory Committee, where surprise surprise, we find British Airways is demanding that the CAA take more money from general aviation and give it to them. This is the third year running that CAA charges to GA have increased and BA's contribution has been reduced. BA, which pays no fuel tax or VAT on tickets, is angry that GA, which pays its full measure of tax, isn't charged enough directly to fund government regulation. I'll put it another way. BA, which pays 0.02 percent of turnover to the CAA for regulation, wants small aviation businesses who already pay up to eight percent of their turnover to the CAA to pay more. Does the CAA have the backbone to stand up to the 300-pound gorilla? It hasn't so far.

But we're getting ahead of ourselves here. A lot has happened since I last wrote this diary for *General Aviation*; on November 11th I submitted AOPA's reply to the CAA's consultation on ATSOAS, the review of Air Traffic Services Outside Controlled Airspace. These, you'll remember, include proposals to replace RAS, RIS, FIS and all the rest with a simpler system of Basic, Traffic, Deconfliction and Procedural services. Our main concern relates to the proposed speed of introduction and a need for at least 12 weeks' lead-in time so that GA pilots can be briefed fully on the new services.

At the same time I had a discussion at the DfT about the concerns we have in respect of the BCPL and IMC rating. The DfT recognises the issues and is willing to help make input at Government level, so it's no use petitioning authorities in the UK – they're already fully on our side. Pressure must be applied elsewhere.

In the week beginning November 18th I attended the General Aviation Consultative Committee at Gatwick, where I promoted the need for the CAA to get behind the AOPA Wings programme – if you do not know what it is take a look at <http://www.aopa.co.uk/scripts/awards.php>. We had the AOPA Executive Committee on November 20th, dealing largely with in-house administrative matters, and on November 22nd I had a meeting with Frank Bannister of Besso. Frank is a long-time supporter of AOPA and is ever-willing to show his support through the sponsorship of what we do. Make sure that next time you're considering your aircraft insurance, give Besso a call on 020 7480 1048.

On November 26th I was in Brussels for the European Commission's ICB meeting. My colleague Dr Michael Erb of AOPA Germany joined me for the discussion on 8.33 MHz, where we have made significant progress in forcing a rethink – see story elsewhere in these pages. The extension of



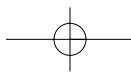
8.33 MHz extension into lower airspace can only proceed once Eurocontrol has satisfied the European Commission that there is a need to do so. IAOPA continues to be very active on this issue.

On November 29th I attended the Navy's FAA Conference at Yeovilton. AOPA Vice President and senior FAA pilot Michael Ryan introduced me to various senior naval personnel. I was able to hand out copies of *General Aviation* and explain a little bit about GA's needs. We share concerns over Lee on Solent as well as the future of aviation – where will future pilots come from? I also met a number of AOPA members who I know will be reading this, and let me say how nice it was to be able to talk to you about your flying experiences.

On November 30th I popped into Henstridge, the home airfield of John Pett, a Board member of AOPA. I was pleased to meet Joe Williams, the airfield operator and to hear positive news about the expansion of the airfield. Even though it is only small, it's going in the right direction. Why not drop in and see for yourself?

December 1st saw the meeting of the AOPA Members Working Group at White Waltham, where thanks to the good offices of David Coe we have been warmly welcomed and excellently hosted. There's a fuller article on the discussions of the MWG elsewhere in these pages, so I'll just say EGLM is a truly lovely airfield – it still has overhead joins and accepts non-radio too!

\*Diary date for you – **Robinson Roadshow at WLAC, White Waltham, on February 26th – hope to see you there!**



## Money, safety and Shoreham Airport

The saga of Shoreham's go-around fee continues to raise real concerns over safety, with the airport claiming it was a measure designed purely to stop flying schools avoiding 'legitimate' fees and saying the CAA had declined to act on AOPA's complaint.

Airport manager John Haffenden reacted with fury to the report in *General Aviation* in December which highlighted safety concerns over the £8.50 fee Shoreham had imposed for a go-around. He claimed to have been misrepresented over the fee, which he said had been imposed because of training flights going around in order to avoid circuit charges.

In an hour-long phone conversation Mr Haffenden said aircraft going around for legitimate safety reasons would not be charged. "Anyone coming in from Biggin, Fair Oaks, anywhere else, who has to go-around will not be charged," he said.

"The object of this fee was to deal with certain people, groups and organisations who, having been cleared for a touch and go, elect to go around at three feet in order to avoid paying the legitimate fees which the airfield needs in order to stay in business."

(Shoreham charges half a landing fee per circuit, with the go-around fee set at half the lowest SEP landing charge, which is £17.)

But following Mr Haffenden's call, AOPA

was approached by a pilot who had been charged a go-around fee after being ordered to go around by ATC at Shoreham. The pilot, a low-hour student on a solo detail, was told to go around because he was deemed to be getting too close to the aircraft landing ahead. Both aircraft were, of course, under Shoreham's control.

Mortified at the extra £8.50 on his already onerous bill, the student wrote to the airport seeking an explanation. He received a reply from Mr Haffenden as follows:

*"It is the responsibility of the captain of the aircraft to position his/her aircraft behind others, having been instructed by ATC. This may well require additional instructions; however, this does not remove the requirement. In the event that an aircraft cannot safely be issued a landing/touch and go clearance by being positioned too close to the aircraft ahead, it will be instructed to go around."*

*"The only reason for not having a charge applied would be in the event of an ATC misjudgement, for example an aircraft has been lined up for departure and for some reason the aircraft on final – which has priority – has reached a position where it requires landing clearance, and the departing aircraft, for whatever reason, has not become airborne, then an ATC initiated go-around would not incur a charge."*

*"I am of the opinion that a circuit training detail that could include a variety of possibilities for landing on various runways in various configurations could well involve a go-around – albeit that this would have been a touch and go if circumstances had not affected this. It needs to be anticipated by the student/club and appropriate finance put in place to deal with this during any training budget."*

*"This is not a safety issue; it is a financial issue which should not be part of any consideration as far as the safe operation of aircraft is concerned."*

A fair and reasonable man might take issue with Mr Haffenden on this last point. It is a safety issue if pilots, and in particular low-time students, are forced to take his cash demands into account when deciding to go around. And where does this case leave Mr Haffenden's argument that the fee is purely to stop those who are contriving to avoid a legitimate fee? Which party was taking the mickey here? In the light of this case, much of what was said during Mr Haffenden's hour-long conversation might be construed as disingenuous, if not downright cynical.

