

# **G**eneral **A**viation

AUGUST 2014

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The journal of  
the Aircraft Owners and  
Pilots Association



**Tecnam P2008JC**  
**Tomorrow's trainer today**

**Manston, Panshanger and the domino effect**  
**EASA and the EC: 'Where did we go wrong?'**  
**Old soldiers mount a dams raid from Denham**

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# General Aviation

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Front cover:  
Tecnam P2008JC

## Chairman's message

### GA in the melting pot

After years, if not decades, of lobbying by AOPA on the need to address those aspects of regulation that inhibit the viability of general aviation, consultations have been initiated to address this very problem. In what is a unique opportunity to secure real change for the better, both the CAA and EASA have embarked on programmes with this objective. The Red Tape Challenge and the establishment of a dedicated General Aviation Unit within the CAA have already received much publicity in the aviation press and GA association journals. More recently, as a result of the RTC, the GAU presented a policy framework for the regulation of GA in the UK - CAP 1188 - "Let there be flight" as it is whimsically entitled, and EASA has issued a Notice of Proposed Amendment (NPA) on the Basic Regulation EC216/2008 through which the rules are developed but which, with hindsight of a decade of experience, has been found to impose unnecessary and costly constraints on many aspects of GA operations.

The GAU launched its policy framework at AeroExpo on 1st June with a two month consultation period. Key commitments of the GAU are quoted as: "...only regulate directly when necessary and to do so proportionately, deregulate where we can, delegate where appropriate, do not gold-plate, and quickly and efficiently remove gold-plating that already exists, and help create a vibrant and dynamic GA sector in the UK..." I must confess, when coming across the adjective *vibrant*, I sneakily looked up the meaning in the dictionary: "Full of energy and enthusiasm"! I suspect this might be meant to refer to the desired characteristics of the personnel in the GAU rather than the activity of buzzing around the sky in a GA aircraft, whether for recreation, transport or business. Personally, I would prefer the term favoured by the DfT in previous consultations on aviation, namely, *sustainable*.

Considering each of the four GAU objectives above, removal of gold plating (and red tape) is essential for good quality and efficient regulation, as is necessary and proportionate regulation. However, whilst deregulation and delegation where possible are worthy aims, the law of unforeseen consequences must always be borne in mind. For example, increased flexibility on cost-sharing rules may be welcomed by the warbird operators in relation to charging passengers for flights, but it opens the door to fly-by-night operators conducting revenue-earning flights without having an AOC, the possession of which guarantees fare-paying passengers a higher and more appropriate level of safety. The ability to conduct flight training at unlicensed aerodromes may appear to reduce the cost of such training, but migration of flying clubs from licensed to unlicensed sites could also reduce the viability of those aerodromes that need a licence for reasons other than flight training, such as providing a base for aerial work operations and minor AOC operators.

Aerodromes are just part of the picture, however. Sustainability relies on many interdependent factors but the one that plays the most important role is the supply of pilots. Every pilot starts with *ab initio* training, and ultimately a proportion of these will go on to own and operate aircraft. The flight training, maintenance, aircraft and product design and manufacturing industries all rely on this supply for their continued existence. Even commercial air transport depends on GA to provide pilots, although one or two airlines prefer to think otherwise. There is strong connectivity between all sectors of aviation, and if GA becomes significantly less sustainable, then the adverse impact is felt widely, way beyond the private pilot community.

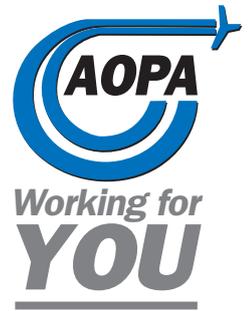
The hourly cost of flight training is a major consideration when an individual is considering the spending of disposable income, or the overall cost of embarking on a career with commercial operators. The annual decline in new licences has been staring us in the face for a decade, and successfully addressing this problem would, to my mind, do more by far for GA than the otherwise timely proposals from the GAU. This is not an EASA problem, and it can be tackled at national level. Remember NVQs? They led to a 25 per cent increase in pilot licences issued at the time in the 1990s. The much-debated issue of VAT on pilot training is worth another plug; why should foreign pilots trained in the UK not be able to claim a VAT rebate when returning to their home country, as with shop purchases? This would make a large sector of the UK flight training industry instantly more attractive to overseas trainees.

The volume of consultation material in circulation at present is considerable, but AOPA members are assured that your subscriptions enable us to respond, debate and lobby accordingly.



George Done

# Tell EASA what's wrong



In a coordinated initiative, the European Commission and the European Aviation Safety Agency have launched two separate consultations asking some of the very big questions in aviation life: How is the EASA regulation working so far, what did we do wrong, and where should we go from here?

The consultations present an opportunity to amend the Basic Regulation, the 'bible' which governs everything EASA does. This document was given to EASA by the European Commission in 2008 and has been invoked by the Agency to excuse questionable rulemaking ever since. AOPA has been calling for changes to the Basic Regulation since it was adopted. Now, we have the first genuine opportunity to look at the fundamental flaws in the Basic Regulation and get them fixed.

The process will most likely take three to four years to complete, so this is the only opportunity we will get this decade to fix what is broken and steer EASA in the right direction.

When reading the motivation for the consultations, it is clear that both EASA and the Commission has understood the message that IAOPA has been sending for years – that the current regulation for GA is not fit for purpose. Among the fundamental issues that are now up for discussion are things like the definition of commercial operation, the definition of complex aircraft, requirements for third country licenses and aircraft, the CAMO system and the requirement for registered facilities to become Approved Training Organisations (ATOs).

Looking at the way ahead, EASA and the Commission is asking us if there are new areas where EASA should take over responsibility, like creating a common EU level aircraft register, a common repository for licenses and approvals, or strengthening EASA's role in the international context. Also, the question of the future financing of EASA is on the table, with ideas such as en-route fees,

passenger charges, etc.

These are very significant questions and there is no doubt that the two consultations will be studied carefully by AOPAs and other stakeholders all over Europe. IAOPA encourages all stakeholders to submit their replies to both the EU Commission and EASA. IAOPA Europe will produce a consolidated response, and invites all members to provide their input to IAOPA at the email [iaopa@iaopa-eur.org](mailto:iaopa@iaopa-eur.org) preferably before August 15th.

The two consultations can be found here:  
[http://ec.europa.eu/transport/modes/air/consultations/2014-aviation-safety\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/transport/modes/air/consultations/2014-aviation-safety_en.htm)  
<http://easa.europa.eu/document-library/notices-of-proposed-amendment/npa-2014-12>

The deadline for the official consultations is September 15th 2014. ■

## New GA landscape

The European Aviation Safety is planning a conference on general aviation to take place in Rome on October 15th and 16th under the Italian Presidency of the EU. IAOPA believes that because of fundamental shifts in attitude that EASA is currently showing this conference could represent a pivotal moment for European GA, and AOPA UK's Chief Executive Martin Robinson has offered EASA Executive Director Patrick Ky the association's full support for the changes he intends to make.

M Ky is looking at the way in which the UK is trying to improve regulation of GA by cutting red tape, and among those invited to speak at the conference is Grant Shapps MP, Chairman of the Conservative Party and a private pilot who is conveying a wish-list from general aviation to the government.



**Patrick Ky**

Martin Robinson says: "It is clear to me from speaking to people in the European Commission that they also fully support Mr Ky in his quest to make improvements in the way EASA operates. IAOPA has been battering away at the Commission for more than a decade trying to get it to address the GA

issues that EASA has thrown up, and in turn the Commission has become increasingly – and sometimes publicly – exasperated at EASA as it continued to plod along in the same old way.

"But change at the top, with Patrick Ky taking over from Patrick Goudou at the end of last year, seems to be making a genuine difference. EASA is becoming much more open to discussion and debate, and it's being proactive about telling industry what it's doing and why. The old way of paying lip service to consultation and issuing orders from on high may have fallen out of favour. Patrick Ky seems to be fashioning a more confident, less defensive EASA that's better able to create regulation that is suited to general aviation."

## AOPA's Erb to chair EASA GA group

Dr. Michael Erb, Managing Director of AOPA Germany and Deputy Vice President of IAOPA Europe, has been elected Chair of the European Aviation Safety Administration (EASA) Safety Standards Consultative Committee General Aviation Subcommittee (GA-SSCC).

The GA-SSCC is composed of organisations and associations representing the general aviation industry and will examine ways to improve the efficiency of EASA regulation, including initial and continued airworthiness, operations, licensing, aerodromes and air traffic management. Established in the summer of 2013, the GA-SSCC group will be a central part of EASA's new "simpler, lighter and better" rules initiative made public by the agency at Aero 2014.

Dr Erb has been Managing Director of AOPA-Germany for 13 years and holds a Diploma in Business Administration and a doctorate in Political Science. He holds a CPL with an Instrument Rating.

After his appointment Dr Erb characterised the work of the GA sub-committee of the SSCC as "consulting with EASA, in close cooperation and partnership with the other representatives on the sub-committee, in such a way that their administrative framework will be adjusted so that general aviation, which is suffering heavily from over-regulation today, can recover and prosper again in the near future."

In addition to Dr Erb, IAOPA is represented on the committee by Jacob Pedersen, President of AOPA Denmark.



**Dr. Michael Erb**

# Single-seat microlights deregulated

Single-seat fixed-wing microlights no longer need to be regulated for airworthiness purposes, the CAA has confirmed. The move, which followed an extensive consultation exercise, will mean qualifying aircraft no longer need a Permit to Fly to operate in the UK.

Aircraft which will be eligible to be operated under the new rule include the Topsy Nipper, Jodel D-9 and the Corby Starlet.

The move extends the single-seat de-regulated (SSDR)

category, introduced in 2007, to include all single-seat fixed-wing microlight aeroplanes as defined within Annex II Article 4(4)(e). All such aeroplanes can

now be designed and constructed either privately or commercially without the airworthiness oversight of either a member association or the CAA.

The rule change requires an amendment to the Air Navigation Order (ANO), but the CAA has allowed an exemption to all owners and pilots of such aircraft to allow them to take advantage of the new freedom. The amendment, which is likely to take effect from October next year, covers any microlight that:

- Is designed to carry one person;
- Has a maximum take-off mass of no more than i) 300kg for a single seat landplane (or 390kg for a single seat

landplane of which 51% was built by an amateur, or non-profit making association of amateurs, for their own purposes and without any commercial objective, in respect of which a Permit to Fly issued by the CAA was in force prior to 1 January 2003); or ii) 315kg for a single seat landplane equipped with an airframe-mounted total recovery parachute system; or iii) 330kg for a single seat amphibian or floatplane; and

- Has a stall speed or minimum steady flight speed in the landing configuration not exceeding 35kt calibrated airspeed.

As the exemption only applies when the owner has notified the CAA of their intention to use it, the CAA Aircraft



## Chief executive's diary: Future-proofing GA

I don't remember a time when GA had so much going for it. The heads of the CAA and EASA are committed to removing our shackles, and the Chairman of the Conservative Party and the Aviation Minister are on our side. Others lower down the food chain are genuinely concerned to make up for the mistakes of the past. Are our troubles over?

Far from it. GA's 'wish list' has gone into the Government and (at time of writing) awaits a response. The involvement of Grant Shapps MP ensures that it gets a fair hearing, but I've spent years dealing with some Departments, notably the Treasury, who have their own agendas and don't easily bend with political winds – and they are past masters at smothering initiatives. In conversation with Grant Shapps this month I suggested that the Department for Transport create a permanent role for a DfT official to continue the work of improving GA in order to achieve the stated aim of having a 'vibrant' GA sector in the UK. However, he says he'll have to speak to the Aviation Minister about it...

We are fortunate to have this rare conjunction of planets – Andrew Haines, Patrick Ky, Grant Shapps, Robert Goodwill, Mike Smethers at the EASA Board of Management – who are on our side, but they all hold temporary posts. In fact, Mike Smethers is stepping down as we speak. There's no guarantee that any of them will be replaced by men or women who share their vision. It's the permanent links in the chain, the civil servants, we have to bring onside, and keep them there. We have to make the most of today's opportunity while future-proofing the system by which it is

implemented.

It's been a busy time at home and abroad since I last wrote this diary. On May 12th

AOPA submitted its response to the Farnborough Airspace Proposal. James Chan wrote our response, which is of course that AOPA is not in a position to support this proposal. It should also be noted that the entire GA community is opposing the TAG airspace plans.

Next day I was in Beirut to take part in the 2nd EU/Lebanese Aviation Forum. Lebanon is in the process of separating its CAA from its Department of Transport, creating an independent regulator similar to that of the UK. It is likely that Lebanon will align its regulations to those of EASA. On the 15th and 16th I took part in the Flight Safety Foundation of the Mediterranean Conference in Cyprus as a speaker and panellist. Other speakers included Catalin Radu, the President of the European Civil Aviation Conference, Luis Fonseca de Almeida, Director of the International Civil Aviation Organisation in Europe, plus Cypriot Ministers and senior officials. There were also speakers from Israel including Giora Romm, the head of the Israeli CAA, who spoke at the IAOPA World Assembly in Tel Aviv in 2010. Clearly, Cyprus is a gateway to Europe for many AOPA members in this region. On the 17th I met with the President of AOPA Cyprus, Ioannis Papaicovou, to discuss the difficulties of GA in the region, and what IAOPA could do to help.

Back in London on May 19th I had a



discussion with Kelly Lightowler of the CAA's Directorate of Airspace Policy about the Electronic Conspicuity Working Group, of which I am Chairman. Next day I was at the CAA for the Airspace Safety Initiative Co-ordination Group meeting, where much of the focus was on Class G operations where electronic conspicuity plays a role in improving safety.

On May 21st I had a telecon with Grant Shapps MP. No Cabinet Minister in recent times has more understanding of GA than the Minister without Portfolio, who not only keeps his aircraft at benighted Panshanger but has to contend with EASA's regulations on third country licences. I stressed the desirability of appointing a civil servant to look after GA's interests at the DfT in order to implant the change agenda among the permanent staff.

On May 28th I took a day trip to Brussels on easyJet to attend the EASA Advisory Body (EAB) where there were useful discussions about the Basic Regulation BR216/2008 and the Advance Notice of Proposed Amendment. Mike Smethers attended to brief on the work of the Management Board; as Mike steps down from the Chairmanship of the Management Board I must acknowledge his help and his leadership. Without his guidance it is doubtful that GA would be moving in the positive direction in which it is now heading.

Next day I was in London for the DfT's EASA update briefing – this is an informal 'chat' about aviation's experience with EASA. Again, we have been fortunate in that Mike Smethers chairs this meeting. It will be interesting to see what the impact of Mike's departure from the EASA Board of Management will be.

That afternoon I went to Sywell for Aero Expo. The big announcement at Sywell was the formation of the CAA's GA Unit, which has been reported previously in GA. On

**Right: a Topsy Nipper, one of the aircraft no longer needing a Permit to Fly to operate in the UK**

Registrations department is writing to all potential beneficiaries asking them if they want to take advantage of the exemption; a single-seat microlight can, if the owner chooses, remain on its existing Permit to Fly for the duration of the exemption period. The CAA will notify registered owners when the amendment to the ANO takes effect, expected to be in October 2015.

As with the previous 115kg SSDR category, accountability for initial and continuing airworthiness of SSDRs will remain with the aircraft designer, builder and owner; the pilot will still need to hold a UK NPPL or EASA PPL/LAPL with an appropriate microlight rating and operate



in accordance with the Rules of the Air.

Responses received during the public consultation were overwhelmingly supportive of de-regulation, the CAA said, which echoed the views already expressed

by industry. An internal CAA appraisal of safety performance of the UK-only 115kg 'SSDR' class did not reveal any issues preventing expansion of the SSDR category. ■

June 1st Andrew Haines came to the AOPA marquee for an informal discussion with members. Again, thanks to Andrew for his open and frank views, and for spending time with AOPA. It seems that members also enjoyed the discussion with the CEO of the CAA and the marquee worked well. Let me thank those members who helped on the stand over the weekend – we really could not have done it without you, and there are never enough words to express our gratitude. Thank you also to Mandy Nelson and Dave Impey for their hard work in making the weekend a success. I know from the positive feedback that we had from members that Sywell was a success. But this could not have happened without the organisers, who put on an excellent



**CAA Chief Executive Andrew Haines answers members' questions at Aero Expo, Sywell**

show – thank you John, Alex and all your staff. GA needs events like yours to showcase what we do.

On June 3rd I went to Brussels for the EASA Industry Consultation Body meeting. The main issue for GA is 8.33 KHz radio spacing. I was able to show that 8.33 is about airspace capacity for the commercial sector, and that GA would have to pay from its own pocket to support the capacity gains of the airlines. The Commission's

representative agreed to look into the issue; I hope to have a response prior to the next meeting. I also had a meeting with Brian Davy, the GAMA representative in Brussels. We discussed the Basic Regulation and the Advance Notice of Proposed Amendment, agreeing to align our positions wherever possible.

After a day in the office I was back in Brussels to attend the SESAR Performance Partnership. I was able to make the point to this group that a conundrum exists – the larger companies involved in ATM modernisation have little interest in GA as the returns are too small, whereas the smaller manufacturers have innovative ideas from which GA could benefit, but they do not have the balance sheets to support the SESAR funding requirements!