Mr Haffenden said he was operating within a limit of 75,000 movements a year agreed with local authorities, of which 22,000 were training movements. He was running a business, he said, and had to remain viable.

But does a go-around count as a movement,



**Above: Shoreham insists, wrongly in AOPA's view, that charging for go-rounds has no bearing on flight safety**

I asked him, given that it involves neither a take-off nor a landing?

"We make a record of it," he replied.

"Does it count as a movement against your 75,000 limit?"

"We record it," he said.

Either he doesn't know or he's not saying. If the answer is that a go-around doesn't count, then the fee constitutes nothing more than a useful extra revenue stream for the airfield, with no downside except for the pilot.

AOPA has every sympathy with licensed airfields that are trying to remain solvent while coping with a burden of nonsensically-costly regulation, and we encourage members to pay all legitimate fees to help them remain in business. But it's a two-way street, and when money-making schemes impinge on safety as AOPA maintains this one does, it's time to look long and hard at the way you're running your operation.

AOPA's Martin Robinson says: "Charging for go-rounds absolutely impinges on safety, particularly where low-time students are involved. A go-around can be a perplexing problem for an inexperienced pilot, as we saw recently at Southend when a student who was ordered to go round – even though he had the right of way – became confused, crashed and was killed. Go-rounds are too safety critical to be treated as money-making schemes or burdened with cost factors for students to take into account, and we will continue to urge the CAA to stop this indefensible practice." – *Pat Malone*

● Mr Haffenden is the co-author of the economic report which has helped to create the current parlous situation at Lee on Solent. See separate stories in this issue ■

The period between December 3rd and 7th was quite busy, with four productive meetings at DfT on Single European Sky followed by CAA and EASA briefing on the IMC/BCPL. Earlier in the week I had a good discussion with Ian Seager, publisher of *Flyer* magazine, with a view to working more closely with each other. Look out for more good things to come from Seager Publishing.

We had another IAOPA executive committee meeting in Zurich in the run-up to Christmas, and the final meeting of 2007 was ACEP, the education programme about airspace that we intend to launch on the pilot population. ACEP is beginning to pull all the education and communications material together – ultimately, 50,000 CDs will be sent out directly to all pilots and aircraft owners. This is a major project and one which AOPA wholly supports. We all need to redouble our efforts to ensure that we exercise the utmost care in our use of airspace.

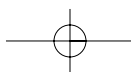
As mentioned at the beginning of this diary the first meeting of 2008 was the SRFAC where the CAA's charging scheme and costs are discussed. This is the third year of increases as a result of the dismal Joint Review Team process, the stitch-up from which AOPA was excluded and which still rankles today. BA continues to press the CAA for an end to what it presents as cross subsidies by 2011/12! As I write, I'm looking ahead to upcoming meetings on airspace, and a week in Brussels – all of which I shall report on in the next issue of GA.

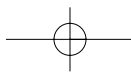
**Martin Robinson**

### Conversion training

The General Aviation Safety Review Working Group is asking all pilots to be sure they are obtaining enough high-quality type conversion training when buying a new aircraft of progressing to a new type.

While problems relating to lack of conversion training are largely encountered in the homebuilt field, it's worth reinforcing the message right across general aviation, says AOPA's representative on the GASRWG, Geoffrey Boot. If in doubt, do some more dual.





## BCPL threat to experienced instructors

AOPA is invoking human rights law to fight off the latest threat to general aviation in the UK, the abolition of the Basic Commercial Pilots Licence by EASA.

The BCPL was a UK-only licence introduced primarily to deal with problems that were arising from an ICAO review of aerial work, which threatened to put a lot of flying instructors who did not have full commercial licences out of a job. The CAA gave PPL flying instructors a restricted BCPL, which allowed them to continue instructing and to be paid for it.

There are still some 400 to 500 instructors in Britain working on the basis of restricted BCPLs, but the licence is scheduled to disappear together with all national licences and ratings when EASA takes over responsibility for flight crew licensing.

Thereafter, some of our best and most experienced flying instructors will either have to quit, or work for nothing.



AOPA believes the situation contravenes European human rights legislation, which gives every citizen the right to work and says employment cannot be arbitrarily taken away. The right of merchants

to trade unhindered goes back to the Magna Carta; AOPA CEO Martin Robinson says: "The Treaty of Rome, the Treaty of Amsterdam, every major European treaty enshrines this principle. You are protected by law from being forced out of work, and if EASA persists with this course it will be acting contrary to European law."

The BCPL situation dates from the 1980s when ICAO redefined aerial work to include flight instruction. In response, the CAA introduced the BCPL and gave restricted versions, allowing remunerated flight instruction only, to PPL instructors. Some experienced instructors have been working on the basis of BCPLs for their entire careers.

EASA's first informal reaction to AOPA's observations has been to suggest that restricted BCPL instructors could be allowed to teach for the Light Aircraft Pilots Licence, EASA's sub-

ICAO ticket. But this would have a serious effect on instructors' earning capacity, would increase the cost of a full ICAO-compliant PPL because of the reduced availability of instructors, and would reduce safety by taking some of the best and most experienced flying instructors out of the full-PPL pool.

Says Martin Robinson: "Under EASA's current plans, many instructors are going to lose privileges or income or both, and full instructors are going to be more expensive and less available despite the fact that they are not necessarily more experienced or better at the job."

"People are being hammered through no

**Below: full instructors may become even rarer and more expensive if EASA has its way**



## Think it couldn't happen to you?

What kind of an idiot takes off with a concrete tie-down block attached to his Cherokee?

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If it could happen to him, it could happen to anyone. Even you.

A court in Newcastle has fined a pilot £1,000, plus £715 costs, for failing to conduct proper pre-flight inspection of his aircraft prior to take-off. A concrete block tied under one wing of his PA28 fell off as the aircraft climbed out. It landed in a built-up area and gouged a hole in a tennis court, which was happily unoccupied at the time.

The pilot realised what had happened when he arrived at his destination and found a loose rope attached to his aircraft. He filed an MOR, but by that time the falling block had already

been reported by some fairly hostile members of the public, his aircraft had been identified from a radar trace and the CAA had been informed.

The pilot was given credit in court for having co-operated fully with CAA investigators, even though he knew a court appearance was virtually unavoidable. He was prosecuted for breaching Article 52(c) of the Air Navigation Order (2005), which constrains the commander of an aircraft to take all reasonable steps to ensure an aircraft is fit for flight prior to take-off. In his defence, the pilot said he had been interrupted during his walk-round when he got avgas on his hands, and after he'd cleaned them he resumed his pre-flight at a different place.

He was familiar with the aircraft, and had in fact tied it down himself – only one tie-down block had been available when he arrived at Newcastle. Despite the fact that the trailing

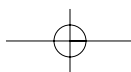
block had left a mark across the apron to the tarmac he noticed nothing unusual about the taxi or take-off performance of the Cherokee, nor did its flying characteristics alert him to the fact that he had an unwanted weight under one wing – a stiff north-westerly wind disguised any handling anomalies. And finally, he pointed out that his 17,000-hour professional flying career had previously been unblemished.

The helpful advice from the CAA is that all BCPL holders should upgrade to a full CPL!

The problem of what work can be remunerated and what cannot is not common to all European countries. Under British law, something is permitted unless it is specifically proscribed, whereas in some European countries something that is not specifically permitted may or may not be prohibited. In the UK, taking money for instruction is permitted only if certain licenses or ratings are held, but elsewhere permission need not be expressly granted – which means a one-size-fits-all law is impossible to write because interpretation will differ fundamentally from state to state. ■

AOPA's Martin Robinson said afterwards: "There's a lesson for all of us in this case. If it can happen to this guy, it can happen to you. The cases AOPA takes up do not exclusively, or even generally, involve low-time private pilots with little experience. Many a basic mistake has been made by a greybeard who couldn't believe afterwards how he'd allowed it to happen."

"Happily, this incident has not affected the pilot's employment, and he's a wiser man for the experience. However long you spend in the aviation business, you can never afford to neglect the absolute basics." ■





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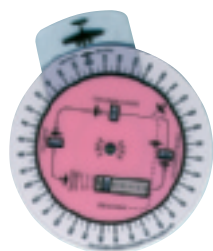
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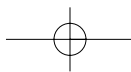
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## Breathing space for Lee-on-Solent

Hampshire Police, under political and public pressure to explain its demands to keep an £8 million 256-acre general aviation airfield to itself for the use of a BN Islander and two Coastguard helicopters, has been forced to agree to allow GA to use Lee on Solent until May 14th.

The people whose jobs and businesses are under threat if GA is forced out of Lee – some of whom have already been forced out of Southampton – must now come up with something that will satisfy Hampshire Police within a few months if they are to stay. Just to make life interesting, Hampshire's Chief Constable Paul Kernaghan isn't telling anybody exactly what criteria must be satisfied for him to rescind his decision to kick everybody else out. He claims that a safety evaluation has been done at Lee on Solent, but all requests to see it have been ignored.

Furthermore, every sensible suggestion made up to now by Lee users has either been rebuffed or ignored.

For some reason that has never been satisfactorily explained Hampshire Police has been given control of Lee on Solent airfield by the government, and is demanding that everyone apart from themselves and the Coastguard get out. The Royal Navy gliding club will also be allowed to stay as they have grandfather rights – it's a former Navy airfield – but sources say the police would have them out, too, if they could think of a way to dump them.

After a Parliamentary debate in November, Chief Constable Kernaghan said in a press release that flying could not continue at Lee on Solent in future without "significant investment in the infrastructure" to make it safer, and the police didn't have the money. "The burden

rests on those who wish to fly out of Daedalus (Kernaghan insists wrongly on referring to Lee on Solent airfield by its past RN name) to come up with fully-funded plans to permit them to do so, while meeting my criteria and above all satisfying the need for a safe flying regime."

One has to ask what qualifications the Chief Constable has to arbitrate on flight safety, and what Hampshire Police are doing operating an airfield, which forms no part of their core business. Shouldn't they be out nicking villains? If they confess to being unable to run an airfield used by more than three aircraft safely, then surely control should be taken from them and given to someone

**If they confess to being unable to run an airfield used by more than three aircraft safely, then surely control should be taken from them and given to someone competent to do the job**

competent to do the job.

AOPA's David Ogilvy, who has been involved in trying to save Lee on Solent for general aviation for almost 20 years, says: "There has always been a complete lack of co-operation from Hampshire Police over Lee on Solent. The Chief Constable simply cannot see that, if properly co-ordinated, gliding and power flying can take place jointly on a large scale, which reveals gross ignorance of aviation. Perhaps a visit to Booker on a busy summer weekend would educate him."

And Martin Robinson adds: "To put this in a context that Hampshire Police will understand, it equates to shutting down the M27 to all except police traffic. No doubt it would make their lives easier, but they have to wake up to the consequences for those who need to use it. With GA having effectively been forced out of Southampton by Ferrovial, Lee is the sole remaining tarmac runway between Brighton and Bournemouth, and as such is a vital link in our dwindling chain of GA airfields."

\*The second part of John Walker's history of Lee on Solent starts on page 20 ■



## Shoreham's take on Lee

Aviation minister Jim Fitzpatrick is quoting a socio-economic study by Erinaceous PLC into the value of general aviation at Lee on Solent as part of his justification for backing Hampshire Police's dog-in-the-manger stance on the airfield.

There is no sign that Fitzpatrick knows the report was compiled by one of Lee on Solent's nearest potential competitors, a company which is itself facing economic difficulties. The report was compiled by Shoreham airport manager John Haffenden and an economist employed by Erinaceous, which owns Fair Oaks as well as Shoreham. See *General Aviation*, December 2007 for the situation at Erinaceous.

Neither the Department for Transport nor the South East England Development Agency (SEEDA) has revealed the contents of the report, but a letter from Jim Fitzpatrick to AOPA chief executive Martin Robinson may shed some light on the flavour of it. Mr Fitzpatrick's letter reads: "I am of course aware of the Joint Planning Statement produced by the Fareham and Gosport Borough Councils in respect of Daedalus (sic) although I should point out that the passages you have highlighted (supporting GA at Lee) are simply the local councils' stated aspirations for the site. You also point to SEEDA's statement of intent when it acquired part of the Daedalus site, but this was before Erinaceous plc concluded its socio-economic study of the value of future general aviation activity at Daedalus. That study was commissioned by SEEDA and it would be inappropriate for me to comment on its conclusions."

Martin Robinson says: "Jim Fitzpatrick wouldn't get the Tory party to produce a socio-economic report on the Labour party, so he needs to be wary of what's put in front of him now."