On June 10th I went to the British Business and General Aviation Conference at Silverstone. AOPA has a genuinely good relationship with BBGA – and Mark Swan was on hand to provide an update on changes occurring inside the CAA. On the 13th I chaired the Electronic Conspicuity Working Group meeting; at this session Plextech provided a presentation on the use of cameras in the role of enhancing 'see and avoid'.

I was off to the USA on June 15th for the annual FAA/EASA Conference. I also had discussions with Mark Baker, President and CEO of AOPA USA as well as being the IAOPA President. On GA, Europe and the USA face similar issues. Mark clearly has GA DNA in his system – we spoke about a number of aircraft he has owned and operated including a BAC Strikemaster. He has a great love of flying and I believe he is a safe hand on the tiller at this time. I look forward to working with Mark in his role as IAOPA President.

Between the 17th and the 20th I spent my time in EASA/FAA panel sessions and met with Patrick Ky and others. I was

accompanied by Craig Spence, Secretary General of IAOPA. Over lunch I was able to discuss the BASA, the bilateral agreement on aviation between America and Europe, with Filip Cornelis, Head of Aviation Safety at the European Commission. The main hold-up to the release of the BASA is a technical legal one. PPL Licensing matters are dealt with in an annexe to the main BASA, which was originally developed to deal with certification matters. The Commission hopes to be in a position by October 2014 to release the details so that those pilots who are affected can see the direction of travel – Filip Cornelis did not rule out an extension to the deadline of April 2015 – if it is required. So the BASA Annex III on PPL Licensing and IR is unlikely to be ratified until about July 2015.

On the 25th I was back in the office to brief the AOPA Executive Committee on most of the above text, and on the 26th I went to the Goodwood Festival of Speed to see how the aviation part is developing. Then on the 29th I left for Shenzhen, where I took part in a flight training conference and exhibition. Between the 7th and 9th July I was in Beijing for discussions with AOPA China, and to finalise the details of the World Assembly.

On July 10th I attended the CAA GA Partnership meeting in Gatwick, held in the presence of Grant Shapps MP. I fully support Grant in his goals but there is very little in what the CAA is currently proposing that will change the lives of AOPA members or will improve the health of GA in the UK in the years ahead. We support the call for a 'vibrant' GA but the CAA alone cannot deliver this – the Government needs to put in place a package of measures that will stimulate the training market. Student pilots are the lifeblood of our industry. –

**Martin Robinson**

# Annual General Meeting

The 48th 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 Tuesday 23rd September 2014 at AOPA, 50a Cambridge Street, London, SW1V 4QQ, commencing at 2.00 p.m. The formal announcement and agenda of the AGM appears on page 10.

A set of the financial accounts for the year ended 31st March 2014 will be provided in advance of the meeting on the AOPA website [www.aopa.co.uk](http://www.aopa.co.uk)



together with the minutes of the 47th AGM and brief personal details of the members offering themselves for election and re-election. These data will also be available at the AGM.

Any member wishing to elect another member to the Board of Management must provide notice in writing or email to the AOPA office at least 35 days in advance. A statement of willingness to serve will be expected from the proposed member together with appropriate personal details. Proxy voting is permitted, either by nominating in writing or by email a

member who will be present at the AGM as proxy, or by nominating the Chairman as proxy

Following the formal business of the meeting, there will be time for discussion with the Chairman and CEO.

Tea, coffee and sandwiches will be available for those attending from 1.00 p.m. and it is expected that the meeting will finish by 3.30 p.m. It is very important for planning purposes that 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](mailto:info@aopa.co.uk)), or by post to AOPA, 50a Cambridge Street, London SW1V 4QQ. ■

## Cessna SIDs – German LBA makes things worse

The possibility of German Cessnas switching to the UK register is still being discussed despite moves by the German aviation authority which were supposed to relieve owners of older aircraft of an unnecessary financial burden which could force them to scrap perfectly airworthy aircraft.

The saga of Cessna's Supplemental Inspection Documents (SIDs) for older aircraft, as interpreted by the Luftfahrt-Bundesamt in Germany, goes from bad to worse. AOPA Germany thought a breakthrough had been achieved when the Luftfahrt-Bundesamt (LBA) agreed to vary its previously inflexible approach which dictated that the SIDs must be fully complied with by all affected owners. But the LBA has announced that the concessions it is making will be hedged about with conditions that will drive up costs again.

The SIDs call for corrosion inspections of Cessna 100 and 200 models which involve in some cases removing the wings at a cost of more than €15,000. Given the low value of some older Cessnas, this would effectively write them off – even



when no problem is found some airworthy aircraft would have to be scrapped. Like the American FAA, most European aviation authorities accept that the SIDs are discretionary for private owners, but the LBA says all Germans must comply.

Negotiations over the last year led the LBA to reappraise its position, but when it published its official notice on the issue on June 20th, it included the condition that a 200-hour inspection had to have been completed in the year before the corrosion inspection. The inspection had to be carried out according to Cessna's Corrosion Prevention and Control Programs (CPCP) before the end of 2014. If nothing is found, compliance with the full SIDs may be postponed until the end of 2015. This would mean that Cessnas up to 1200 kg MTOW would be subject to the new EASA 'Part M lite' maintenance regulation called ELA1, due to take effect from spring of 2015, which among other things shifts responsibility for carrying out the sort of

work recommended in the SIDs to the aircraft operator. But to get to that position, the LBA wants smaller Cessna owners to spend thousands of Euros. If the additional CPCP inspections can be done within the context of a 200-hour check the cost will be around €1,000. If an aircraft also has to have a 200-hour check to make the SID inspection possible, the cost can make the aircraft unviable.

An additional cost-driver is that in Germany there is no LAMP – all aircraft have individual maintenance programmes which have to be written with a lot of effort and accepted by the LBA. This drives the cost of the paperwork required for the interim solution up to €1000.

There are a number of other conditions which make the inspections as costly as they are unnecessary, and for the owners of Cessnas above 1200 kg MTOW such as the 182, 206 and 210, all the problems remain. AOPA Germany says the LBA's requirements will cost a minimum of around €2,000 per Cessna, but it can also easily be twice as much. AOPA Germany is suggesting that owners carefully consider the option to 'flag out' their aircraft to countries like the UK where there is a "friendlier and more competent aviation authority". ■



**Left: having to remove wings for inspection on older Cessnas would effectively write them off  
Top: problems remain for older versions of the larger Cessnas like the 210**



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# Flight Instructor refresher seminars

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Please look on the AOPA UK website ([www.aopa.co.uk](http://www.aopa.co.uk)) for further details, or contact the Administrator directly on +44 (0)7754780335



**AOPA 2014 AGM**  
**2.00 p.m. Tuesday 23rd September 2014**  
**at AOPA, 50a Cambridge Street,**  
**London, SW1V 4QQ**

The formal notice follows:

## THE 48TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE BRITISH LIGHT AVIATION CENTRE LIMITED

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**THE AIRCRAFT OWNERS AND PILOTS ASSOCIATION OF UK**  
 will be held at AOPA, 50a Cambridge Street, London, SW1V 4QQ  
 on Tuesday 23rd September 2014 at 2.00 p.m.

### Agenda

1. Apologies for absence
2. To confirm the Minutes from the 47th Annual General Meeting
3. To receive and approve the Directors' Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31st March 2014.
4. The election of Directors to the Board of Management. The following Directors are due to retire by rotation: Geoffrey Boot, John Pett, Chris Royle and Pauline Vahey. All 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 Annual General Meeting.

By Order of the Board

*George Done, Chairman*



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# Drone arrests

Two men have been arrested after the drone quadcopter they were flying allegedly almost collided with a police helicopter over the George Washington Bridge in New York.

New York Police Department sources said the helicopter pilot followed the drone to its landing zone and arrested the two men, aged 34 and 23. A second drone was recovered. The two men were charged with Class D reckless endangerment because the helicopter pilot believed the drone was a threat to his aircraft.



Officers on the helicopter said the drone was flying at about 800 feet AGL near the bridge just after midnight. The helicopter pilot had to take evasive action to avoid a collision. Police say the drone had been observed flying as high as 2000 feet.

\*400 drone crashes – see and avoid? Page 35

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For details and price information please see <http://bit.ly/1qJfxB6> ■

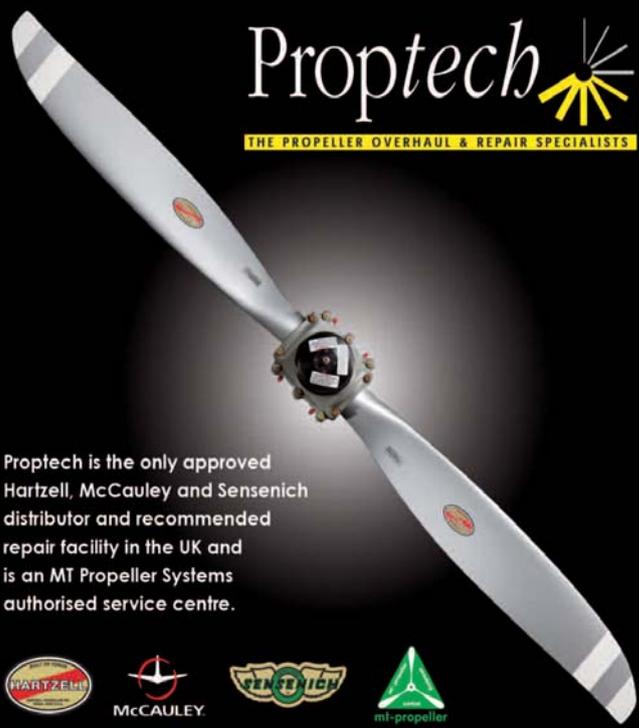
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## No 8.33 advantage to GA

8.33 kHz radios are also back on the agenda, as 2017 is the date by which all of Europe's airspace goes 8.33. There is some confusion because in theory each state can decide which portions of its airspace are 8.33 compliant. The likelihood is that most European states will opt for 8.33 throughout their airspace, because they see 8.33 as an enabler to increase airspace capacity. Under the current plan, GA is being asked to pay for additional airspace capacity which is of no



value to GA but benefits only the airlines. Frequency allocation in Europe has been the responsibility of individual states; some years ago AOPA Germany produced algorithms to show that if all those allocation offices were replaced by a single office whose personnel worked without respecting state boundaries, the current .25 MHz spacing would be more than sufficient. Eurocontrol, however, says that only when all of Europe's airspace is converted to 8.33 would they finally have enough capacity.

International AOPA has been working to get some funding out of Europe to help to defray the costs of 8.33 compliance – the rules state that if change imposes costs on those who do not benefit, recompense should be made. But this issue has been on the agenda for 20 years and there seem to be many ways of avoiding the issue. ■

## Bilateral – still some concerns

At the EASA/FAA conference in Washington in June, an announcement was expected on the Private Pilot Licensing annexe to the Bilateral Aviation Safety Agreement (BASA). Due to legal and technical issues there is a delay to publication. The good news from the conference is that if you require a US validation of your European licence, then the 61.75 route remains in place. However, under the BASA arrangement it may be the case that before you receive your 61.75 you will also have to do a US Air Law exam – this is to be confirmed.

One of the difficulties faced by the FAA is the fact that under the Trust arrangements which pertain for

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N-registered aircraft in Europe, it is often difficult to trace the beneficial owner of an aircraft when a misdemeanour has been committed – the FAA ends up with a Trust address in Delaware and gets no further. Martin Robinson has discussed this issue with the FAA office in Brussels and has

suggested a 61.75 equivalent so the FAA had the names and addresses of licence holders, and could also gather basic data on which aircraft they flew. “We want maximum freedom for pilots, but we may have to compromise where they see no alternative,” he said. ■

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# Aerodromes – good news, bad news

*Panshanger's passing, the theft of Manston and other aerodrome issues addressed by Stephen Slater*

A shock announcement that Panshanger aerodrome is to close by the end of September is the latest in the series of threats to GA aerodromes from the Government's current headlong rush to force local authorities to provide land to support their policy of housing development.

The airfield has been threatened for some time by proposals within Welwyn and Hertford Council's Emerging Core Strategy to be redesignated as residential land with the potential for 700 houses. As a result of lobbying activities surrounding clear flaws in their initial case, a Core Strategy Review is now under way and is expected to continue well into 2015.

The earliest that planning permission could potentially be given for housing is mid-2016, but the airfield site owner, Mariposa Investments, has refused to renew the lease of the current tenant, North London Flying School. This will effectively close the airfield on 21st September and force owners of based aircraft to move off site. The move by Mariposa is clearly designed to throw the site into disuse to aid their development plans.

What makes Panshanger's potential closure all the more sad is that was

acquired and originally maintained as a post-war civilian airfield by the late Nat Somers, a well-known air racing pilot of the 1950s. Jersey-based Mariposa Investments represents the family trust and with the passing earlier this year of Nat's widow Dame Phyllis Somers, the company has assumed a new, more aggressive attitude.

As the tenant, North London Flying School appears to be in an invidious position. Haim Merkado and Sue Hart have transformed the airfield in recent years, creating both a thriving flying school and the 'Out of the Box' cafe, one of the nicest drop-in facilities in the country for visiting pilots.

As many know, Haim is a sometimes controversial character, and I suspect that the terms of his lease have perhaps prevented his being as vocal on this matter as he has been regarding 'CAA Complaints'. Whatever the case, it is sad to think that in September, NLFS will close its doors at Panshanger for the final time.

The good news is that 'Save Panshanger'

***Panshanger – Nat Somers' widow's death has changed attitudes to the investment***

pro-aviation supporters and local residents (who see the airfield as a far more welcome local asset than 700 more houses), have pledged to continue to battle to keep the airfield in its current use. In addition, organisations including Sport England have gone on record as stating their position remains unchanged too, as there is clearly a greater need to safeguard the site for future aviation use as a leisure and transport amenity even if the flying school did close.

## Domino effect?

Panshanger is not alone. Later this year Hucknall will close, to make way for a Council-supported housing development, while Manston was summarily closed by owner Anne Gloag on 15th May, despite concerted opposition from local residents, employees and politicians. It was noteworthy that Ms. Gloag has turned down offers from other companies which would acquire the airport and keep it operational. It transpires that as early as February last year, her agents had discussed with Thanet Council a development of 1,000 houses on part of the site.

There is also a risk of a domino scenario developing as other developers will increasingly see GA airfields as easy pickings.



STW

There are clear implications for other similarly threatened airfields including Wellesbourne and Bourn in this area.

The General Aviation Awareness Council and AOPA are continuing to brief local authorities on the need for GA airfields for

access to leisure aviation, flying training and as a vitally needed part of the business

communications infrastructure.

We are also working on initiatives such as with Sport England on classification of key airfields as Significant Areas for

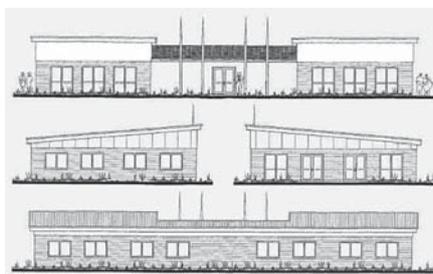
Sport, based on their sport flying activities. However we also need to increasingly lobby central Government, to remind them of their National Planning Policy Framework commitment to maintaining GA airfields as part of the national transport and economic infrastructure.

While this is being done 'from the top down', it is certainly now time for all of us to relay that message, whenever possible, to those who seek to represent us. Bear in mind, that within around 250 days, the country will be heading for a General Election. It's the ideal time to bend a few parliamentary ears!

### **GA expands at Bristol**

Bristol Flying School is constructing new premises at Bristol Lulsgate airport, a vote of confidence in the future of general aviation at an airfield which has not in recent times given the impression that GA was part of the plan.

As the announcement of the new building was being made, Bristol was trialling new weekend off-peak landing charges which brought the airport – the only aviation facility in the area since the



**Above: artists impression of Bristol Flying School's new premises**

closure of Filton in 2011 – within reach of more of GA. The month-long trial was due to end on August 1st.

The new facilities will be home to The Bristol & Wessex Aeroplane Club and Aeros Flight Training, the commercial flight training arm of the Aeros Group. Aeros has been looking for a base in the Bristol area since being forced out of Filton by the closure. Construction began in June and should be completed by September.

Bristol & Wessex Aeroplane Club dates from 1927 and flew from Filton until 1957, since when it has operated from Lulsgate. Barry Bailey, Managing Director of Bristol Flying School, said the Club had been working with Bristol Airport since 2009 to identify the right investment opportunity. "We are proud that we are now making this a reality in 2014," he says. "The club has an unmatched history in the Bristol area dating back to 1927, and with the construction of The Bristol Flying School the future remains set to meet the original club aim; to promote civil GA flying in Bristol and the surrounding area."

Aeros Group Managing Director Nick

Dunn expressed Aeros delight at coming back to Bristol and teaming up with Bristol & Wessex. "This is the second flight training centre we will have opened this year, taking the Group to seven training centres overall," he said. "This development fits well with Aeros growth strategy of opening centres in all major UK conurbations. We currently have training centres at Gloucester, Cardiff, Stratford-upon-Avon, Coventry, Nottingham and Cranfield. Bristol Lulsgate is an ideal location for the development of GA for the area."

In its new guise, the joint Bristol & Wessex and Aeros will offer pretty much every ticket a pilot can aspire to, from a LAPL to and ATPL with everything in between.

The landing fees trial at Bristol in July was open to aircraft up to 2730kg and offered a discounted rate of £16 per tonne at certain times – on Saturdays, 09:30 to 10:45 and 14:00 to 16:00, and on Sundays from 08:30 to 11:00 and 14:30 to 16:00. Bristol & Wessex provides handling services for GA aircraft at Lulsgate, and says it hopes the discounts will be expanded and continued in future.

### **New GA airfield in Wales**

Llanbedr, the former military airfield located in the Snowdonia National Park, has reopened for visiting GA aircraft with a new flying club, low landing fees and attractive hangarage rates.

Llanbedr Flying Club has started life as an Approved Training Organisation under

**Below: Llanbedr is perfect for exploring the Welsh coast and Snowdonia**



Robert Farrell

the new EASA system, and so far it has one Cessna 150. Its Commercial and Compliance Director (an ATO comes with lots of responsibility) Mike Spiers says they're looking to lease a four-seater. They offer PPL and LAPL courses,

RAF Llanbedr opened in 1941 as a Fighter Command gunnery school and for most of its military life was associated with target towing and drones. The airfield closed in 2004, but has been taken over by the operators of Kemble against the wishes of the Snowdonia National Park, in which it is situated. The Park authorities were strongly opposed by local people, who want the site developed as a civil airfield. At time of writing (July 14) GA has the airfield to itself, but Llanbedr Airfield Estates, the owners, are known to have plans to invest in the airfield and an announcement on other aviation uses was expected imminently.

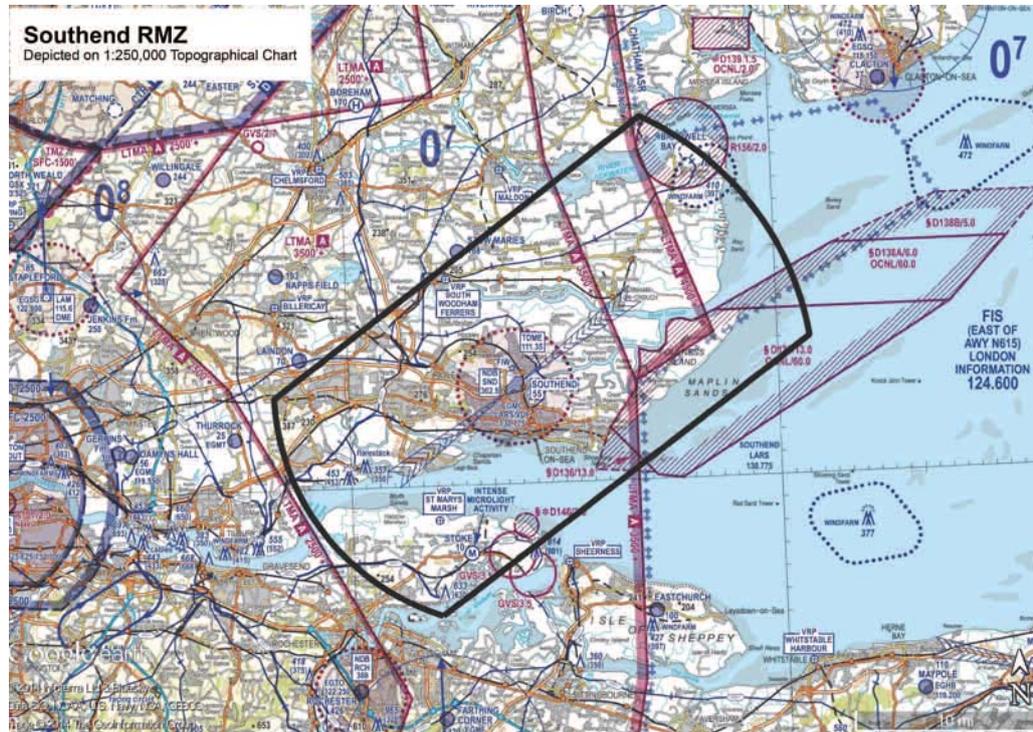
It's early days yet, but if enthusiasm built businesses, they're on a winner. The three principals are Spiers, Ed Hollinshead (Head of Training) and Gary Davies (Safety Manager). As yet they have no radio, so PPR is important – Valley will call before its Hawks beat up the airfield, which you'd want to know about before flying in – and given that Llanbedr was once a dispersal airfield for the V-bomber force, you need have no worries about finding a runway long enough for your aircraft.

The airfield is well-placed for exploring Snowdonia and the Welsh coast, B&B is plentiful, and the village of Llanbedr is 15 minutes walk away. Landing fee for aircraft under 750 kg is £8, and £12 for aircraft up to 1250 kg, and short-term hangarage is £16 for the first night for small aircraft and £8 a night thereafter, or £24 for the first night and £12 subsequently for four-seaters.

Mike Spiers says: "The chance to reopen an airfield doesn't come often, especially one with such an interesting history. We're in an area of exceptional beauty, surrounded by class G airspace, with enormous runways and aprons, and we're within easy reach of the beach and campsites. Come and get EGOD in your logbook, and help us breath life back into Llanbedr."

Mike Spiers is full of compliments for the CAA over the way they handled Llanbedr's ATO application. They provided a template which Llanbedr modified to suit, then the CAA suggested further amendments and nodded the application through at the second attempt. Mike says: "They were very positive and proactive in suggesting suitable changes and making it easy to conform. For example, when I said I didn't want to use their document control system they immediately said I could replace it with my own. They couldn't have done more to help us."

Check out the details on [www.fly-llanbedr.co.uk](http://www.fly-llanbedr.co.uk)



## Southend gets an RMZ

The CAA has imposed a temporary Radio Mandatory Zone (RMZ) around London Southend Airport, starting from July 17th and likely to remain in place until a decision is made on Southend's application for Class D airspace. The RMZ will be reviewed in spring next year.

The airport says the RMZ will allow ATC to provide enhanced traffic information and de-confliction advice to aircraft landing or taking off at Southend. Although an ATC clearance is not required, to gain entry to an RMZ a pilot must establish two-way communication with air traffic control before entering, and must remain on frequency while in the zone. AOPA's Members Working Group is concerned that ATC can turn an RMZ into de facto Class D airspace anyway, and is investigating what advice can best be given to GA pilots.

Southend sits wholly in Class G airspace and has seen a significant increase in commercial air transport movements in the last two years. It completed its consultation on establishing controlled airspace around the airport at the end of December 2013 and formally submitted an airspace change proposal in June.

Pilots planning to fly through the Southend RMZ must contact Southend on 130.775 before entering the zone. Aircraft not fitted with radios can operate in the RMZ providing the pilot is able to co-ordinate arrangements with Southend ATC prior to departure.

*\*RMZ: what can you say? See page XX*

## One more for Strasser

Leeds-Bradford is the latest airfield to sign up to AOPA's 'Strasser Scheme', under which they agree to waive landing fees in cases of genuine emergency or precautionary diversion.

It brings to 205 the number of airfields to subscribe to the Scheme, and Charles Strasser continues to work towards getting a 'full house' of acceptances from every UK airfield apart from Heathrow, Gatwick, Stansted and London City, which have not been asked to join.

Leeds Bradford Head of Operations Alan Shaw indicated in June that the airfield would like to join the Scheme, and Charles Strasser sent him the documents for signing, and the airfield's AOPA Safety Certificate.

The Strasser Scheme came about when the CAA issued CAP 667, which said in subsection 9.2(c) that "there were a number of fatal accidents where a timely diversion or precautionary landing could have avoided the accident. In the UK (and probably elsewhere) there is a culture of pressing on and hoping for the best rather than 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.*"

Following an AOPA Executive Committee meeting, Charles Strasser wrote to the CAA to ask what they intended to do about the latter statement. When it became clear they were doing nothing, he set himself the task of getting every aerodrome in Britain apart from the four mentioned above to commit to waiving charges for precautionary diversions.

This has largely removed fear of the cost of landing from the decision-making process of pilots who are considering a weather diversion, sometimes in stressful circumstances not conducive to cool thinking. For initiating the AOPA Strasser Scheme and his persistence over the past 11 years in getting over 200 airports and



Paul Dean

airfields in the British Isles to participate, Charles Strasser won the 2010 CAA GA Safety Award.

### Shoreham praised

Charles has received countless letters of thanks from people who have availed themselves of the Scheme. The latest came this month from AOPA member Ray Kennedy, who was flying a PA32 from Jersey to Old Buckenham when engine started running



rough with partial loss of power just west of Shoreham. Checks and vital actions failed to resolve the problem, so Shoreham cleared Mr Kennedy for an immediate landing on runway 02. KB Aviation diagnosed fouled plugs in one cylinder, cleaned the plugs, power-tested and sent Mr Kennedy on his way within 90 minutes, with no landing charges because of the Strasser Scheme. "I couldn't ask for a better outcome," Mr Kennedy wrote.

Charles Strasser says: "This is just what the Scheme is all about. Think what might

### Above: Shoreham praised for deft handling of a potential emergency

have happened had Mr Kennedy been dissuaded from landing immediately by fear of a significant fee at Shoreham. He may instead have pressed on with rough running, and the incident could have turned into something much worse. He made the right decision, and Shoreham is to be congratulated and thanked for playing its part in the Scheme." ■

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# Letters to the Editor

## Due courtesy

Sir,  
AOPA, as ever more a 'lobbying' organisation at UK and EU level, must deal with Ministers and their appointed officials of all political colours. It would be prudent to keep the goodwill of those currently in opposition also – they may return to power. So articles with 'gibes' about members of former administrations should perhaps be avoided, especially if they are inaccurate. That way, too, our own fellow-members without relevant memories will not be misled.

In Steve Slater's otherwise excellent article in the June 2014 *General Aviation* on threats to GA airfields, he says of airfields that they were "classified as

'brownfield' industrial developments by John Prescott, bless 'im". No, not exactly; and I feel that the last phrase would have been inappropriately patronising even if they had been.

When the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (Prescott) issued PPS3 in 2005/6, both AOPA and PFA (I was and remain a member of both, now LAA of course) alerted members to the fact that this might be interpreted by local planning authorities as advice or policy to treat the whole of all current or former airfields as previously developed ('brownfield'). I (like, I am sure, many members of both Associations), prompted by the magazines of both, contacted my MP to ask the DPM whether his intention was that the whole curtilage of all airfields should be so regarded. I received from my MP what I presume was the standard response to these representations, which was from the Minister of Housing and Planning in the Office of the DPM, Yvette Cooper. This made it clear that it was only the 'previously developed' part of any airfield that should be so regarded, such as where there were or had been buildings and roads, not the whole curtilage. In other words, PPS3 should not be treated as grounds for allowing development on the 'movement areas'. However, the distinction between the 'greenfield' and 'brownfield' areas of such a curtilage might be a matter for the Courts. This was reassuring, and I hope it was used by subsequent campaigns to keep airfields open against any developers who cited PPS3 in their proposals.

But, of course, that was the policy clarification of the Minister at the time about the guidance issued by the DPM at the time in the Government at the time. All these could change under a different Government and Ministers, so we should remain alert – but always both accurate and courteous in our dealings with officials and in our publications.

**Michael Fortescue  
Staverton**

*I must comment it is the first time I have ever heard of anyone leaping to the defence of the Rt Hon John Prescott! However I fully note, and agree with, your comments on dealing with due courtesy with anyone with whom we deal on airfield developments. I also must thank you for the time and efforts you put in at the time.*

*While your comments on PPS3 in 2005 and 2006 are correct, I understand from John Broad, David Ogilvy and Anna Bloomfield who lobbied for AOPA and GAAC at the time that the comments sent to you by then Minister of Housing and Planning in the Office of the DPM, Yvette Cooper were set to have been included as an annex to the PPS document.*

*This was never done, I understand, due*

*to an "administrative oversight" by the Department. This was duly recorded in Hansard in response to a question in the House of Lords, but neither the DPM nor his Minister thought it fit to seek a further amendment for their inclusion in the PPS statement.*

*I am tempted to add again 'bless 'em'. But I won't. I don't want to be deemed discourteous, not least because we urgent need to lobby MPs again, on the latest threats to our airfields from precisely the planning developments we foresaw back in 2005. – Stephen Slater*

## Destruction of Manston

Sir,  
Firstly I must admit to a very personal interest in Manston. I have flown from the field for over 30 years with 22 Search & Rescue, AEF Flight and in later years used the commercial flights from Manston and as a PPL with TG. I believe that the airfield still holds great potential as a diversion field. It will be many years before Gatwick and Heathrow have any more capacity. British Airways, Ryanair and KLM also have been using the field for training. The A380 was there recently and stayed for several days. Regular Boeing 747 cargo flights have also taken place. Just before the airfield was closed I was downwind



**Above: Boeing 747 cargo mixes with general aviation at Manston**

with an Airbus ahead and a KLM following, no problem. The Royal Air Force have also used Manston for visits by the Red Arrows and the Battle of Britain Lancaster, Spitfire and Hurricane. So you can see there has been plenty of traffic.

One of the problems has been that Thanet Council refused night landings, restricting movements. But the field has a history going back to the First World War. And in the Second it became a battlefield where many men died defending the country. On one occasion a flight of Swordfish took off to attack two German battleships in the English Channel, and all the aircraft were shot down, with only one surviving airman.

I am pleased to read that you have taken this up with Thanet, who have been asked by the MP to bring in a Compulsory Purchase Order. In the meantime it would not be unreasonable to ask that light aircraft should still be able to use the airfield.

**John Worthy ■**

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# Apart from saving the IMC rating...

...what has AOPA ever done for us? *Nick Wilcock* brings you up to date on some campaigns

No, not the sanitation, the medicine, education, wine, public order, irrigation, roads, the fresh-water system and public health —for those we have the Romans to thank, or so *Life of Brian* would have you believe! But of late we've actually been very busy trying to improve the lot of the struggling PPL industry. Everyone (even the CAA!) agrees that the current EASA regulations and the manner in which they've been imposed are disproportionate and burdensome. The Red Tape Challenge gave the CAA a golden (not, for once, a gold-plated!) opportunity to Do Something in response to the feedback they'd been receiving from industry. So here's a brief taste of what we've been up to:

## PPL Working Group

After we pointed out that there were 43% more questions than EASA require in the current LAPL/PPL exams, the CAA agreed that this was indeed excessive. So last year a joint Industry / CAA PPL working group (PPL/WG) was set up at the behest of the CAA, charged with the task of bringing the LAPL and PPL syllabuses up to date and to review the theoretical knowledge examination requirements. At its last meeting in May 2014, the PPL/WG finalised the syllabuses;

nothing revolutionary as far as flight training goes, just some slight tweaks to ensure that the LAPL/PPL flight training syllabus is fit for today's trainee pilots. In addition, a small sub group, including a highly experienced CAA GA staff examiner, was set up to blitz the current exams. This was achieved in mid-June and the group's recommendations are now with the CAA. This is actually a two-phase process; in Phase 1 the current questions were reviewed and only those which were considered irrelevant or designed to trap rather than test were binned, because the CAA had an imperative requirement to meet the political target it had been set, and time was of the essence. Later work in Phase 2 will consist of developing more realistic questions, appropriate to everyday PPL flying and with less emphasis on the Chicago Convention of 1947 or the Franco-Prussian War of 1870 or whatever that tedious guff is which aspirant PPL pilots are supposed to study these days — and promptly forget after the exam! Nevertheless, the group's recommendations followed the proposals for six exams rather than nine, as agreed by the AOPA Instructor Committee last year. Three will be 'combined subjects'

(Air Law and Operational Procedures, Navigation and Flight Performance / Planning, Aircraft (General) and Principles of Flight) each with 24 questions, while the other three will be 'single subjects' of 16 questions each (Meteorology, Human Performance and Communications). Why 24 and 16? Seemles — to pass you need to achieve 75% in each exam, which means 18 in combined subjects and 12 in single subjects. The group was also careful to choose essential questions which the average trainee should be able to answer without difficulty, rather than scouring the most obscure recesses of the subjects for not-very-desirable questions — and failing one question will not mean that several others will also be failed, each will be self-contained.

## AltMoC

Once the CAA has agreed to the PPL/WG's recommendations, it will draft an Alternative Means of Compliance. What's that, I hear you ask. I will spare you the Eurobabble, but once EASA has decided that a new rule is needed, there is a somewhat lengthy process to undergo before the method by which the new rule should be achieved is revealed. This is known as the 'Acceptable Means of Compliance'. However, EASA member states are free to develop their own alternative methods provided that these don't conflict with the 'hard' law of the Aircrew Regulation. The huge advantage of raising an Alternative Means of Compliance is that it can be achieved in the time it takes to draft it, plus 30 days for EASA to object. Other member states are then free to adopt the AltMoC. Whereas by contrast, an AMC raised by EASA itself would have to go through the full consultation process, taking months if not years to achieve. As many will know, we've already seen one hugely beneficial AltMoC, which removed the 100 hours of mandatory ground training required for the LAPL/PPL; it took about five weeks from conception to inception, thanks to the hard work of our good friend Cliff Whittaker at the CAA. It is the view of everyone that we wish the LAPL/PPL AltMoC to be in place by 8 Apr 2015 and the CAA is very keen to achieve this; that is also the date we are working to for the Phase 2 LAPL/PPL theoretical knowledge questions.