## Redhill under threat - again

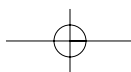
Redhill aerodrome, which has held a significant aviation function since it opened in 1934, is under threat of closure. The present owners, Redhill Aerodrome Ventures Ltd, have made repeated attempts to change the site's role, starting with an aborted plan to turn it into 'London Redhill Airport'; when this failed they put forward proposals to develop a 'balanced community settlement'; as this muddled idea, too, came to grief through local opposition and lack of support from the local councils, they have tried a new ruse in the form of an equestrian centre. This is the current problem, which also is facing strong objections in order to protect the site's aviation heritage, the existing businesses at the aerodrome, local employment

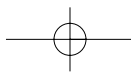
**Below and right: Redhill has a strong aviation heritage**

and the interests of the local community.

AOPA is in contact with the two relevant local authorities and has put forward strong reasons for the need for Redhill to remain open and available as a general aviation aerodrome.

The Association is becoming increasingly concerned at threats to the future of several GA aerodromes, the most recent of which is Leicester. Further details will follow. – David Ogilvy





# MWG moves on IMC, Wings and airfield reps

The AOPA's Members Working Group is pressing ahead with work on a number of fronts, from revitalising the Wings Scheme to invigorating the web forum and establishing a network of airfield AOPA representatives across the country.

The meeting of the Members Working Group at White Waltham on December 1st attracted 15 members from as far afield as Cornwall and Leicester. The geographical spread led members to suggest that one meeting in 2008 should be held in the north of the country to try to counter the Home Counties bias in representation.

The meeting was chaired by Chris Royle, who has also now been elected to the AOPA board. Chief executive Martin Robinson attended, as did chairman George Done and Mandy Nelson, who works in the AOPA offices. For the first time we had two women members, Pauline Vahey of the British Women Pilots Association, and Auriol Stephenson. Members included Andy Rehorn, Tony Purton, Richard Warriner, Timothy Nathan, Mark Stock, Steve Copeland, Chris Gunn, Mike Cross, and Barrie Humphries.

Martin Robinson gave the members a run-down on current work that's being done in Europe, at ICAO and at home, most of which is covered elsewhere in these pages.

## IMC rating

Members are particularly concerned at the possible loss of the IMC rating, which is under threat when EASA takes over Flight Crew Licensing and national licenses and ratings are abolished. The IMC is a UK-only rating, and there is strong opposition to it across Europe, particularly from professional pilots. It was suggested that such were the lifesaving benefits of the IMC that Britain might 'go Italian' and simply carry on training for it as though it still existed. George Done pointed out that pilots from other European countries, particularly Holland, come to Britain to take the IMC course even though they cannot use the rating at home, simply in order to improve safety.

But there are real problems for the IMC rating. Timothy Nathan pointed out that in countries like Germany and France it is illegal to fly in IMC outside controlled airspace, and EASA cannot simply over-write national laws. Martin Robinson added that the European

Cockpit Association had set its face against the IMC, and its word carried great weight. The DfT and the CAA were supportive of the IMC, so petitions and protests to UK authorities were a waste of time. "The DfT are aware of our concerns – the safety impact, the business impact on FTOs – and they share our position that unless there is a Europe-wide alternative like an accessible instrument rating, it must be retained. The CAA wants to influence Europe with a 'son of IMC' that addresses their concerns, but it's an uphill struggle. Germany in particular is very anti PPLs doing IMC flying."

Martin suggested it may be possible to create a 'defensive flying' certificate on the lines of the AOPA RadNav certificate which could facilitate the teaching of IMC skills. He added that IAOPA was working through the European Commission to address the issue, with the chairman of AOPA Lithuania, Arunas Degutis MEP, taking the lead.

## Airfield reps

The members have proposed a network of airfield AOPA representatives who would act as points of contact for pilots, and who would promote AOPA in their area. Volunteers are needed at as many aerodromes as possible –

busier fields may need more than one, and one person may cover several small strips – and the first volunteers have already come forward.

AOPA has traditionally disseminated leaflets and information through its corporate members, who are in effect the main flying clubs in the country. Given their staff turnovers it's almost impossible to keep track of whoever should be sticking up posters or whatever. A volunteer network would be infinitely preferable.

Member Andy Rehorn is working on 'terms of reference' for airfield reps, figuring out what resources they would need and how the network would operate, and more information will be made available soon. In the meantime, if you'd like to volunteer, send an email to Martin Robinson – martin@aopa.co.uk

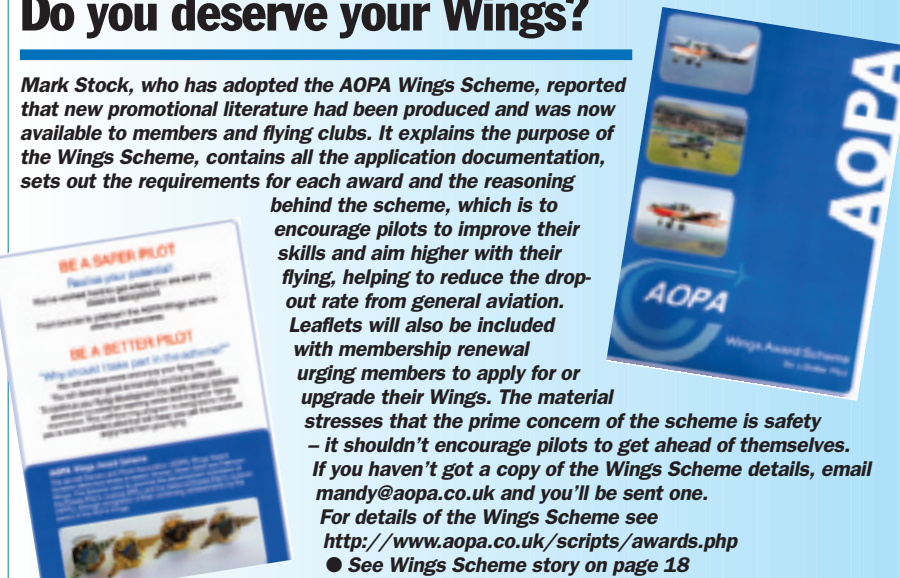
## Website

The members are keen to pep the website up a bit, and perhaps to breathe life into the web forums, which don't get much traffic. There were a lot of specific suggestions for improvements, and Mike Cross, Timothy Nathan and Steve Copeland will be working with Martin Robinson to see what should be done. ■

## Do you deserve your Wings?

**Mark Stock, who has adopted the AOPA Wings Scheme, reported that new promotional literature had been produced and was now available to members and flying clubs. It explains the purpose of the Wings Scheme, contains all the application documentation, sets out the requirements for each award and the reasoning behind the scheme, which is to encourage pilots to improve their skills and aim higher with their flying, helping to reduce the drop-out rate from general aviation. Leaflets will also be included with membership renewal urging members to apply for or upgrade their Wings. The material stresses that the prime concern of the scheme is safety – it shouldn't encourage pilots to get ahead of themselves. If you haven't got a copy of the Wings Scheme details, email [mandy@aopa.co.uk](mailto:mandy@aopa.co.uk) and you'll be sent one. For details of the Wings Scheme see <http://www.aopa.co.uk/scripts/awards.php>**

● See Wings Scheme story on page 18



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# Do you...