## RF-to-ATO conversion

One seriously burdensome issue facing PPL training schools is the current requirement they face to convert to

Approved Training Organisations in order to continue to provide training for Part-FCL licences, ratings and certificates. The CAA attempted to do the best it could to work within the requirements, but the draft ATO template manual was greeted by Registered Facilities with the same level of enthusiasm as an income tax demand. EASA noted that the peasants were beginning to revolt, so convened a 'RF-to-ATO conversion workshop' in Köln in mid-May, which I attended on behalf of IAOPA Europe. It quickly emerged that there was actually no AMC available for 'non-complex ATOs' (such as those providing PPL/LAPL training), so everyone had been working to requirements appropriate for airline pilot training. The CAA's John Wickenden and I formed part of the group which worked on simplified means of compliance for non-complex ATO organisation and training requirements, whilst others worked on 'post holder' requirements and simpler safety policy. This gave EASA enough confidence to start working on its own AMC for non-complex ATOs, but as I've already explained, this could take a while. A delay to the RF-to-ATO conversion deadline would be nigh-on essential if RFs were to be able to take advantage of any new AMC; however, EASA was quite happy for the UK CAA to draft an AltMoC on the topic. The aim was to achieve this, together with a vastly reduced non-complex ATO manual as soon as was reasonably possible, so that if no conversion deadline was agreed, at least UK RFs would have more time before the current deadline to complete ATO conversion criteria. But...

## TAG/SSCC/FCL

A month after the RF-to-ATO conversion workshop, I was back over in Köln for another EASA meeting. This time it was the twice-yearly 'Thematic Advisory Group / Safety Standards Consultative Committee / Flight Crew Licensing' session, which meets to address problems identified with Part-FCL requirements. Some useful work was conducted, but then Matthias Borgmeier dropped something of a bombshell by announcing that EASA was considering a complete change to the requirements for LAPL/PPL training, possibly including training 'outside an ATO' and extended continuance of JAR-based national training in those member states still conducting such training. This was a total surprise; nevertheless, EASA are meeting with the EC as I write and this possibility is on the agenda. Also on the agenda are a total of 36 other Aircrew



Regulation amendment proposals to ease current requirements, all of which would be most welcome – perhaps unsurprisingly, as the vast majority had been raised by IAOPA Europe in the first place! However, after our previous EASA experience, do we really want a potential wait of three years of confusion and negotiation whilst EASA possibly reinvents the wheel of PPL/LAPL training yet again? AOPA thinks not; instead we simply want the CAA to press ahead with the RF-to-ATO AltMoC, in order to simplify the requirements with which we're now reasonably familiar. I await the outcome of the EC meeting with some trepidation though, as I'm concerned that the UK CAA may decide on a policy of appeasement towards EASA, rather than a robust stance backing up our agreed work in hand. As I've often said before, when dealing with Eurocrats we need a Churchill, not a Chamberlain!

### EASA/non-EASA aircraft

One of the difficulties faced in the early days of part-FCL was the question of flying non-EASA aircraft with an EASA pilot licence. Some member states came up with quite bizarre ideas, including dual licences, one of which was to state 'This is not an EASA pilot licence'. Well, neither would it have been a fishing licence, nor a driving licence!

Fortunately, the UK CAA took the sensible, pragmatic solution of amending the ANO so that any UK-registered non-EASA aeroplane of a specific class may be flown using an EASA licence which includes privileges for that class. Whereas some of our continental cousins are still flapping about deciding how to solve the problem. EASA has also agreed that non-EASA aircraft may be used for EASA training, so for example a Chipmunk can be used for the Aerobatic Rating. Similarly, an EASA aircraft may be used for non-EASA training – hence a Cessna 152 may be used for the NPPL/SSEA, for example, although once a licence has been issued, the holder will be restricted to the aircraft for which the licence is valid. One point to watch though, is that operation of a non-EASA aeroplane flown on a sub-ICAO licence such as the LAPL may not be acceptable in other member states, and some member states may not permit any visiting foreign-operated non-EASA aircraft... hardly the level playing field of Brave New Euroland we were promised by EASA.

### Crown dependencies and IR(R) training

The Isle of Man and Channel Islands, although self-governing possessions of the British Crown, are neither part of the United Kingdom nor the European Union. The upshot of this is that ATO approval for the IoM and CI rests with EASA, not the UK CAA. As the IR(R) is not an EASA rating, it cannot be approved by EASA. AOPA has now had confirmation that this doesn't actually matter as there is no legal requirement for IR(R) / IMCR courses to be 'approved' and the CAA has no intention of changing this. Which means that RFs and ATOs in those delightful islands may continue to offer IR(R) / IMCR training and testing.

### AOPA website

Largely as a result of our lobbying, there have been a number of recent beneficial CAA policy changes. These have been publicised on our website [www.aopa.co.uk](http://www.aopa.co.uk) which also includes many other snippets of news and information, as well as links to member services and our shop, 'the Pilot Store'. If you haven't already done so, please visit the website and encourage others to do so.

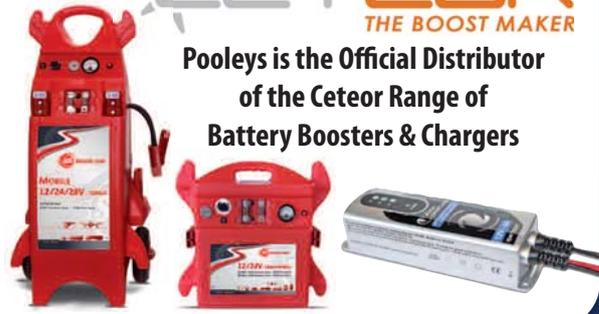
So that's just a part of what AOPA has been doing for you in recent months and will continue to do. But we do need the support of our members; the more we have, the more effective can be our lobbying and as a result, the more we can do for your benefit! ■

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# Members set the agenda



**AOPA Members Working Group, from left, George Done, Kevin Fitzpatrick, James Chan, Nick Wilcock, Chris Royle, Chris Wheeler, Pauline Vahey, Paul Rutherford, Peter Barron, Timothy Nathan**

AOPA's Members Working Group met at White Waltham on July 5th to discuss pertinent topics ranging from RMZs and GARs to membership strategy and corporate structure. Eleven members came to the meeting, with Pauline Vahey in the Chair. AOPA Chairman George Done also attended, although Chief Executive Martin Robinson was in China making final arrangements

for the International AOPA World Assembly, to be held there in September.

At the time of the meeting AOPA was awaiting the government's response to the Red Tape Challenge and members were hoping for great things from it. It was said that we have now the most unusual 'conjunction of planets' in that most of the senior people involved in regulation are kindly disposed to general aviation and willing to work for its survival – a situation which has not pertained before. The Chief Executive of the CAA Andrew Haines, CAA Chairman Deirdre Hutton, EASA Executive

Director Patrick Ky, and most importantly, Tory Party Chairman Grant Shapps and Transport Minister Robert Goodwill, had not only pledged to act on GA's behalf, but were following through on their promises! This unique situation may not last long, and we have to capitalise on it. Much is riding on the government's response to the Red Tape Challenge 'wish list', which contained almost everything AOPA has spent the last decade fighting for. The response is promised 'before the end of the summer'.

Some of the actions the Members Working Group would like to see are bound up in the Red Tape Challenge, and nothing useful can be done until the government says what it's going to do about them. One matter discussed at this meeting was airport handling charges, which mean that GA pilots have been billed up to £170 for services' they didn't

want, need or use.

Ground handling services are covered by European Union directive 96/67/EC, dating from October 1996 which gradually opened up the services to competition and expressly urges airports to allow general aviation to 'self-handle', incurring no cost. Airports have largely ignored that part of the ruling, and the EU has been reluctant to do anything about it.

For ten years IAOPA has been working on getting the Directive, which is not mandatory, converted into a Regulation, which must be complied with. Two years ago IAOPA's supporters in the European Parliament helped get an amendment to the very door of the Parliament, only to see MEPs get cold feet in the face of a demonstration by unions involved in handling at airports. Once the government's response has been read, AOPA will re-evaluate the position. ■



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## RMZ: what can you say?

The new Radio Mandatory Zone around Southend came in for discussion, with some members characterising it as *de facto* Class D controlled airspace, if the controllers chose to use it as such. Timothy Nathan thought AOPA should offer advice to members on how best to handle the RMZ, and the group agreed.

An RMZ is an area where a pilot is required to make radio contact before entering. It does not imply any further restriction or control. But as Timothy pointed out, it's possible for controllers to effectively deny entry. If a pilot were to make the commonly used initial call, addressing the station, giving his or her callsign and perhaps adding "basic service", that does not satisfy the requirement to make radio contact. The controller then merely has to say, "stand

by" and the pilot cannot enter the RMZ.

Members sought out the definition of radio contact in the CAA's published policy for RMZs. Paragraph 4.4 reads:

"4.4 Before entering a RMZ an initial call containing the designation of the station being called, callsign, type of aircraft, position, level, the intentions of the flight shall be made by pilots on the appropriate communication channel.

Two-way communication is considered to have been achieved once the pilot has provided the following information on the appropriate communications channel: callsign, type of aircraft, position, level, intentions of the flight."

Timothy thought that all of this should be contained in the initial call, without waiting for a response from the controller. That way, the requirement would have

been satisfied and the controller would be given no opportunity to keep you out.

Members thought this introduced a greater risk of stepping on another transmission, and while it was agreed that this was a problem, there seemed to be little alternative. If you prepared your first call and delivered it quickly, the problem was reduced. As an example, Timothy Nathan rattled off a sample call containing all the required information – it took eleven seconds.

In paragraph 2.1 of the CAA policy on RMZs the phrase: "and other information as prescribed by the competent authority" is added to the information required before RMZ entry is granted. The policy also states that "two way communication" must have been established, which would indicate that if the controller declined to reply, access would not be possible. But the definition effectively means one-way communication will do. This calls for clarification.

The Members Working Group asked Timothy Nathan and James Chan to look into the issue, in consultation with the CAA, and establish what advice might be promulgated to AOPA members.

Nick Wilcock is already collating information on refusals of access to Class D; AOPA will be keeping a close eye on the operation of the new RMZ. ■

## Aerodrome news, good and bad

James Chan is the MWG's lead on aerodromes; he reported good news from Bristol, where a system has been introduced to levy discounted fees on general aviation outside peak hours – see the report elsewhere in these pages. GA handling at Bristol is provided by Bristol and Wessex Flying Club.

The response of Farnborough to the avalanche of criticism of its application for controlled airspace is awaited. The closure of Manston was condemned; the airport had fallen into the hands of profiteers who seem never to have had any intention of operating it as an aviation concern, but had their eyes fixed on property development from the start. AOPA corporate member TG Aviation was fighting

the closure in the High Court. The irony of closing Manston when politicians were talking of establishing Boris Island just a few miles away is lost on no-one except the politicians who have to make the decisions... what hope is there?

On the bright side, it was reported that Leeds-Bradford has joined Belfast International in AOPA's 'Strasser Scheme', whereby landing fees are waived in the case of emergency or unplanned precautionary diversion. Charles Strasser continues to pursue the few remaining aerodromes who have declined to join the scheme. With 205 aerodromes having signed up, the only holdouts are Cardiff, Bournemouth, Luton, Lydd and Manchester.



**Above: Members Working Group Chairman Pauline Vahey keeps order**

It was also reported that Llanbedr on the Welsh coast has been established as a GA aerodrome with good facilities and a welcome for all; see separate article in these pages. ■

# Sywell yes, Goodwood maybe

The Members Working Group considered Aero Expo at Sywell to have been a great success and thought it advisable once again to have a significant AOPA presence there next year. Nick Wilcock said the general feedback on the Expo was good; there had been some 200 exhibitors, 12,000 visitors and 1,050 visiting aircraft, a 20 percent increase over the previous year. "Some exhibitors said it was their best show, and they had done some significant business," Nick said.

The AOPA marquee was well sited and had worked very well, having been used by members as a drop-in centre where they could get coffee and talk to each other, and to AOPA people. The only negative aspect was the noise from some of the neighbours. Martin Robinson tried to give presentations, but they were drowned

was obvious," she said. "I think they did themselves a great deal of good among GA pilots with their presence at Aero Expo."

CAA Chief Executive Andrew Haines came to the AOPA marquee to answer members' questions, although it was difficult to have a conversation with him because of the noise.

AOPA signed up more than 20 new members, which was the primary purpose of the exercise.

Pauline Vahey also reported on a scoping visit she had undertaken to Goodwood, where the organisers of the Festival of Speed were hoping AOPA would take a stand. AOPA had in fact done so two years ago, and the return didn't justify the investment. "Martin, Mandy and I flew down from Elstree with Tony Ryan in a Baron," Pauline said. "We were chauffeured to the Festival of Speed site in



**Above: Nick Wilcock's grasp of the minutiae of regulation is remarkable**

an S Class Mercedes, so they were really trying. We looked at the aviation part; they'd revamped it since last time, bringing it within the boundaries of the Festival. But even if we'd been keen, Goodwood was just two weeks after Aero Expo and we couldn't really have got it together in time."

In 2012 it seemed there seemed to be little crossover between the motoring aficionados and the aviation fraternity. But Pat Malone said he had ridden The Hill on the Sunday, and in the excellent weather four JetRangers had been kept busy doing sightseeing flights for much of the day. If we could tap into that audience, we might perhaps do ourselves some good. A presence at the Festival of Speed is to be kept under review. ■



**Above: round-table discussions at the MWG are robust, informed and positive**

out by a high-decibel PA and music for a fashion show that was running close to the AOPA marquee. MWG Chairman Pauline Vahey said that for an hour a day it was so noisy it was difficult to converse.

Timothy Nathan said that at most trade shows there were edicts from the organisers about how much noise you could produce. Chris Wheeler suggested that we approach the organisers with a view to establishing a 'high noise' corner where those who needed to make a racket could do so without inconveniencing their neighbours.

Pauline said there had been a good showing from the CAA, who will have an even bigger presence next year. "They were very approachable and their enthusiasm



**Above: AOPA had a stand at the Goodwood FOS two years ago. This photo: four JetRangers were busy doing sightseeing flights at this years FOS**





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Sitting outside the factory door she looked beautiful. Slender and shapely with the eye catching body lines of an Olympic athlete. The sexy flowing stripes lead the eye over the smooth contours to a young Britannia carrying the Union flag. Not what you might at first think, but the Tecnam P2008JC. It is the epitome of the philosophy of “if it looks right, it probably is right”. It’s as if an aeroplane (not a plane!) had been fashioned out of a lump of lard and then been placed in a wind tunnel that was switched on to hurricane mode; then wait for the airstream to mould it into the perfect aerofoil. I believe the same technique was used to decide on the shape of the Supermarine Spitfire. If not, it could have been. A smile had already appeared on my face.

I learned to fly in the Rollason Condor in the early 1970s at Shoreham, with an instructor named Wilbur Wright (not the original). The Condor was a tailwheel

aeroplane with very basic equipment like a piece of cork on a stiff wire as a fuel gauge and venturis on the fuselage to supply a vacuum for the instruments. However, the change to more modern tricycle undercarriage aeroplanes with better avionics was on the horizon. And a few years later the Condors gave way to C150s and C152s. They were sleeker and more comfortable, and with headsets and intercom – no more straining to hear the instructor over the noise of the engine.

However, time stops for no man (fantastic reward for anyone who can!) and grandma Cessna 152 is showing her age a little. Not so fleet of foot as some of the new wannabe trainers on the block. You can’t take it away from grandma though; she has done a fantastic job and did exactly what was expected of her. But many have now gone to the spirit in the sky and for those left behind a care home

surely beckons.

That is what led me to Capua, in Italy, home of the Tecnam factory. Designed by Mr Pascale, on paper the P2008JC appeared a good potential replacement for our aviation equivalent of the Derby and Joan club members on the flight line. We, Tim Orchard (Tecnam’s UK distributor), Ben (an instructor colleague) and I arrived at Naples Airport on a very wet February afternoon. This, of course, made us feel at home. There was doubt as to whether or not we would be able to fly the aeroplane the following day due to waterlogging of the runway at the factory – again, much like home. I was quite surprised by this, due to my ignorance of the local weather; I thought a Mediterranean climate meant dry and sunny.

However, the sun did come up the



# New tricks

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*Grandma Cessna no longer cuts the mustard for new Tecnam P2008JC fan **Martyn Blunden***

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following day and although it didn't quite dry up all the rain, incy, wincy me was definitely going up into the sky. One could use a bit of artistic licence and say the airfield was a bit soft underfoot, but others would say you could grow rice in it. On arrival at the remote factory we were given a thorough tour of the production facilities, from the raw materials coming in one end to the finished articles being pushed out the hangar doors at the other. One surprise to me was the incredible variation of the destinations of the aeroplanes coming out of the factory. Each had build ticket attached to the tail stating the model specification and its eventual country of operation; which were all over the globe.

As we were directed towards a completed aeroplane outside, the smile on my face broadened. There she was; a brand new P2008JC. I must say I eagerly approached the aeroplane and sad as it is to admit, when I opened the cockpit door I think I said "Wow." Having seen the attention to detail and quality in the construction process, you could definitely see it in the finished article. As I slid my way onto the high-back, sports car style seat, I got the sense of "new smell" that is alien to an old instructor hack. At the same time my brain is being over stimulated by the look of the instrument panel. My seven-year daughter would probably say "awesome", but I am too

reserved for that. I have to admit I'm a bit of a dinosaur for an instrument panel full of clockwork dials, but the sight of what was in front of me will help others drag me into the 21st century.

Seated in the aeroplane, and being a bit vertically challenged, I felt at first as though I was sitting in the back. Such is the allowance and consideration given to the taller driver. However, the ergonomic design of the rudder pedal position meant that when I slid my seat forward to a position to operate all of the controls it didn't put my knees in close contact with the lower edge of the instrument panel, unlike in a C152. The joystick control, as opposed to a



## ***The attitude to try***

Although I learned to fly at a fairly young age, like many who dream I was not in a position to follow an aviation career at that age unless someone else paid for it. I entered an agricultural engineering career until my late thirties. During that time I had my own engineering business where I trained young people in that discipline. I advised on a national board of engineering education when the NVQ system first appeared, which was strongly geared around competencies. That was thirty years ago. Now, finally, an aviation administration board (EASA) has decided to accept the idea of competencies to evaluate a pilot's ability to perform tasks (although still limited at this stage). Originally there was government money to be had in the form of tax relief at the full basic income rate for the NVQ qualification – Level 5 was deemed appropriate for a pilot – which was based around competencies. However, the UK aviation training industry abused it and to my knowledge only one person, via Virgin Atlantic I believe, ever completed the required course. Therefore the government withdrew the privilege from the aviation sector.

The cynical say that if you can't do, teach, but I enjoy teaching and passing on my meagre knowledge to anyone who will listen. I am an FIE now and have been an FIC instructor for over ten years, and I get great satisfaction in trying to help others develop their pilot competencies. It is not always either pretty or perfect, but it is more about the attitude to try that is important. Those who give up learning are missing a big trick! I still have a few more years to enjoy the training environment in what I believe is one of the best pilot training countries in the world, but now we need some fresher faced aeroplanes and, in due course, no doubt fresher faced instructors! – *Martyn Blunden*



control yoke, felt just in the right place too. The one thing missing was a manual trim wheel. Normally I rarely use an electric trim even if it is available (old habit, I suppose), but it did not take too long to get used to the two buttons on top of the joystick. Another noticeable benefit is the extra width of the cockpit over a C152; there are a few extra inches of shoulder room as well as the headroom. Also, the position of the forward screen and overhead wing are arranged so that one doesn't feel so cramped up and confined either. With the additional equipment specified for night operations (as we requested) the mix of conventional instruments and the two Garmin G3X displays help keeps the feeling of being in your comfort zone; the fully electronic (ie G1000) doesn't.

The Rotax 912 S2 engine, which is also new to me, uses a silicon chip brain to control the mixture via the carburetors and there is no traditional mixture control. But



**Right centre: sizeable door, high-backed sports car style seat – and a new aircraft smell**

**Right: decent short-field performance – ground roll at MAUW is quoted as 244 metres**

maybe some comfort can be had in the fact that there is a choke control to aid starting, if needed. Memories of my Morris Minor! Thrust is generated from a GT propeller of wooden construction that's cased in a laminate protective layer which has to be handled with care so as not to damage the protective coating. The doors still require that firmness (careful choice of words!) required of many a Cessna door to positively close them and there is a top catch, not to be forgotten about. It's probably a weight thing, as well as cost, but an inertia reel seat belt would have





**Left: 'the eye-catching body lines of an Olympic athlete' enhance the wow-factor**  
**Below: The Tecnam P2008JC attracts a lot of interest at Aero Expo at Sywell**



weight of 530kgs of 161m and 272m respectively, which would enable one to interpolate for a lower weight should it be appropriate. And usefully there's an intermediate table for 580kgs. Landing distances are only quoted for the MAUW and are said to be 179m for the ground roll and 388m for LDA for the same conditions as take-off.

The endurance once airborne is phenomenal. With 120 ltrs total useable fuel capacity and a cruise of 90kts using about 16 ltrs/hr you could stay up for far longer than my bladder would like! On the recent ferry flight back from Italy the longest I felt comfortable with was just under 4hrs – more of that another time. The MAUW is 630kgs, so generally with the night configuration (which adds a bit to the standard empty weight) that allows for two average pilots and about two thirds fuel. This endurance easily matches, or exceeds a C152 with full fuel.

During the take-off roll the stabilator quickly becomes very effective and it would be easy to raise the nose too early, although the rudder doesn't really become fully effective until around 40kts – something to watch for in a strong crosswind situation. However, the demonstrated crosswind limit is 15kts. Lift off occurs around 50kts and the initial climb is flown at 65kts with take-off flap, increasing to 71kts for best rate of climb clean. Having both conventional and Garmin flight instrument displays really does help when you fly the aeroplane for the first time, compared with just a glass cockpit. It's amazing how you can still feel in your comfort zone in a completely new type.

The nose attitude for the climb and level flight is lower than a C152, similar to that of a Piper Tomahawk, which for the typical C152 pilot tends to lead to a lower airspeed in the climb and a slight climb in level flight until the new attitudes are learned. Due to the curve of the nose cowling, when turning there aren't the same pitch reference clues as in some aeroplanes, so that can take a bit of practice, too. From the P2 side it's not



**Above: standard Tecnam P2008JC panel – Martyn opted for two Garmin G3X screens**  
**Left: Garmin G3X screen and clocks keep the veteran in his comfort zone**  
**Right: from the P2 side it's less easy to monitor the VSI for student's pitch control**



picky really. Marco, the Tecnam test pilot and a thoroughly nice fellow, had already shown us round the 'A' check, and now that we were securely strapped in we were ready to go.

The runway at the Tecnam factory is of course grass, and even though it is very soft there was no problem getting airborne in quite a short distance. The ground roll at sea level on grass with an air temperature of 25°C is quoted at 244m and the TODR is 406m at MAUW. The manual also quotes figures for a lower



been a nice touch. However, for years I've been fiddling with the adjustment of manual seat belt adjusters along with everyone else, so I shouldn't start getting

as easy to see the VSI tape on the G3 as it is on a conventional dial which I personally use frequently to monitor pitch attitude accuracy.



Steep turns at 45° can be flown without any increase in power without really losing any airspeed, defying everything I have taught for years! Using 2000 prop RPM, which is displayed rather than engine RPM, the P2008JC cruises along very nicely at 90-95kts (using the aforementioned 16ltr/hr). Increasing RPM to 2100 and 2200 increases the IAS to 100 and 110kts respectively, which obviously will increase the fuel consumption. One noticeable difference from other types I normally fly is a pleasant reduction of noise in the cockpit; you can even communicate between crew without headsets on. Stalling is fairly benign, with some pre-stall buffet to warn the unwary pilot and the clean stall occurs at 48kts and in landing configuration at 40kts.

Before commencing an approach I decided to check out the flap performance.

---

***Above: reducing power to start a descent the aircraft is reluctant to slow down  
Left: nose attitude in the climb and level flight is lower than in the Cessna 152***

---



and stable in any configuration.

Landing brings no surprises and with traditional single leaf spring main gear suspension it should stand up to students making the occasional indifferent landing. After landing, as the machine slows down you need to remain aware that the nose wheel is a castoring type and has no direct mechanical link to the rudder pedals. Therefore, differential braking is required to steer as the rudder runs out of effectiveness. On the ground it manoeuvres

well in small spaces, but you do need to think ahead (like most times in flying) and plan the turns to happen as you are still moving. You can't stop and then expect to kick the nose wheel into the direction you want to go! Again it is just different from most other common training aeroplanes, but not alone in the design feature.

There was no debate in my mind that this was the aircraft for us, and a subsequent order led to Omega Flight Training being the first operator of its type in the UK. Registered as G-TNDR, the P2008JC is now fully operational at Shoreham and has already found many enthusiasts, particularly the instructors! ■

**Above: author Martyn (left) accepts the keys from Tecnam CEO Mr Paolo Pascale**

**Below: journey's end – Martyn does the key thing again with Tecnam UK's Tim Orchard**  
**Right: Omega Flight Training at Shoreham is the first P2008JC operator in the UK**

There are only two stages of flap, take-off setting and landing. Selecting the take-off position gives a net pitch up result with a small trim change, whilst further selection of the landing flap initially pitches the nose up then as it fully deploys, the nose ends up with a net pitch down, and subsequent small trim change. Initially reducing power to start a descent meets with a certain reluctance to slow down and go down, as a consequence of an efficient airframe I suppose. Therefore, a lower than expected power setting is required to achieve the desired descent rate. With landing flap lowered a normal approach can be flown with excellent forward visibility at 60kts, with a best performance landing speed of 54kts.

One issue that you have to watch is speed and power changes on approach. Although you want to be careful not to let the speed get too slow (and head for the back of the drag curve), it is also easy to add too much power and the slippery thing will accelerate towards  $V_{fe}$  at 71kts. With a little practice this is easily mastered though, as it can be beautifully set up nice



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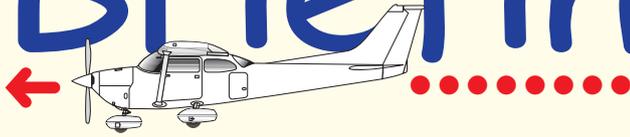
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# Briefings



## Freydis Sharland 1920 - 2014



British Air Racing Champion. In the same year she delivered a Tempest to the Pakistan Air Force, flying solo for a fortnight with many stopovers. When she arrived she was refused entry to the officers' mess because she was a woman.

In 1955 she was a founder members of the British Women Pilots' Association, and its first Chairman. That year she married Tim Sharland, with whom she settled on a farm in Northern Rhodesia. She gave up flying when pregnant with her first daughter – she had three children – and returned to the air when her first daughter turned 17. She retired at 60, but bought herself a microlight and continued into until her early seventies.

Tim and Freydis moved to Benson in 1980 and she loved the fact that their days were punctuated by the noise of the

**Left: Freydis Sharland in ATA uniform, and (extreme right) with members of the British Women Pilots' Association**

aeroplanes from RAF Benson, still to be heard during her funeral in the village church. She was awarded the ATA service medal by then Prime Minister Gordon Brown in 2008.

In her later years she worked with the Youth Enquiry Service, Meals on Wheels, Relate Counselling, Half Way House, the WI, and the Bensington Society, the historical society of Benson Village where she was buried in the village church of St Helen's.

Pauline Vahey, Chairman of the British Women Pilots' Association, said: "Freydis Sharland was our first Chairman and she has maintained close links with us ever since. She was an inspiration to all women pilots, a brave and fearless aviator who distinguished herself in the wartime Air Transport Auxiliary, and after the war she continued to fly and to provide enormous support and encourage for women in aviation. She will be sorely missed." ■

Freydis Sharland, distinguished World War Two Spitfire pilot and founding Chairman of the British Women Pilots' Association, died on May 24 at the age of 94.

Born on September 22, 1920, Freydis learned to fly at Marshall's Flying School at Cambridge, following in the footsteps of her aviator father and elder brother. When she joined the Air Transport Auxiliary in February 1943 she had just 26 hours 10 mins total flying experience, but by the time she left ATA at the end of October 1945 she had flown 607 hours and 25 minutes in ATA service on 38 different types from a Lysander to a Wellington. Being based at

Hamble, Spitfires were her bread and butter, and she ferried 110 of them to front line squadrons. A meticulous and conscientious pilot, she taught herself instrument flying and spent hours in the primitive simulators of the time.

After she left the ATA in 1945 she became a trainer with the Women's Junior Air Corps, teaching young women to fly and earning her full RAF wings. It was the only organisation to teach women to fly for many years, as the ATC did not admit women until 1982!

In 1952 Freydis started air racing, and by 1954 had become the first female

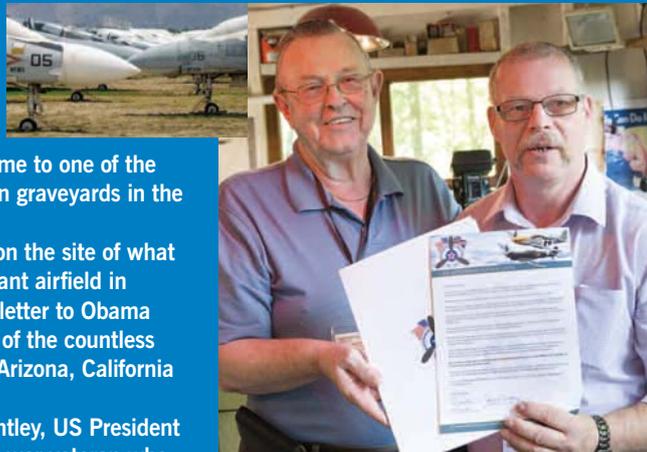
## Gizza plane

Warrington heritage centre at Burtonwood has written to US President Barack Obama to offer a home to one of the hundreds of military aircraft in aviation graveyards in the American desert.

Burtonwood Heritage Centre, built on the site of what was once the largest and most important airfield in Europe, RAF Burtonwood, has sent a letter to Obama asking for dispensation to display one of the countless aircraft being stored in the deserts of Arizona, California and New Mexico.

The letter was co-signed by Jim Bentley, US President of RAF Burtonwood Association, a US war veteran who served at RAF Burtonwood in the 1950s.

Some 60,000 US servicemen were stationed at RAF Burtonwood over a 50-year period from 1942 through to the end of the Cold War, and around 7,500 of them married English brides. Towards the



**Jim Bentley (left) and Roy Thorpe-Apps with their letter to Obama**

end of the war the American presence increased the population of Warrington by 25%.

Roy Thorpe-Apps, UK president of Burtonwood Heritage Centre said: "We may not enjoy the same climate as the Arizonian desert here in Warrington but we do have the passion to care for a retired aircraft at Burtonwood.

"To display a military aircraft would be the perfect way to keep

the memory of RAF Burtonwood alive for the guys in America and the UK, but we need the support of the USA to do that. We would do our utmost to keep it in tip top condition on behalf of the US Air Force."



Doug Fisher Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum

## Where to see the Lancasters

This is the month of the Lancasters... the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight and the Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum are putting together the only airworthy Lancasters in the world for what will almost certainly be the last opportunity anyone will have to see two of the World War Two bombers together in the air.

The Canadian Lancaster leaves Hamilton, Ontario, on August 4, flying via Goose Bay and Keflavik with a possible stop at Narsarsuaq, and is scheduled to arrive at Coningsby on August 8. It will then undergo a scheduled maintenance inspection before the Canadian crews complete a short training programme with the BBMF in preparation for their participation in air displays and fly pasts with the BBMF Lancaster and fighters, starting on August 14 with the Eastbourne International Air Show.

On August 28 the Canadian Lancaster will visit Durham Tees Valley airport, the former RAF Middleton St George, where 419 Squadron RCAF was stationed during the War. The Canadian aircraft is known as the Mynarski Memorial Lancaster after Andrew Mynarski, who won the Victoria Cross in 1944 when he was killed trying to save the life of his rear gunner, who was trapped in the jammed turret of their burning Lancaster over France. Mynarski flew with 419 Squadron, based at Middleton St George.

The icing on the cake comes on September 2 when the two Lancasters will overfly a third, Just Jane, as she does a taxi run at East Kirkby in Lincolnshire.

The Canadian aircraft is due to remain in Britain until September 22. At time of going to press the schedule looked like this:

**August 14, 15, 16 and 17:** Eastbourne International Air Show

**August 16 and 17:** Combined Ops Show, Headcorn

**August 17:** Sywell Great War Air Show

**August 21:** Flypast, RAF Marham

**August 21 and 22:** Clacton Air Show

**August 23 and 24:** Dunsfold Wings & Wheels

**August 23 and 24:** Flypast - Carfest South (Laverstoke, near Popham)

**August 23:** Dawlish Air Show, Devon

**August 24:** Little Gransden Air Show

**August 28:** Teesside Airport (RAF Middleton St George)

**August 30 and 31:** Bournemouth Air Festival

**August 30 and 31:** Shoreham Air Show

## Up and away at 17

Balloon pilot Alex Court receives his PPL on his 17th birthday from Tony Rapson, Head of the CAA's General Aviation Unit. Alex, who passed his solo flight test on June 1 after logging 36 hours flying time in 16 different balloons, had conducted his first training flight at the tender age of 10. His father David Court is a balloon instructor and head of training at the British Balloon and Airship Club, the UK's only current balloon Approved Training Organisation.