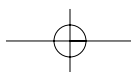
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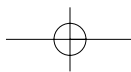
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## 8.33 breakthrough

IAOPA has won significant concessions on the spread of 8.33 MHz radio with an agreement across Europe that they will not be mandated below FL195 until at least 2013 and possibly longer.

Eurocontrol claims there aren't enough frequencies to go round and is demanding that every aircraft re-equip with 8.33 MHz-spaced radios, a demand that is estimated to cost the European GA industry some £4 billion. But IAOPA has demonstrated that this expenditure would be unnecessary if Europe got its act together on the existing frequencies. At the moment frequencies are allocated by individual countries, with each VHF frequency having an exclusive zone of 300nm around it. Huge numbers of frequencies have been allocated but are virtually or completely unused. IAOPA has pointed out that if the 27

frequency allocation offices in Europe were replaced by two guys in Brussels, far better use could be made of the spectrum. The 27 offices disagree.

Michael Erb, managing director of AOPA Germany and a doctor of economics, has produced a technical paper showing the massive wastage in the current system. Martin Robinson says: "This is an excellent paper which shows there is plenty of capacity in Europe without 8.33 MHz. Eurocontrol have tried to ignore this paper so we have taken it to the European Commission, who asked Eurocontrol for an explanation. Eurocontrol tried to blind them with science, but the Commission has requested a full study and analysis. Their request seeks further information from Eurocontrol on how the current utilisation of the band could be assessed, and the potential gains which might

be expected from improved practices. The outcome would provide the proper basis for a decision on the expansion of the newly adopted Regulation to the airspace below FL 195.'

"At a meeting in December I was able to ask the chairman of the EC's Industry Consultation Body if the ICB endorsed the EC's letter to Eurocontrol, and in effect they have no alternative but to do so. Eurocontrol is now bound to carry out the request.

"The earliest 8.33 MHz can now be mandated is 2013, and it may take longer."

Dr Erb adds: "This is a welcome development that will potentially save European general aviation many millions of Euros. A well crafted Europe-wide frequency utilization plan should easily prevent users of the lower airspace from having to re-equip with radios with channel spacing less than the existing 25 MHz." ■

**Eurocontrol tried to blind them with science, but the Commission has requested a full study and analysis**

## Free landing in a Citation

AOPA has received a letter from an aerodrome that subscribes to the Strasser Scheme, under which landing fees are waived in case of genuine emergency or precautionary diversion. The airfield says that it allowed a claim for a free landing recently, in line with its usual policy, when a pilot diverted because of a warning light in his cockpit. It adds wryly that the pilot was flying a Cessna Citation.

The case illustrates a point of occasional friction between aerodromes and AOPA over the Strasser Scheme, which exists in order that pilots who are faced with making difficult and potentially life-saving decisions on whether to divert, often in stressful circumstances, should not have to worry about the cost. It was originally suggested by the CAA, and was taken up by AOPA's Channel Islands chairman Charles Strasser when the Authority did nothing to implement it. To date, 194 UK airfields have agreed to participate in the scheme.

AOPA's chief executive Martin Robinson says: "Let me say that the Citation pilot was as entitled to a free landing as anyone else, but I know of many occasions in the past in which pilots have been entitled to a free landing, but have paid the fee anyway.

"The Strasser Scheme is a wonderful contribution to general aviation safety, and with a few exceptions the vast majority of aerodromes see its value and bend over backwards to comply with its requirements. That



said, aerodromes are our partners in general aviation – we rely on them, and without them we couldn't exist. They are businesses and they need to make money. Many of them operate on the margins of profitability, sharing the cost burdens that we ourselves experience. We need to support them, financially as well as morally.

"If you have to divert, why not consider making a contribution to the aerodrome anyway if you can afford to, even though you don't have to? That would be very much in keeping with the spirit of the Strasser Scheme, and it would acknowledge the debt we owe to small aerodromes and perhaps help them stay open in tough times." ■



## IAOPA World Assembly

The 24th IAOPA World Assembly will take place in Athens from June 9th to 14th 2008, coinciding with the first ICARUS Aero Expo, the first event of its kind in southern Europe.

Delegates to the Assembly will discuss the future of world general aviation, debate their common interests and plan for the future. Access to airports and airspace, security, user fees and the environment will all be addressed.

The World Assembly is being organised under the auspices of the Greek Minister of Transport and the Minister of Tourism Development. Leading Aviation Companies such as Olympic Airways, Aegean Airlines and Air BP are sponsoring the event.

With the backing of IAOPA, the Hellenic Air Force and the Greek Government, it is hoped that ICARUS 2008, the first International Aero Expo Athens, gives impetus to general aviation in a country where it has ample opportunity for growth.

ICARUS 2008 will be hosted in Tatoi Military Airfield and will feature displays by military and civil aircraft, seminars with keynote speakers including Phil Boyer, IAOPA President, and free access to the Hellenic Air Force Museum and the unique private warbird collection at Tatoi.

ICARUS runs from June 13th to 15th. This ground-breaking event will be well worth visiting. If you're considering flying yourself down, you'll find that Greek airspace will be particularly GA-friendly during the event. Not only will landing and parking fees be waived from June 6th to 16th but handling charges at all Greek airports will be waived for the whole of the month of June, thanks to sponsorship from Olympic Airways Services.