Ian Chadwick, the CAA's balloon specialist, said: "We would like to wish Alex well for the future. He has already amassed considerable flying experience at a young age, having flown abroad as well as in the UK. Alex sets an example to all young people interested in flying by showing that dedication and perseverance can pay off."

As well as undertaking a supervised solo of at least 30 mins, Alex also had to undertake at least 16 hours of flight instruction, and carry out 10 inflations and 20 take-offs and landings as part of his training.



## Tecnam flying high

A Tecnam P92 Taildragger has flown over the highest mountain in the Americas, Aconcagua in Argentina, which rises to 22,837 feet in the Andes. Flown by

Tecnam's Argentine dealer Mario Cardama, the aircraft achieved an altitude in excess of 24,000 feet without undue problems. Cardama went onto oxygen at 12,000 feet, and two of the three cameras fixed to the plane stopped working because of the cold. The pilot said the aircraft could have continued climbing, but he returned as he believed he was close to his limit of cold and oxygen deprivation.

Photo shows Cardama's P92 approaching the 22,870 foot summit of Aconcagua



# Woburn Moth Rally



de Havilland Moth Club Tiger 9 formation team at Woburn in 2013

The de Havilland Moth Club will be celebrating the 80th birthday of the DH.87 Hornet Moth and the DH.89 Dragon Rapide at the 29th International Moth Rally to be held at Woburn Abbey on August 16 and 17.

In addition to an appearance by the world's oldest airworthy Moth aircraft, DH.60 Moth G-EBLV, sponsored by BAE Systems who will be hosting a Heritage Exhibition on site, the rally will commemorate the 24 hour endurance flight of de Havilland test pilot Hubert Broad, who left Stag Lane Aerodrome at 5.30pm on 16 August 1928 and landed back at 5.30pm the following day.

de Havilland aircraft from Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands and Switzerland have already booked in. The Irish Historic Flight (a DH.84 Dragon and two Chipmunks) will be displaying during the weekend; DH.60GIII Moth Major HB-UPE is flying from Switzerland to celebrate her 80th birthday at Woburn.

## Online logbook goes mobile

For those who have progressed beyond the pen-and-paper era, Logbook.aero has launched new mobile apps for iOS devices (iPhone and iPad) and Android devices (mobile and tablet) to allow pilots who store their data digitally to view a dashboard summarising their flying hours, landings and flights and view their logbook, basic details about each flight and enter new flights.

You can also now post your flights to Facebook for friends and family to see where you've been flying, and view GPS tracks overlaid on Google Maps, photos and YouTube videos. Pilots can also create a public profile page to share with friends. And by 'following' other pilots (like Facebook and Twitter), pilots can see where other people have been flying.

Logbook.aero, launched in 2013 by PPL Wayne Bloor, is a cloud-based online pilot logbook designed for PPL, LAPL and CPL pilots, with separate logbook formats for microlight and glider pilots. Being cloud-based, the data can be viewed on any device within a browser, or using dedicated iOS and Android apps. More features will be added very soon. The apps are available in the App Store and Play Store. New users have to create an account on the website (<https://www.logbook.aero>) prior to using the app for the first time. ■

## See and avoid?

More than 400 large American military drones have crashed since 2001, according to a year-long investigation by the *Washington Post* newspaper, which studied 50,000 pages of accident investigation data obtained under the Freedom of Information Act.

At the same time, the US Department of Transport has attacked the FAA for failing to move quickly enough to integrate UAVs into existing traffic in the United States.

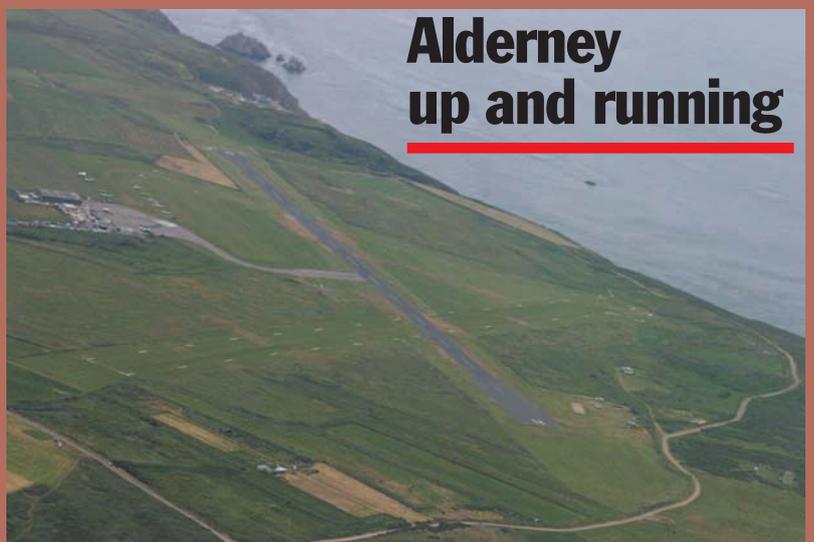
The *Post* investigation found that four fundamental safety hurdles had yet to be overcome. First, drones have a limited ability to detect and avoid trouble. Second, pilot error is a major problem – "Despite popular perception, flying a drone is trickier than playing a video game," the *Post* says. Third, persistent mechanical defects dog UAVs, and fourth, communications links can be unreliable – records show that links were disrupted or lost in more than a quarter of the worst crashes.

Concern has been expressed outside the US at the ease with which drones could be 'hijacked' using inexpensive and freely available technology.

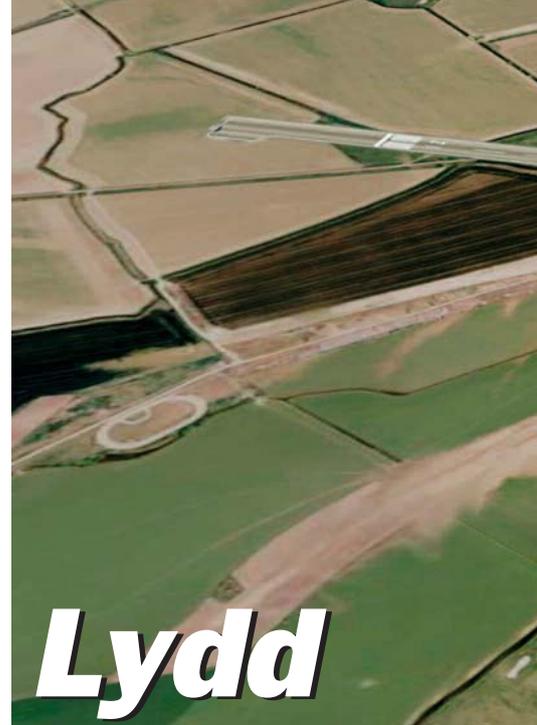
The report comes as the Department of Transportation issued a scathing report saying the FAA is behind schedule on a number of targets that determine if it will meet its 2015 integration deadline for UAVs. It says there remains a lack of technology standards for UAVs – or UASs, as some authorities include the entire control system as part of the drone – to be able to sense and avoid other traffic. The FAA is not collecting and analysing UAS safety data, nor had it developed procedures sharing UAS safety data with the Pentagon, the largest user of UAS.



All three runways at Alderney are back in full operational following remedial work required as a result of bad weather. Repairs and improved drainage mean the main asphalt strip and both grass runways are back in operation. The shorter of the grass runways, closed last year on the advice of the Channel Islands aviation regulator due to the poor condition of the surface, has reopened. The longer grass runway had been closed since December, also on the regulator's advice. The already poor condition of its surface and poor drainage were exacerbated by the winter's high rainfall. The airfield faced further restrictions in February when the grass areas around the one remaining operational runway became waterlogged following heavy rain. This caused its width to be reduced from the 23 metres to 18 metres and its operational length from 877 to 799 metres, restricting commercial payloads. Aurigny has had to carry up to two fewer passengers per flight on occasions. Following a review by the Director of Civil Aviation the operational length has reverted to 877 metres. The problems have brought home to Alderney just how much the island relies on its airfield, and a project has been started to address its long-term maintenance requirements.



## Alderney up and running



# Happy birthday, Lydd

*Lydd wants to recreate its historic commercial success and is preparing to invest heavily. Pat Malone reports*

The owners of Lydd airport are embarking on the first phase of a £25 million redevelopment which will allow aircraft up to 737 and A320 size to use the airfield commercially, but they are promising that general aviation need not be concerned about being cut out.

Lydd is going in the opposite direction to nearby Manston, where property developers have got their claws into one of Britain's longest runways and are moving to kill off aviation. The irony of closing down Manston while others are promoting the stupendously expensive Boris Island a few miles away seems to be lost

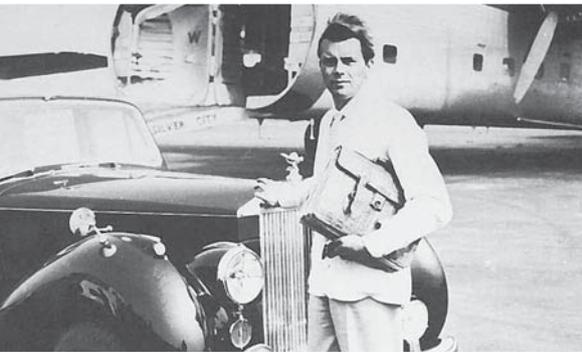
only on politicians.

But at Lydd, the management says that not only does it propose to plough millions into improvements, GA will remain a major part of the plan. Airport spokesman Jeff Sims says: "Lydd Airport has a thriving GA market, with two clubs based there, and of course it's a hugely popular stopover for pilots heading to and from the near Continent. GA is a bedrock of the airport's business, and Lydd management looks forward to maintaining this successful relationship for many more years to come."

There can be few GA pilots who haven't experienced Lydd; for many years it has



been a customs and immigration stopover for cross-Channel flights, although you can no longer drop in without notice. Fifty years ago it was one of the busiest airports in Europe and was recognised as an air gateway to Britain, regularly used by royalty and Hollywood celebrities.



**Top left: general aviation will always be welcome at Lydd, says the airport**  
**Above: Silver City's Bristol Super Freighters were popular with well-heeled holidaymakers who wanted to take their cars to the Continent**



**Clockwise from bottom left: celebrities passing through Lydd in its heyday included Diana Dors, Dirk Bogart, Gregory Peck and the Duke of Edinburgh**

In mid-July this year, Lydd celebrated 60 years of providing commercial flights. Silver City Airways had started its famous Channel car ferry service in 1948 linking the grass airfield at Lympe, a few miles away, with Le Touquet. By 1953 the service had become so popular that a bigger, better airfield was needed. Silver City embarked on the establishment of its own all-new airport, choosing a 345-acre site near the village of Lydd, 10 miles from Lympe. In January 1954 work started on building two runways, a control tower and a two-storey passenger terminal building. The total cost of the new airport, which was to be called Ferryfield, was £320,000. It had its first commercial



movement on July 13th, 1954. Royal recognition was bestowed upon Silver City and Lydd Airport in April 1956 when Prince Philip flew his personal de Havilland Heron into Ferryfield and toured the airport. And as daily flights linking Lydd with Le Touquet and Ostend continued to thrive, the airport handled 222,828 passengers in 1958 – nearly 37,000 more than Gatwick.

By the 1960s Lydd had become an internationally-recognised airport with royalty and celebrities such as Gregory Peck, Diana Dors and Humphrey Bogart regularly flying in and out. Ten years after it opened Lydd had become one of Europe's busiest airports, popular with well-heeled holidaymakers who wanted to take their cars and families to the Continent. At the same time it became a gateway to Britain for thousands of continental visitors and business travellers.

The growth of the roll-on, roll-off cross-Channel car ferry market from Dover and Folkestone undermined Silver City's business and the service declined during the 1970s. The airport continued operating thanks to other passenger and

operates Lydd Airport – also now known as London Ashford Airport – has already spent £35 million upgrading the airport over the past decade, including the installation of a new ILS, a new executive terminal with VIP facilities, improved passenger check-in and security, and a new departure lounge.

A healthy mix of general aviation, corporate jets, air taxis, cargo and maintenance as well as scheduled services to Le Touquet mean Lydd is once again thriving. In May and June the airport hosted holiday charter flights to Italy, run by Newmarket Holidays.

Capita, part of the design team for London's £14.8 billion Crossrail transport scheme, has been appointed to manage and design a 294m runway extension, plus a 150m starter extension, which will allow Lydd to maximise the availability of routes and aircraft choices to operators. Also planned is a new terminal building. Work on the runway is expected to begin by the end of this year.

The airport fought a 42-day public inquiry into its runway expansion plans, which were opposed by some on the

grounds of danger to Dungeness nuclear power station three miles away. The airport has had to meet strict environmental, noise and traffic conditions.

Jeff Sims says: "As we celebrate our 60 years as a commercial airport, we look forward to continuing success and remain very confident that our investment plans here will create a successful, modern regional airport capable of providing high-quality air travel services to a wide catchment area in Kent, East Sussex and beyond.

"We want to offer people the chance to go on holiday or business without the hassle and expense of flying from the main London airports which are becoming increasingly congested along with the roads that serve them."

The airport is not far from the M20, the high-speed rail link from Ashford station means that London is just 38 minutes away by train, and private helicopter transfers can be arranged to the capital. As long as GA continues to be welcomed by Lydd at reasonable cost, we wish the airport every success. ■

**Above: Lydd's planned runway extension will allow 737s and A320s to use the airport commercially**

**Right: holiday charters – this one to Italy – already make use of Lydd**

freight services, and of course, general aviation. In the days before the opening of the Channel Tunnel, when lunch in Le Touquet was more exotic than perhaps it was today, a sunny summer Sunday could see hundreds of GA movements at Lydd.

Today the Silver City Airways Association, made up of former staff and those with an interest in Lydd's aviation heritage, is thriving and stages a well-attended reunion at Lydd each year.

Lydd Holdings, which owns and



# Ask the Captain

## Can Claroxan Advanced help maintain healthy vision?

**Capt. Roger Johnson**  
Commercial Pilot



Roger Johnson has enjoyed a 25-year career as a captain with American Airlines. He has logged over 22,000 hours of flight time and is type rated in the B-757 and B-767 airframes. Roger is also an AOPA member. The 57-year-old California resident has been using **Claroxan Advanced™** — the once daily tablet for healthy eyes — for five years, and is thrilled its benefits.

Pacific Health recently spoke with Roger, and he shared his success using **Claroxan Advanced**.

### Aviation Medical Exams

*I started using **Claroxan Advanced** for peace of mind. I take my aviation medical exam every six months to renew my first class medical and continue to receive 6/6 on the vision portion, which astounds my examiner. He asks me how I do it and I say, "In addition to a healthy lifestyle, I take **Claroxan Advanced** daily."*

### On the Job

*I fly the LAX – HNL (or surrounding islands) – LAX route. During the entire flight out to Hawaii, I endure "perpetual sunset," which can be quite draining on the eyes.*

***Claroxan Advanced** helps when I return to LAX. I usually arrive right before sunrise, so my vision has to be keen. There is*

*heavy traffic coming into and out of LAX. So, it is important to be able to pick up visual traffic to orient myself for traffic pattern entry.*

*One morning, returning to LAX after the long flight from HNL, I was cleared to land on runway 7L. On final approach, I spotted an aircraft on the runway. It had been cleared for take off, but hadn't started moving yet. As an airline pilot, you always look for options. I could go around, which would cost the airline unnecessary gas money and cause an unnecessary delay. Or, I could execute a sidestep maneuver and land on 7R.*

*I advised the tower of the situation and asked if we could side-step and land on 7R. The controller okayed my suggestion and we landed safely and earlier than anticipated. This move saved 1,000 pounds of fuel and saved the passengers any undue delays. I have to say that taking **Claroxan Advanced** maintained my vision to the point that I could pick up that aircraft on the runway very quickly, giving me more time to weigh my options and make a sound decision.*

*Can **Claroxan Advanced** help maintain healthy vision? Yes, the formula is very beneficial for the eyes. If you rely on your vision to succeed, you should try **Claroxan Advanced**.*

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Serving Size: 1 Tablet  
Servings Per Container: 30

Amount Per Serving		% Daily Value
Vitamin C (Ascorbic Acid)	60 mg	100%
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Zinc (Zinc Oxide)	15 mg	100%
Copper (Cupric Oxide)	2 mg	100%
Vitamin B2 (Riboflavin)	1.7 mg	100%
Selenium (L-Selenomethionine)	70 mcg	100%
Grape Seed Extract (95% Proanthocyanidins)	211 mg	†
Ginkgo Biloba Leaf Extract	120 mg	†
Lutein (200 mg of 5% Lutein Extract)	10 mg	†
Zeaxanthin (100 mg of 2% Zeaxanthin Extract)	2 mg	†

† Daily Value Not Established

The **Claroxan** brand has been popular with pilots and shooters in the United States for over 10 years. Airline pilots use it to maintain healthy eyesight so they can continue passing the vision portion of the aviation medical exam.

**Claroxan Advanced** is also used as a way to maintain shooting performance, precision and accuracy for law enforcement, competitive shooters and big game hunting guides.

This year Pacific Health is slowly introducing a new **Claroxan Advanced** formula in test markets throughout the UK and EU. The **Claroxan Advanced** formula is designed to be beneficial for the eyes and for the maintenance of normal vision.

The formula has been modified for EU distribution in accordance with the EFSA register of health and nutrition claims guidelines.

If you're a pilot and you count on your vision to succeed then you should try **Claroxan Advanced**.

For EU customers the company is currently running a promotion where you can try a 90 day trial for \$117.00 USD - approximately £73 GBP - and you'll receive a free bottle of Optimis7 eye drops which relieve redness and irritation, a good product to have when dealing with dry air in the cockpit. Go to [www.Claroxan.com/discount](http://www.Claroxan.com/discount) to order.

To order the **Claroxan Advanced** formula call toll-free **0808.134.9880**. Customer service is open 13:00p-1:00a GMT. Pacific Health is shipping from the US during the initial EU launch. You can also order online at [www.Claroxan.com/discount](http://www.Claroxan.com/discount). Shipments usually arrive in about 2 weeks.

# Denham's dams raid

War child **Tony Purton's** great escape takes in the Ruhr dams, Colditz, Stalag Luft 3 and the home of the Zeppelin  
Pictures by Rex Stanbridge, Paul Edwards and Alan Faulkner



The Denham Flying Group is a loose association of about 40 Denham-based pilots, the core of whom trained with Cabair's Denham Flying School some 15 years ago under the tutelage of CFIs Rod Brown and Bill Stenson, who are members of our group today. Alan Faulkner and I are the oldest in the group at 79. Alan owns PA28 Archer II G-CBTT (Tango-Tango). This year the object of our tour was 'A tour of Germany'. As wartime London kids Alan and I have a 'personal' interest in WWII history. We were also Cold War warriors (National Service) – Alan in the RAF as a Fitter/Armourer, me in the Army as a Drill and Small Arms Instructor. What more natural than an 'historic' tour of Germany and Poland finishing up in Friedrichshafen to further our interest in airships developed following the fortunes of British airship engineer Alan Handley's VARIALIFT 'heavier-than-air' airship project.

Being 'elderly' gentlemen we were looking for a relaxed 10-day (at least) tour to give us time to see things on the ground and use ground transport to see nearby places of interest. We decided to limit our



Top: the Möhne Dam, seen over the wing of Tango Tango

Right: lunch at Meinerzhagen with our hostess Erika Kuck – Paul Edwards, Rex Stanbridge, Alan Faulkner, Tony Purton

eastward travel to just over the Polish border to visit Stalagluft 3 at Zagan, about 1500nm in total.

Detailed planning proved more difficult this year because Jeppesen have withdrawn their familiar paper charts. We decided on a combination of old Jeppesen charts and airfield plates with new national charts for Germany and France and using SkyDemon on a 30-day free trial basis with limited (30 minute) GPS coupling in flight.

Our 10-day 'window' was due to start on Tuesday 10th June. One other Denham crew decided to join us, Paul Edwards and Rex Stanbridge flying PA28 Dakota G-DAKO (Dakko). On the morning of our departure the forecast thunderstorms in SE England and the near Continent were a bit worrying, but we all decided to get started and see how we got on. Tango-Tango got airborne first from Denham at 09.25 intending to route via Calais then direct Brussels, Kleine Brogel, Maastricht.

Approaching Calais the weather inland looked distinctly murky whereas the coast up to Ostend was clear with a defined cloud structure beyond, so we re-routed to the north of Ostend, turning east via Brasschaat, staying north of Brussels and Kleine Brogel, then SE towards Leverkusen skirting Monchengladbach's CTZ and finally due east for a straight-in to Meinerzhagen's 06 runway. The skies cleared as we moved eastwards, and with the help of the westerly wind we touched down in Meinerzhagen just under three hours after leaving Denham. Dakko got there before us, being a bit faster and having routed direct through Brussels and Kleine Brogel.

Meinerzhagen is a private airfield run by local businessman Herr Mullensiepe who is also a licensed customs/immigration officer, so we were able to fly there direct from Denham by PPR arrangement. Simple approach and circuit calls in German were expected (see separate box) which would be useful later on. Fuel was cash only. After two hours on the ground we continued on our way to Leipzig at 15.30, leaving behind thunderstorms forecast later that afternoon. That night nearby Dortmund suffered its worst storm in years, causing serious flooding and loss of life. By contrast we were to enjoy 10 days of clear skies until we returned to England on 19 June.

Our route to Leipzig was via the Ruhr Dams. Aiming the Garmin 430 GPS at EDLZ Soest/Bad Sassendorf took us NNE over the Sorpe and the Möhne dams, from where we turned SE for the Eder dam about 10nm short of the German Army airfield ETHF at Fritzlar. After that we headed due east, edging northwards to avoid Erfurt's CTZ and skirting a forecast belt of heavy rain just north of Erfurt, to land after just under two hours flying on the huge concrete runway of the former

DDR fighter base at Leipzig-Altenburgh. After refuelling we secured the aircraft, the Tower Controller found us an hotel in Altenburgh and called us a taxi – the climb to the top of the very tall control tower is not for the faint-hearted! Our only thought after flying over 500nm from Denham was to have a beer, and the scene at the hotel bar was reminiscent of John Mills' *Ice Cold in Alex* arrival from his desert ordeal.

Next day, Wednesday, we left our heavy luggage at the hotel to which we would return on the Thursday night, and set off by train to Leipzig to get a bus to Colditz. Arriving in Leipzig station about 11.00 Rex



had the bright idea to take a taxi to Colditz to arrive in time for the afternoon guided tour of the castle. We agreed a fixed fee of 70€ with a taxi driver, paid up front and were driven to the hotel just off the main square below the castle square where we checked in before heading out to tour the castle. As many have commented, the outside of Colditz Castle has been cleaned up a lot since 1945 so it does not look as dreary as it must have done then. However, the inside is still pretty original and must have been a forbidding place in which to be incarcerated for four years. Our tour guide was a local girl who admitted that until the end of the Cold War few people in the area realised the history of their 'Castle on the Hill'. However, in a two and a half hour walking tour covering the grounds and the

castle she gave a very good account to the place.

Having 'done' Colditz we 'did' Leipzig the next day, taking the one and a half hour bus ride from Colditz back to Leipzig. We toured Leipzig by bus, visited the St Thomas church in which JS Bach had been Cantor 1723-1750, hearing his music played on both the organs in the church in succession. Finally we visited the St Nicholas Church which became the centre of the GDR's popular peace movement in the 1980s culminating in the

## AIRFIELD DETAILS

- Meinerzhagen** – private airfield  
1170m tarmac Tel: 0171 414 5600
- Leipzig-Altenburgh** – former East German fighter base  
2435m concrete Tel: 0049 (0)34 47 59 0-151
- Zielona Gora-Przylep** –club airfield  
880m grass Tel: 0048 (0)68 321 30 10 azl@azl.pl
- Pirna – Prazchwitz** – club airfield  
900m grass PPR Tel:0049 (0)3501 523666
- Bautzen** – former East German jet trainer base  
2200m concrete Tel:0049 (0)3591 601322
- Bad Endorf** – club airfield  
770m grass Tel: 0049 (0)8053-209 496
- Friedrichshafen** – commercial airport  
2356m tarmac
- Abbeville** – club airfield  
1250m concrete Tel: 0033 (0)9 75 41 00 91

**Top right: the tower at Leipzig-Altenburgh, a climb 'not for the faint-hearted'**

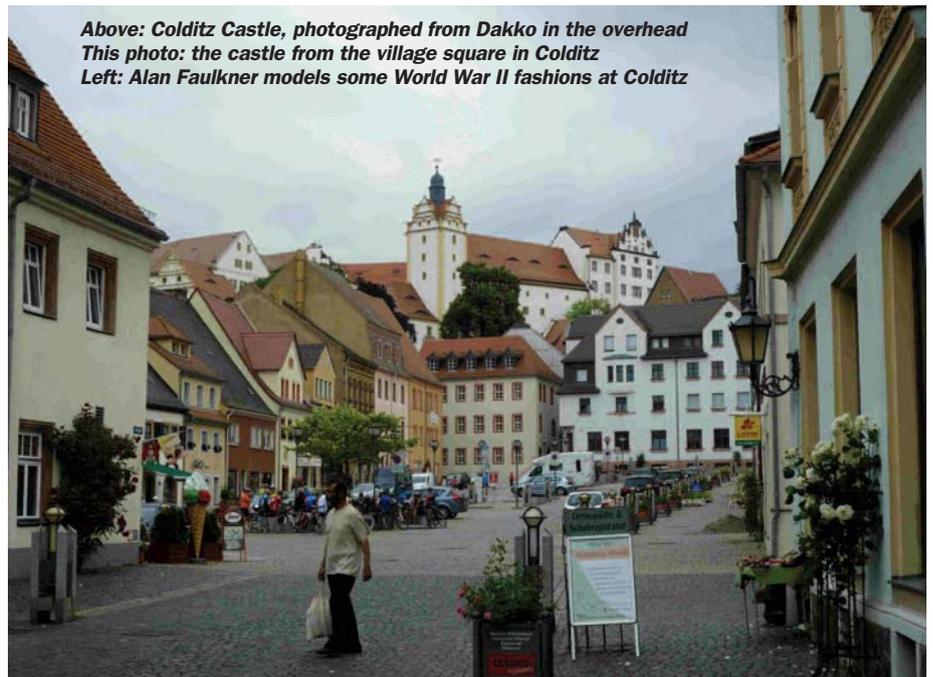
**Above: Tango Tango and Dakko safely tucked up at Leipzig Altenburgh**

**Below: TT and Dakko with well-preserved Antonov An-2s at Zielona Gora**





**Above: Colditz Castle, photographed from Dakko in the overhead  
 This photo: the castle from the village square in Colditz  
 Left: Alan Faulkner models some World War II fashions at Colditz**



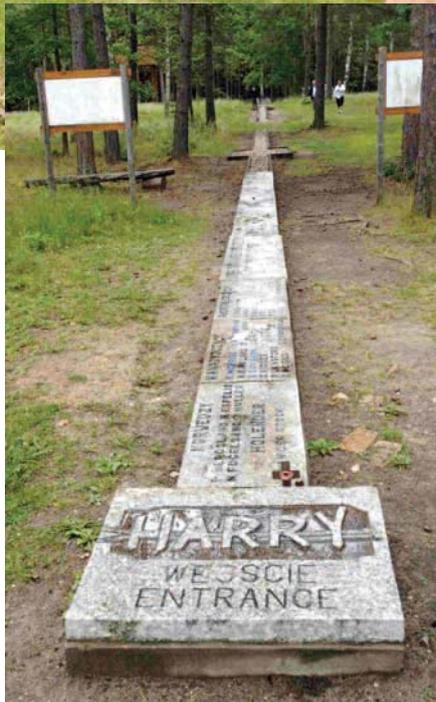
700,000 strong peaceful protest march around Leipzig from 7th to 9th October 1989, defying the GDR's army and police forces, precipitating the end of the Cold War.

On Friday we were off to Zielona Gora in Poland to visit Stalagluft 3 at Zagan about 20 miles south. Surprisingly, Altenburgh Tower told us there was no need to file a flight plan for flights between European Schengen countries – real open borders for GA traffic. We had not been able to get in touch with the Zielona Gora before we left but were assured that it was a popular

destination and very welcoming. We were told to make our approach and circuit calls in German. Soon after take-off we flew over Colditz Castle and orbited a couple of times to pay our respects. Munich Info passed us over to Poznan Info at the border. Making 'blind' calls in German we landed on Zielona Gora's wide grass runway at 13.15 parallel to and well away from gliders being winched into the air as we were on finals. We parked next to a row of well-preserved An2 biplanes, secured the aircraft and headed for the airfield hotel. The atmosphere of Zielona

Gora airfield was totally relaxed. Not having pre-booked rooms in the airfield's own hotel we booked into one nearby. Rex, thinking ahead again, negotiated with our taxi driver to drive us to Zagan and back the next day, touring Stalagluft 3 with the taxi – 300Zlotys (€75) all in.

On Saturday morning at Stalagluft 3 we met the Director who told us that the museum was heavily supported by RAF Halton, who had built a replica of one of the wooden huts. We went into the woods to see the memorial to the murdered 'Great Escapees' and the line of tunnel Harry



**GERMAN RADIO CALLS**  
**10 miles from:** Station name, G-XXXX Zehn (10) Meilen, bearing from, zur Landung (to land)  
**Field in sight:** Flugplatz in sicht  
**Downwind:** Links/Rechts Gegen Anflug, Piste XX  
**Base leg:** Links/Rechts Quer Anflug  
**Finals:** Ende Anflug



*Left: the entrance to Great Escape tunnel 'Harry' at Stalag Luft 3*  
*Top left: Harry, 100 feet long, was an extraordinary undertaking by the PoWs*  
*Above: the aero club at friendly and relaxed Pirna Pratzchwitz near Dresden*  
*Below: the view from the tower of the Frauenkirche in Dresden*

backtracking the grass runway to park. Pirna's flying club personnel were very helpful in booking us an hotel in Dresden right in the city centre. We took a taxi to railway station at Pirna and the train into Dresden main station arriving about 18.00. Dresden is a great city to visit – busy, vibrant and colourful. This Sunday it was

excavated for the BBC TV programme. The whole camp site covered several acres of densely wooded countryside. We drove straight back to Zielona Gora airfield, settled up and without refuelling flew back into Germany to Pirna-Pratzchwitz south of Dresden to park up for two nights. Our take-off from Zielona Gora's wide grass runway at 14.25 was a little disconcerting, with a strong crosswind which seemed to cause a downdraft as we lifted over the trees at the western end of the airfield, affecting our climb-out performance. After an otherwise uneventful one-hour flight we approached Pirna airfield at 3,000ft over some high ground to join right downwind for Rwy 30 alongside gliders operating by winch,





**Top left: Bautzen tower, built into the side of a Cold War haz shelter**  
**Left: our props were padlocked at Bad Ebdorf because of recent thefts**  
**Above: the beautiful Chiemsee, with the Alps as a backdrop**  
**Below: Mad King Ludwig's Versailles copy almost bankrupted Bavaria**

playing host to a sports promotion in the main square with 5km and 10km fun runs and a half marathon. There is plenty to see, the rebuilt Frauenkirche and the Lutheran Kreuzkirche with its Cross of Nails from Coventry Cathedral in reconciliation following the destruction of both churches in WWII. Our evening meal was taken in the Sophienkeller restaurant, opposite the Zwinger art galleries and museums we had visited earlier in the day, which celebrates the life and antics of a former Saxon Elector (1694-1733) and King of Poland (1697-1704) Augustus the

Strong (a devoted patron of art and science but a bit of a libertine!).

On Monday we were to fly 200nm south to Chiemsee. Altenburg had no avgas and we had planned to stop off either in the Czech Republic at LKMO Most, east of Karlovy Vary, or at EDQM Hof-Plauen just over the German border to the west of Karlovy Vary. However, a telephone call to Most was discouraging in that they wanted cash for fuel in Czech Krone and were anyway busy parachuting and sky-diving. The Pirna flying club lads told us that we could get avgas for a reasonable price at EDAB Bautzen which would compensate to some extent our back-tracking some 25nm NE to get it. So at 12.20 we set off for the 10-minute flight to Bautzen, another former DDR airbase which we were told had operated Czech-made L39 jet training aircraft.

Bautzen airfield is well kept and has its control tower built on the end of an aircraft hazard shelter. We didn't hang around though and were airborne again at 13.45 for Chiemsee and EDPC Bad Endorf. Routing straight through Czech airspace we transited their high ground at 6000ft, avoiding the busy airfield at Most at Praha Info's request, routing to EDMW Deggendorf NE of Munich and so down to Bad Endorf about 10nm north of

Chiemsee.

We were required to PPR for Bad Endorf, but we had been unable to raise the airfield either from Pirna or from Bautzen so approaching Deggendorf we asked Munich Info to contact the airfield for us. It was not until we were within 25nm of the airfield that we got confirmation that we were expected and could land there – a considerable relief. Bad Endorf was not easy to find. It was not on our Garmin 430 so we aimed for EDNV Vogtareuth about 5nm west and took a bearing from there. It was not until we were over the town of Bad Endorf that we spotted the grass runway 35 to the north on which we were to land. We were warned of power cables on the approach to RWY 35 so we came in high to clear them and side-slipped to arrive at the threshold to make best use of the 770m grass runway, which was fortunately dry.

Thomas Perl, a board member of the Flying Club at Bad Endorf, and his colleague Harry met us. It was 16.00 when we landed and parked our aircraft and they wasted no time booking us into an hotel on the lakeside at nearby Prien and called a taxi. We explained that we would be visiting the 'palace' at Herrenchiemsee the next morning then returning to the airfield to fuel up and fly to our final destination, Friedrichshafen. All we had to do was to telephone Thomas as we left the hotel the next day and he and Harry would be at the airfield to meet us. The thing that did surprise us was that they fitted large chains and padlocks to the propellers of our aircraft because there had been a number of aircraft stolen from the field. The Hotel Luitpold sits right on the edge of the lake at Chiemsee just yards from the ferry boats to the two islands Herren and Frauen Chiemsee.