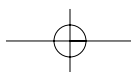
For more information see [www.aopa.gr](http://www.aopa.gr) or contact [icarusexpo@aopa.gr](mailto:icarusexpo@aopa.gr) ■



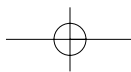
## Economics Panel

**ICAO regularly updates guidance in two economics manuals for contracting states regarding airport and air navigation service provider finances and charges. These documents serve to standardise and regularise fees and charges for services levied by these providers. IAOPA representatives are preparing for the next joint meeting of the Airport Economics Panel (AEP) and Air Navigation Services Economics Panel (ANSEP) in February 2008 and are concerned with proposals that would delete or reduce the importance of weight-related charges for aircraft operations at airports and in the air traffic control system. Existing air navigation service providers normally rely on an aircraft gross weight and distance travelled formula to determine fees to be charged for their services. Deleting or reducing the effect of weight-based charges would have an impact on high-end general aviation operations, although in Europe IAOPA managed to fight off proposals for en-route charges for most of GA.**

**If you want your views considered in these forums, send them to the IAOPA secretariat – email [John Sheehan, jshee11@aol.com](mailto:John.Sheehan@aol.com).**







# Safeguarding small airfields

If you operate an airfield, however small, you should be thinking about 'safeguarding' – a process that helps to protect the airspace around an airfield from indiscriminate building that could affect the safety of operations. It does this by controlling the use of land.

Safeguarding is a relatively straightforward process that will take a bit of time and effort, but which could pay off handsomely in the long run. Help is available in the commercial arena. Richard Vousden, Safeguarding Adviser to AOPA and the GAAC, explains:

"Those who have looked into the subject will probably know that the recommended first step to safeguarding an airfield is to prepare a safeguarding map to lodge with the local planning authority. Once the LPA forwards a planning application, how do you check

whether or not a structure infringes the obstacle limitation surfaces laid down in CAP168? Until now there have been only two ways – manually, requiring a thorough understanding of the theory, or by the use of software. One is expensive in time, the other very expensive in money. There is now a cost-effective alternative.

"Airfield Safeguarding & Development has devised a solution to the problem of checking maximum building heights for the smaller airfield that takes a different approach. It uses a graphical solution that only requires the operator to have a basic understanding of safeguarding and to be able to use a computer.

"In essence, ASD analyses the airfield's safeguarded area from which a graph of maximum build heights is produced. (The

different colours represent height bands rather than limitation surfaces.) Once the package is installed on the computer, the cursor is placed at the grid position of the planned structure, and the maximum height in metres AOD (above ordnance datum) may be read off. If necessary, you can zoom in on the area of interest, enabling more precise positioning. Near to the cursor, a flag will appear showing the limiting surface at that point.

"The procedure is easy and fast, enabling the effect of a structure on operations to be quickly assessed. A combination of preparing a safeguarding map and having the ability to assess the operational effects of planned structures will give the operator more confidence when dealing with the LPA."

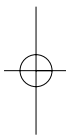
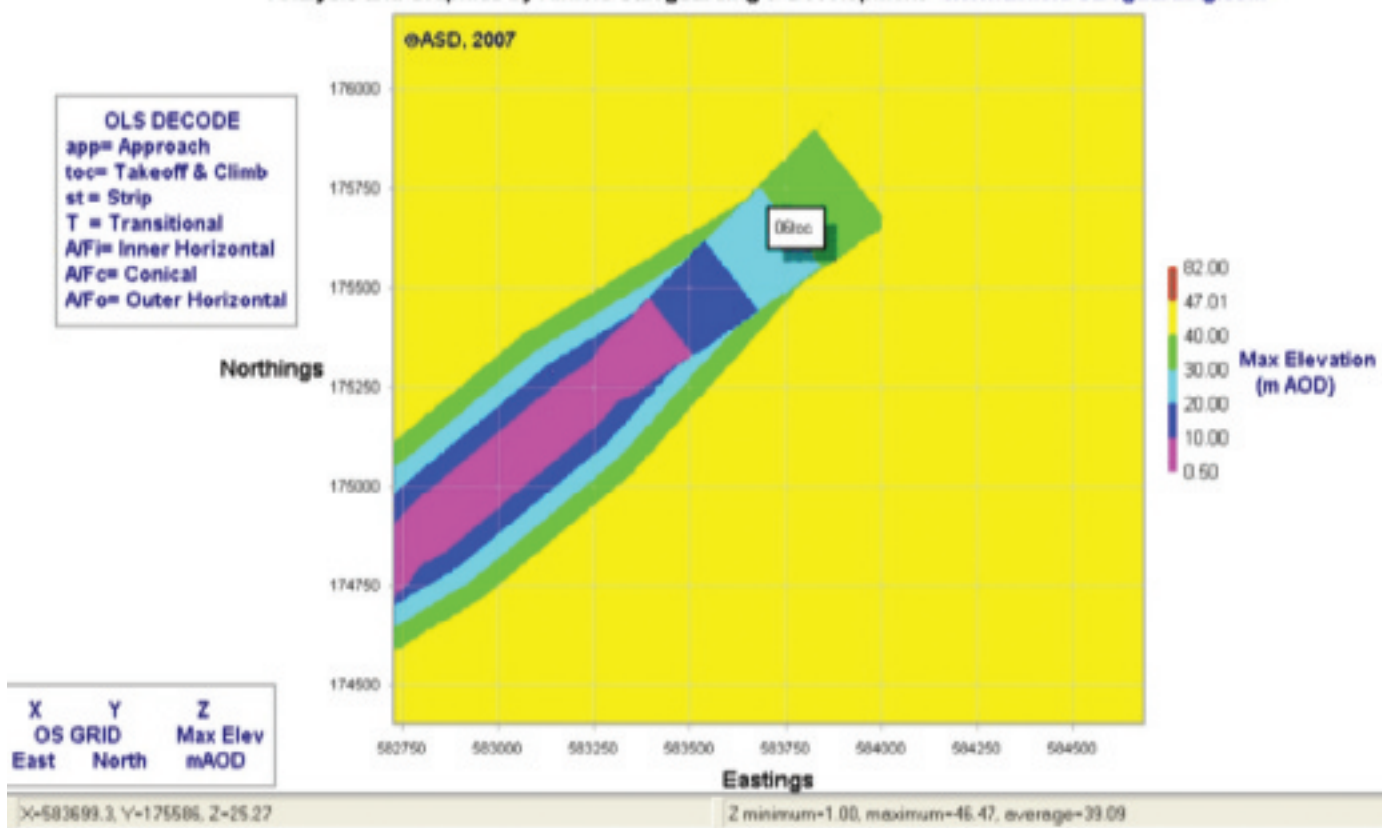
For more information see ASD's website at [www.airfield-safeguarding.com](http://www.airfield-safeguarding.com).

And if you don't know why you should be safeguarding, check the planning factsheets at the GAAC website [www.gaac.co.uk](http://www.gaac.co.uk) ■

## SAMPLE AIRFIELD SAFEGUARDING

Maximum Structure Elevation - CAP 168 Parameters

Analysis and Graphics by Airfield Safeguarding & Development - [www.airfield-safeguarding.com](http://www.airfield-safeguarding.com)



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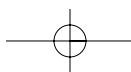
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# What the hell was that? Part II

When I started flying, 'airproxes' were assessed in old money as 'air misses'. I always had a strange feeling that there was no such thing as an air miss, as an inch is as good as a mile. I have to say I was quite sceptical about some of the reports I used to read, based on the fact that if they didn't collide, then all was well. As I've got older and morphed into one of "they" (as in "they will fix it") I find myself sitting on the UK Airprox Board representing general aviation, and I have to confess to a change of opinion regarding the usefulness of such reports.

Firstly, a reflection of what and who the UK Airprox Board are. I'm sure regular flyers will be aware of reports that appear in the press, some more dramatic than others. The Airprox Board is jointly sponsored – for that read 'funded' – by the CAA and the Ministry of Defence, and the Director reports directly to the Chairman of the CAA and Chief of the Air Staff. The Board has no statutory powers; its authority depends upon the professional respect in which it is held. Consequently, impartiality is critical to its success. Furthermore, all information is misidentified when distributed to the wider aviation community, and blame or liability is never apportioned in order to encourage open reporting.

The Board's constitution comprises two sections, civilians and military. Some participants are volunteers, as is the case with the GA section. The two sections are supported by a Secretariat. There are 14 members, civil and military, and there is no formal appointment. Members are expected to serve for at least three years and attend regular monthly meetings. While they are generally nominated by organisations, civil or military, the members are actually sitting as experts in their own right, not representing those particular organisations. An average year's workload will comprise around 250 reported airproxes, raised either by pilots or controllers, civil or military, within UK airspace. A number of these reported incidents are clear-cut and undisputed, and in such cases they are fast-tracked. The rest are examined in detail at the monthly meetings.

In my experience, each case takes approximately 20 or 30 minutes, with fairly open and frank discussions from all parties to determine a primary cause of the incident, taking any contributory factors into account. The Board then determines the degree of risk involved under one of four

classifications – A: risk of collision (an actual risk of collision existed) B: safety not assured (the safety of the aircraft was compromised) C: no risk of a collision, and D: risk not determined (insufficient information was available to determine the risk involved or there was inconclusive or conflicting evidence). Lessons learned can then be highlighted for dissemination, and proposed safety recommendations made where appropriate. All discussions take place under the Chatham House Rules, which means confidential information must be kept within the confines of the meeting.

As an air racer and instructor, I guess my perception of an airprox may be different to that of an airline pilot used to operating in IFR. I have operated, and will no doubt operate in the future, in close proximity to 50 or so aircraft flying at high speed, and have on occasion stream-landed in similar circumstances, so an aircraft at 50 or 100 metres is not a problem to me if I know where it is and what it is likely to do. On the other hand, if you fly heavy metal for a living then something within 1,000 feet or a mile or so seems close, so it is fair to say that different pilots have completely different interpretations of what constitutes an air miss. For the Airprox Board this is a problem, because we deal with the complete range of airproxes from microlights and gliders to GA to 747s in the commercial sector. That is why the Board comprises such a wide range of expertise.

I am pleased to say that most people don't raise airproxes unless they think there is a real risk, but there have been a few cases that we've looked at in my time where there are different agendas. Some might be genuinely innocent, inasmuch as pilots are taken by surprise, and while there was probably no risk they decide to file a report. Others I am sad to say are slightly more deliberate, with pilots trying to justify the need for restricted air space such as ATZ by reporting airproxes, etc.

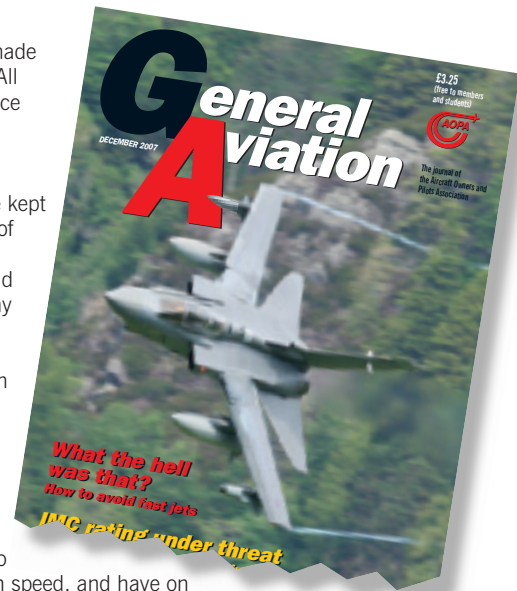
When it comes to the heavy metal end of the spectrum, incidents that take place inside controlled air space require careful analysis to determine whether air traffic control systems are robust and have been applied correctly, and/or whether pilots have stuck to clearances. There are frequently lessons to be learnt here, and recommendations to make. One thing I can tell you is that while pilots may not be perfect, air traffic controllers make mistakes too. Occasionally general aviation aircraft enter controlled airspace by mistake, and I am pleased to say that on most occasions the systems works well, and while airproxes are filed, the correct avoiding action is usually provided by controllers.

Bad flight planning is frequently a precursor to such incidents. This also applies at the lower end of the spectrum, where aircraft blunder in to air traffic zones or indeed air displays which are notamed. In some cases, particularly in open FIR and in VFR conditions where aircraft come within half or a quarter of a mile of each other but avoiding action is taken, I am left feeling that airproxes should not have been filed. After all, that's what Mk 1 eyeball is about.

At a recent meeting, however, there was a good illustration of problems that can occur that don't instantly register – for instance, single runway operations at Gatwick meant that a late go-round instruction led to a conflict with the aircraft that was taking off into a low cloud base. In another GA incident with two high performance singles, air traffic control allowed an aircraft to climb into conflict with another; despite a Mode C indication and incorrect read back, ATC failed to note the problem.

Light aircraft and fast jets do not mix well and we had our usual mix of non-sightings or late sightings. Fortunately most incidents fall within the C group where there is no risk of collision, or B where the safety of the aircraft was compromised but the conflict was resolved.