Next morning, Tuesday, we caught the 09.00 ferry out to the larger island Herrenchiemsee to visit the virtual copy of Louis XIV's Palace at Versailles - built outside Paris 150 years earlier - commissioned by Bavaria's (mad) King Ludwig II (1845-1886). This was the largest and most expensive of three 'palaces' built by Ludwig, the others being a 'fairy castle' at Neuschwanstein in the mountains near Füssen on the Austrian border, and Linderhof a 'small hunting lodge' a few miles to the east of Neuschwanstein. Ludwig's extravagance bankrupted the kingdom of Bavaria and



was only ended with his 'untimely death' aged 40 in a mysterious, but fortuitous, boating accident on Lake Starnberg. The palace is about 20 minutes walk through woods from the landing stage and the 40 minute conducted tours are timed. After strolling back to the landing stage we caught the ferry across to the Frauen Insel which is famous for its Augustinian Monastery housing an order of nuns, and its many open-air restaurants. Then it was back on the ferry to Prien to recover our baggage from the hotel and take a taxi to Bad Endorf arriving there about 16.00.

Bad Endorf Flying Club was playing host to the European women pilots associations that coming weekend including a contingent of eight British girls. They make a pilgrimage there every two years to stay in the Monastery on the Frauen Insel, visit the palace and climb the 6000ft peak of the local Kampenwand. After our return home Thomas Perl sent us an on-line report of their visit which showed that the super weather we enjoyed had deteriorated by the end of that week.

After a one hour flight to Friedrichshafen we landed about 18.00. We parked, were taken by airfield taxi to the terminal, walked out of the terminal through the empty halls, turned right and walked a few yards to the Ibis Hotel where we had pre-booked for two nights – painless! We dumped our bags and took the €2 tram ride from outside the hotel into

Friedrichshafen to stroll beside the lake in the warm evening sunshine and find ourselves a place to eat.

On Wednesday, our last full day, we started with a visit to the Dornier Museum at the airfield as the guests of museum director aeronautical consultant Herr Dipl Ing Dr Straeter, a former President and MD of the Zeppelin company and current President of the Airship Association, with whom we had an interesting conversation about the future development of airships. Then we caught the bus into Friedrichshafen to visit the Zeppelin museum near the harbour, another absorbing two-hour visit. After that it was out into the sunshine to stroll beside the lake, drink some beer and take it easy before enjoying the last of our excellent meals.

On Thursday we flew home across France to Abbeville (Tango-Tango) and Le Touquet (Dakko) to file our GARs and flight plans to allow us back into the UK and Denham. Our departure from Friedrichshafen was a bit time-consuming because we had to book out at the GA office, go through the passenger security checks with some airline passengers, airside taxi out to our aircraft, supervise refuelling, then one from each crew had to return to the GA office to settle up for fuel and landing/parking charges, queue up again through the passenger security checks and airside taxi back to our aircraft.

Yes, we should have refuelled when we landed! Nevertheless Tango-Tango was airborne just after 11.00 for the three and a half hour flight to Abbeville.

Abbeville is a very relaxed club airfield with a clubhouse and café/restaurant. We arrived making blind approach and circuit calls in French which elicited no response. As we approached to land in a negligible crosswind on the 1250m hard runway 20, a glider/tug combination was waiting to depart from the grass runway 02. We refuelled at once, phoned Denham to activate our return GAR with the UK Border Force for an 18.00 (UK) arrival, filed a flight plan, and enjoyed an hour's shut-eye in the canvas deckchairs we'd been carrying all the trip. Our final take-off for the one and a half hour flight to Denham via Le Touquet/Dover was at 17.30 local to arrive in Denham 18.00 UK time.

### FUEL CONSUMPTION - Tango-Tango

Denham		47.0 lit
Meinerzhagen	3.0hrs	104.0 lit
Altenburgh	1.9hrs	72.0 lit
Zielona Gora	1.3hrs	none
Pirna	0.8hrs	none
Bautzen	0.3hrs	94.0 lit
Bad Endorf	2.3hrs	23.1 lit
Friedrichshafen	1.0hrs	83.0 lit
Abbeville	3.5hrs	67.3 lit
Denham	1.6hrs	59.4 lit
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>15.7hrs</b>	<b>549.8 lit = 35 lit/hr</b>
<b>Total fuel cost:</b>	<b>£1161/549.8 lit =</b>	<b>£2.1/lit</b>

**Left: a Zeppelin takes off over Tango Tango at Friedrichshafen**  
**This photo: we should have refuelled on arrival in Friedrichshafen...**  
**Below: a final view of a flying Zeppelin as we depart Friedrichshafen**



Our arrival in the UK signalled the end of our good weather fortunes. As we crossed the Channel the cloudbase descended from 4000ft to 1500ft. Once over land it came down to 1000ft over Kent until over the Thames it was down to 600ft (Southend's ceiling), rising again to 2000ft by the time we reached Bovingdon. Not the sort of weather we would have chosen to leave in, but we were home. Dakko's qualified crew went IMC of course. And the UK Border Force did not greet our arrival!

An amazing adventure blessed by unbelievably good weather, friendly treatment wherever we went, no aircraft problems and an outline plan that worked almost to perfection. How lucky can you get? ■

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Photo - Mr. Les Rickman

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# A modern Fairey tale



Stringbag fan **Liz Moscrop** gets a flavour of Swordfish flying, then and now

**The engine made 750hp, but massive drag made the Swordfish ridiculously slow**

Imagine that. On May 10th last year my brother in law and I sat chatting over sausages and mash in my flat in London when a Fairey Swordfish flew by for the 70th anniversary of the Battle of the Atlantic. We'd been waiting to see her, and shook our heads sagely imagining the poor crew shivering in the slate grey sky above our heads.

Our pity was entirely wasted, however, since the fortunate threesome were having the time of their lives. For Royal Navy Historic Flight (RNHF) Lt Simon Wilson, who has 65 hours on the type (more than any other pilot), the sortie was one of the highlights of his career. His day job sees him flying helicopters for the RN, but he is passionate about the vintage types he flies for the RNHF.

The Swordfish is the only operational aircraft of its kind in the UK, and is allowed 100 hours flying each year in order to preserve the integrity of the airframe, so a three to four hour trip is a real treat for the crew. The aircraft has two cockpits, the front for the pilot, and the rear for an observer, and a weapons officer. The Swordfish looks like an elongated Tiger Moth, but she is actually nearer in size to an Antonov An-2, the world's largest single-engine biplane. She has a metal frame and foldable fabric wings typical of her period, although she is robust enough to withstand harsh maritime environments. The prototype first flew in April 1934 and was already outdated at

the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939. That said, the Swordfish shone during the Taranto raid in November 1940, the sinking of the German battleship Bismarck in May 1941 and the Battle of the Atlantic from 1943 onwards.

Today's light aircraft pilots would recognise many of the pre-flight checks on the Swordfish, with one or two notable additions. During the walk-round, for example, the foldable wings need to be fully locked, and the locking mechanism secured. Another key issue is to ensure the bottom four spark plugs are re-installed in the lower cylinders of the 750hp Bristol Pegasus radial engine. These are taken out after each sortie to allow the oil to drain, which would otherwise pool in the bottom four cylinders, causing fouling.

Lt Wilson says: "The next challenge is trying to climb in. There are several spring-loaded panels that act as footsteps and handholds to help clamber into the cockpit." Imagine an indoor climbing wall and you get the picture.

Even if they had managed to shimmy up the sides, the snug cockpit, which is tight, would thwart a larger person. The instruments and controls are "seemingly scattered in a random fashion, wherever they might fit". The sides are painted matt black with two clear panels near the floor, which let some natural light in to assist with reading the instruments. This would have been crucial in some of the conditions wartime pilots would have

endured. Wilson points out that during the Battle of the Atlantic the weather was the biggest threat, with high seas and raging winds. The Swordfish is not a fast aircraft, with a top speed of just 121 kts. Pilots would take off into the darkness, fearing they would be unlikely to return. If they got too far behind the convoy they couldn't catch up against a strong headwind, so many aircrews lost their lives because they were too far downwind to regain their ships. The Swordfish has an endurance of about four and half hours, but the crews would have been flying at a couple of hundred feet in stormy weather. They were also without modern navigation aids to counter poor night visibility.

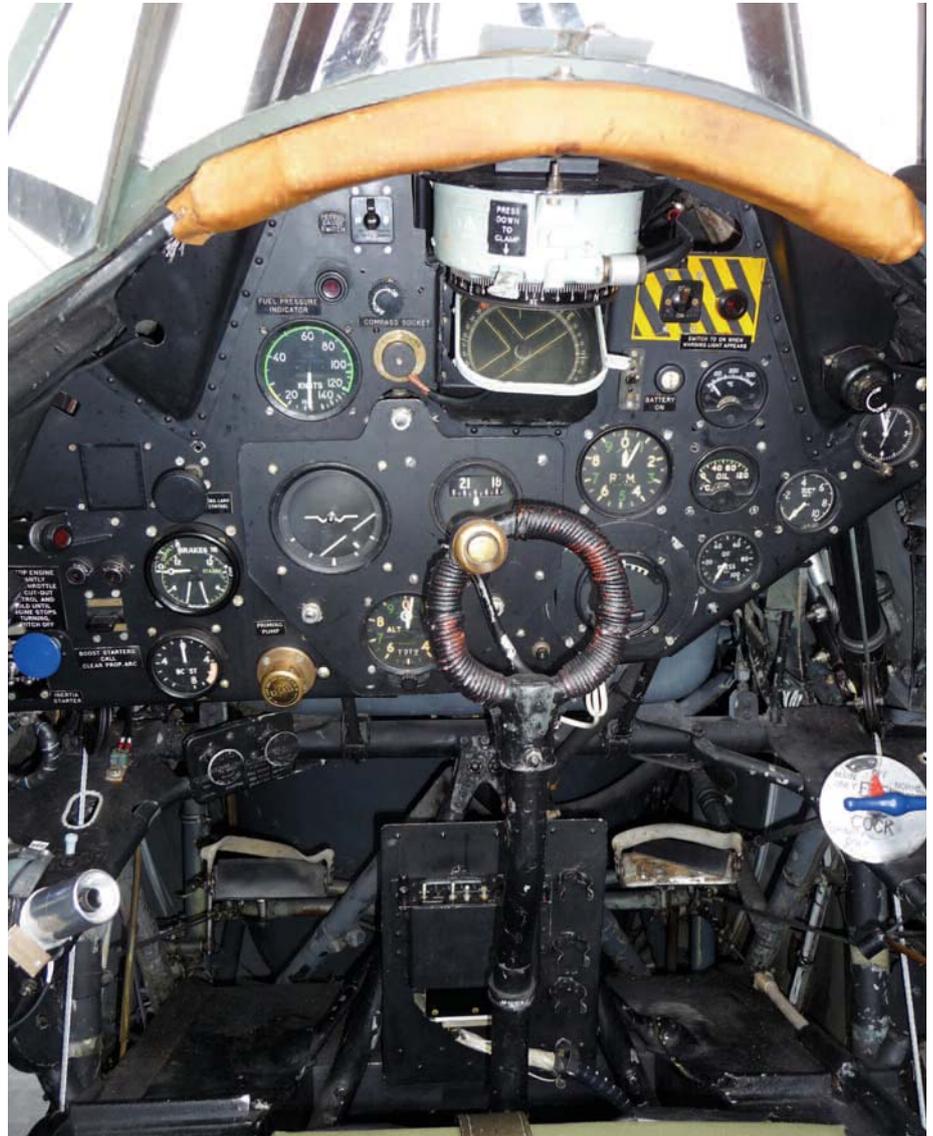
Lt Wilson explains, "Today we only fly in day VFR conditions. The only concessions are that we have a transponder and modern VHF radios, but everything else in the cockpit is the Second World War kit. Bear in mind they didn't have Doppler radar or any modern systems. When they got out of sight from the ship they had to use dead reckoning and guess the wind, as well as by dropping smoke floats into the water to assess the drift."

Today's crew are operating in much more sophisticated environments, but start-up is the same as it was in the thirties. The pilot shouts: "Fuel on, brakes on, throttle closed, switches off, ready to prime, one in." The ground crew then begin to pull the giant Fairey Reed three-blade fixed pitch propeller through each of



**Above inset: Swordfish on HMS Victorious before the strike on the Bismarck**  
**Above: a Swordfish flight over HMS Ark Royal during World War II**  
**Top right: cockpit is snug, with instruments 'scattered about in random fashion'**  
**Below: ground crew lend scale to the big biplane**

its nine blades, with a squirt of fuel pumped into each cylinder as each one passes the twelve o'clock position. As well as priming, this ensures there is no hydraulic lock, which would cripple the engine.



Starting the thing is not for wimps. Two of the ground crew hoist themselves on board the port side, one on the stub wing, and the other on the main oleo. They plug in a large crank handle through a hole in the engine cowling, connecting it to a heavy flywheel which is attached to a clutch at the back of the engine. It is such an arduous task that one of the rites of passage for any prospective Swordfish pilot is to take a turn, so they know what the crew are going through.

Power checks are equally interesting for the long suffering ground crew, who drape themselves over the struts underneath the tailplane to stop it lifting while the engine is run up to 1,800 RPM and the mags checked.

The Swordfish has pneumatic differential brakes which, Lt Wilson explains, "will exhaust air faster than the accumulator can be replenished by the compressor. Therefore taxiing slightly faster than normal is usual in order to get some airflow over the rudder to make the aircraft controllable. You have to anticipate braking, as pressure takes time to build and dissipate as the brakes are applied and released. The tailwheel is free-castering, and taxiing is probably the

trickiest aspect of operating the aircraft. The Swordfish has a large side area, so taxiing in a strong crosswind is demanding, and occasionally the rear crew are called upon to jump out and walk the wing tips to ensure that the aircraft can be safely manoeuvred."

On take-off the tail is kept on the ground until about 40kt, when a fairly progressive, light push is all that is required until at 60kt she is ready to fly, and small amount of back pressure on the control column allows her to climb at a leisurely 70kt. Lt Wilson describes the Swordfish as both responsive and stable. "A fair old bootful of rudder is required in turns to maintain balance. Although large stick inputs are required in roll, it is still surprisingly sprightly longitudinally for such a large aircraft, and it can be turned on a sixpence if you choose to crank it around."

During the war many Swordfish successfully evaded fighter attacks due to this minute turning circle – causing some attacking fighters to wind up in a fatal spin.

For all its shortcomings, the Swordfish was a vital weapon in the war in the Atlantic. German submarines sunk 2,827 ships during World War II, and Winston



*This photo: torpedo from a Swordfish crippled the Bismarck  
Below right: Stringbag played a vital role in the Battle of the Atlantic  
Bottom: flying conditions were dreadful for the three-man crews*

Peter R March

Wilson has to lower his seat and throttle back the engine to hear clearly. The draughty cockpit means that it is essential to have two maps carefully folded, laminated and taped to stop them from unravelling or flying away of their own accord.

The RNHF needs all the help it can get. All the crew are serving military personnel, but the charity has two airworthy Swordfish to maintain. (The second comes online this summer). When parts fail, the organisation needs to go to a specialist engineering firm to replace or repair them. If you reckon that cylinders come in at something near the £3,000

mark, each, you can guess that refurbishing both engines is a costly affair. So why bother? Lt Wilson explains: "Lots of people might question why we are spending such large amounts of money keeping old airplanes flying. I think it is important to act as a living memorial to aviators past, and remind people that these men sacrificed their lives for the freedoms we have today."

On May 10th last year my brother in law and I sat chatting when a Fairey Swordfish flew by in a grim sky. We asked each other, what if those brave men had refused to fly it all those years ago? Imagine that. ■

Churchill famously wrote: "The only thing that ever really frightened me during the war was the U-boat peril." The threat to the Atlantic lifeline, the shipping route followed by merchant convoys carrying food, raw materials, troops and equipment from North America to Britain, was extreme; Britain needed vast amounts of supplies to survive the war. Even in normal times the journey could be hazardous, but during the war Nazi Germany estimated that it needed to sink 150 merchant ships each month to starve Britain out. Submarines hunted in packs, and many lives were lost in slow vulnerable convoys. So the outdated Swordfish was a heroic and necessary escort. Flown from converted merchant ships, the aircraft were lashed onto decks with just four feet

of deck spare either side. Should the airmen manage to make it back after up to four hours in violent sea conditions they often had to be lifted out of the cockpit because they were so frozen. Lt Wilson says: "Even on a summer's day in benign conditions flying it is quite a brutal experience – worse in the rear cockpit because of the propwash."

Thankfully the most awful thing today's crews have to endure is transits to and from air displays. The ferocious engine noise means that hearing ATC and other aircraft on the radio is nigh on impossible.



Peter R March



Peter R March

### Fly Navy Heritage Trust (FNHT)

The FNHT enables the Royal Navy Historic Flight to display its iconic Fairey Swordfish, Hawker Sea Fury and Hawker/Armstrong Whitworth Sea Hawk at air shows across the UK and increase public awareness of the glorious heritage of British Naval Aviation. Please visit its website at [www.fnht.co.uk](http://www.fnht.co.uk)



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