That gives you a little taster of what we do. I am still what one might term a tyro on the Airprox Board I will in later issues report more fully on incidents that may provide some lessons at GA level. *Geoffrey Boot* ■





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## Class Rating Instructor

A little known 'anomaly' exists with the JAA Flight Crew Licensing structure in the form of the CRI (Class Rating Instructor). It's unusual in the fact that unlike the restriction placed on other instructor ratings by the CAA, it does not require the candidate to have attained a pass in the Commercial Pilot exams, only to be able to demonstrate a commercial level knowledge – a subtle difference, as you are still required to demonstrate knowledge way above the level of the average PPL, but still distinct enough to make it available to the those interested in putting something back into general aviation without the desire to pursue it commercially.

So what can a CRI actually do and how do you go about getting the rating?

To quote LASORS, the holder of a CRI(SPA) rating can instruct licence holders for the issue of a type or class rating for single-pilot aeroplanes. The holder may instruct on a single pilot single-engine or multi-engine aeroplanes, subject to being appropriately qualified, as per JAR-FCL 1.310(a).

An applicant for the issue of a CRI (SPA) rating for single-engine aeroplanes shall have:

- A valid SEP (Land), SET (Land), TMG Class Rating or a Single-Pilot Single-Engine Type Rating.
- Completed at least 300 hours flight time as pilot of aeroplanes.
- Completed at least 30 hours as PIC on the applicable type or class of aeroplane prior to commencing the course.
- Completed an approved course at an approved FTO or TRTO of at least three hours flight instruction on the aeroplane or a flight simulator given by an instructor approved for this purpose.
- Passed the relevant elements of a FI Skill Test in a single pilot, single engine aeroplanes with a suitably qualified FIE(A).

What a CRI can do is available in full detail in LASORS, but what all this means in real terms is that a CRI can provide all training beyond initial licence training, such as differences training for tail wheel ratings, complex ratings such as turbochargers, retractable gear and constant speed propeller.

A CRI may carry out training for the issue of class rating including the multi-engine rating after doing the CRI (ME) rating, with the addition of an IR instructor rating the IMCR and IR may be taught. A CRI may also carry out the two-year flight and sign the logbook accordingly and where appropriately sponsored a CRI may also become a SEP Revalidation Examiner. It is also worth remembering this is a JAA rating and as such is valid across Europe.

A CRI may also teach the AOPA Radio Navigation certificate which also may give up to a five-hour credit towards the UK IMC rating.

What does this mean you will be doing in reality? Because a CRI is involved in the training of those who hold or have held a licence, the majority of it can be done away from licensed or government airfields. This is often in the form of the two-year licence renewal flights, and differences training. Club checkouts are also a common role, as are acting as a type conversion instructor for syndicates.

So how do you go about becoming a Class Rating Instructor? There are a number of instructor training schools around the UK all offering the rating with one of the better known being On Track Aviation at Wellesbourne Mountford. This school is a training facility staffed by airline pilots and even the odd member of CAA staff dedicated to instructor training only.

Remember, you are required to demonstrate CPL level knowledge, even though you don't require the exam pass, so hitting the books prior to starting the ground school is a very good idea. The first thing you get on enrolling in the course is a list of required subject areas to brush up on and the sources available to you to do this. The usual subject areas are covered such as Human Performance, Navigation, Meteorology, Flight Planning and Aircraft General Knowledge.

Each candidate is required to make a number of presentations from the standard FI course in both the classroom and the air the choice of subject is normally left up to the candidate. This is where your preparation in advance of the course will stand out. When you're presenting to very experienced pilots and instructors, the presentations have to be of a very high standard and cover all of the learning objectives in the prescribed manner. No prisoners are taken!

There is a minimum requirement of 25 hours of classroom and three hours of flight but the way the courses are structured and the thorough approach of schools like On Track means the classroom ends up being a little longer and a policy of 'buddying' candidates up for in air teaching means that you get significant ground and air time. Small numbers ensure a very personal learning experience. Very thorough briefings and debriefings are required from the candidate for each of the in-air teaching presentations, and your instructor trainer in turn evaluates these. This

will also be the first time for many that they have flown as commander from the right-hand seat and it often takes a little time to become accustomed to it.

At the end of all of this a skills test, conducted by an independent examiner. A pass results in the appropriate paperwork being sent to the CAA, and you are the proud holder of a JAA CRI.

The rating is revalidated every three years through attendance at a flight instructor seminar such as those run by AOPA, and a flight test.

For those wishing to go on further and do the full FI course credit is given for the classroom and airborne training gained during the CRI course.

It is also worth noting that a CRI rating can be gained with a standard Class 2 medical.

An interesting and useful addition to your new skills as an instructor is the AOPA Ground Instructor course. This allows you to give ground instruction towards the PPL, and to become a CAA authorised Ground Examiner, a position that can be remunerated without a CPL. Holding an AOPA Ground Instructor certificate also gives you credit towards the academic requirements for ratings such as the CRI, FI and IRI.

I am a great advocate of the CRI rating as it allows experienced pilots to put something back into aviation on a flexible basis passing on the experience gained in the real world. So while a CRI who does not hold a CPL can't be paid for teaching, they can gain the benefit of flying different types and exposing themselves to wider elements of aviation. For those following the path of the AOPA Wings Scheme it will also count towards the experience requirements. *Steve Copeland* ■

## Time to emigrate?

Bsatisfaction the positive statements of newly-elected Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk regarding general aviation and its value to the country.

In particular, the Premier is supporting plans to transfer some of the country's military airfields, built by the Russians at the height of the Cold War, to civil aviation.

In a statement to the Polish parliament, Mr Tusk said: "There were many questions asked about airports and airfields, also about military airfields. One of these questions was whether we were going to transfer those airfields to civil aviation. Our coalition believes – and it is confirmed by the growth of civil and general aviation in Europe – that small, local airports are the future that will make it easier for Poles to travel domestically and abroad.

"Mr Karol Karski MP raises the slogan 'an airfield in every community.' I would not go as far as this, though if you presented a project of such an enterprise in writing, I would gladly familiarize myself with it. We do not intend to build airfields in every community. In concert with the Armed Forces, we want to speed up the process of transferring at least some military airfields to the disposal of civil aviation.

"I would also like to assure you that I have personally got to know this sector of aviation and I will personally defend locations that are used today by general aviation and are under threat, because they are very often attractive for property developers. I understand very well that airfields located near medium and large sized cities are the future. Even if there are some people who want to take hold of them, I will personally ensure that this network is not ruined."

Can you imagine these words in the mouth of Gordon Brown, or David Cameron?

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