

# Instructors and issues of moment

*The AOPA Instructor Committee, another group whose activities have not been covered fully in this magazine for some time, meets every quarter to discuss issues of importance to their profession and to guide AOPA thinking on these matters.*

*Chaired by Geoffrey Boot, the Instructor Committee includes some of the most experienced flying instructors in the country. At its most recent meeting comprised Dorothy Pooley, Nick Wilcock, Pam Campbell, John Pett, George Done, Ian Marshall, Carol Cooper, Chris Royle and Matt Lane. David Scouller, David Ogilvy, George Capon and Chris Martin sent their apologies.*

*The committee's workload has been fairly high during recent years because of the torrent of new regulation pouring out of Cologne, and this meeting discussed among other things the En Route Instrument Rating which has been the subject of so much debate.*

## Instructors and the EIR

The debate on EASA's Notice of Proposed Amendment on instrument flying concluded that AOPA should express no opinion on the En Route Instrument Rating, which was described in unflattering terms by instructors.

Nick Wilcock updated the committee on NPA 2011-16, covering instrument flying; he wrote an article explaining all the details in the December 2011 issue of *General Aviation* – if yours has gone out with the recycling, you can read it online at [www.iaopa.eu](http://www.iaopa.eu). He talked the committee through the competency-based IR, the EIR and the sailplane cloud rating, as well as plans for the recognition of third-country IRs. The EIR, he said, should not be thought of as an IR but as a rating which extends the privileges of the VFR pilot to airways en route. "The only benefit is to allow people to build up their PIC IFR time towards their IR," he said.

"The problem comes with how safe is it," he went on. "Are the forecasting requirements beyond us at the moment? Is the ICAO requirement adequate to allow a pilot to gauge whether he will be in VMC at the point at which he must come off an airway? The radius of a TAF is 5nm, and your transfer point may be more than that from somewhere for which a TAF is available. Is the ICAO area forecast specification adequate? Because if it isn't, then we cannot support this."

Ian Marshall said the ICAO requirements were "really quite modest" and could not be said to be adequate when

to cover a pilot who would be coming off an airway at 6,000 feet, many miles from his destination. "If the EIR only takes you to the transition point, I find the whole rating a waste of time," he said. "We're trying to make the best of a dog's dinner. What should have happened was the IMC rating should have been the first 15 hours towards your IR, and that would have been useful. What are you supposed to teach people in 15 hours of en route flying? It's ridiculously over the top."

Nick Wilcock said the EIR would only be useable on a CAVOK day. "It's not the case that you could use it a lot," he said. "As the safety agency, it's the responsibility of the CAA to establish that weather forecasting is robust enough to cope with the EIR."

Ian Marshall suggested that the legal ramifications might give the CAA pause. "The first person that gets killed by this rating, they'll get clobbered," he said. TAFs were unreliable, even for the places for

which they were issued.

Pat Malone drew parallels with the helicopter world, where PPL students are given five hours' instrument instruction, then told never to fly in IMC for real because they'd get killed. When faced with IMC, pilots did what they'd been taught to do – instead of landing, they tried to fly out of it, and they got killed. "If you train them, and sign them off as having been certified as capable of flying in IMC, you can't blame them for dabbling with it," he said. Nick Wilcock said you couldn't stop an idiot from killing himself, but Malone said they were not idiots – merely people who were doing what they had been trained and signed off to do.

Most of the EIR must be done at an ATO, but five hours could be flown with an 'independent instrument instructor' and it was not clear how this would work. The idea was that there could be a cost saving, but this was likely to be small. Carol Cooper said students who signed up with an ATO would be likely to stick with it for the whole course. Matt Lane said he'd heard that PPL/IR intended to set itself up as a provider of 'independent instrument instructors'. Nick Wilcock thought it unlikely that any ATO would tell students that they could do five hours with someone with no connection to the school. The CAA, he added, was saying that all training must be done at an ATO and they were not happy with the itinerant instructor idea.

There was some discussion over who would be allowed to instruct for an EIR; Dorothy Pooley said that at the moment it looked as though only a current IR instructor would teach for the EIR; it was said that it would also have to be revalidated annually by an IRE. She pointed out that a IR test is currently £800, and a partial costs the same, while an FE authorisation is £780, which bodes ill for cost-effectiveness.

Nick Wilcock briefly distilled the essence of the CAA's response to the EASA NPA on instrument flying, saying they had not indicated with sufficient force the need to retain the IMC rating in the UK. "They need to stop thinking that grandfathering is sufficient," he said. "We will go back to the CAA and say their response is insufficient." ■

**AOPA's EASA regulation point man Nick Wilcock (left) with Instructor Committee Chairman Geoffrey Boot**



# EASA and aerobatics

Nick Wilcock outlined continuing problems with EASA's proposed Aerobatics Rating, a qualification which many countries have not deemed necessary up to now, and which is being made unnecessarily difficult to obtain due to an EASA requirement that a pilot must have 40 hours PIC before being able to train for it.

He had attended EASA's annual safety conference, which discussed loss of control accidents, in order to gauge

opinions about what they call 'dynamic flying'. "They've revised the whole stalling

methodology for large aircraft, but several speakers said that in moments of stress pilots revert to what they were taught in their early days, which makes aerobatic training at an early stage all the more desirable," Nick said. "If people have had some experience, up to a level where they felt not terrified, they are more likely to be able to recover from upsets safely. Aerobatics are thus beneficial."

It was questionable, he added, whether many of today's airline pilots would be able to recover from a serious upset. Nick said he had told EASA representatives that more people should be given exposure at

the earliest possible stage in their training. The argument put forward by a German delegate, that a pilot ought to have 40 hours of hands-on experience before attempting aerobatics, was not based on anything more than misperception and prejudice. The CAA and the FIA support AOPA's position. Because this is not due to be introduced until 2015, there are other problems with higher priority, but the matter will not be allowed to drop.

The debate turned into a conversation about stall recovery, with instructors saying they were concerned that more and more people were attempting to recover from an incipient stall on power alone. "Minimum height loss' does not mean no height loss," Ian Marshall said. "Students need to understand the proper technique." ■



## Cost-effective audits

Following a discussion at the last Instructor Committee meeting Geoffrey Boot asked whether there had been any progress on investigations into AOPA taking over audit functions for flying clubs and schools from the CAA under EASA. The consensus was that not enough was yet known about the requirements of whomever did the job, so it was not possible to say whether AOPA could do it more cost-effectively than the CAA. There would be no point if AOPA had to charge the same as the CAA to do the job.

Ian Marshall said there were too many unanswered questions, but the matter must be pursued because the cost of CAA approvals were "eye-watering". It was not yet known who would have to pay, and for what; whether an audit would be a box-ticking exercise or a major production; what training would be required for auditors and so forth.

Nick Wilcock suggested the CAA was looking at five or six hours work at £170 an hour. Chris Royle thought it might be possible for the audited company to provide much of the information required, so that the actual audit cost could be minimised. But until these things were known, it was impossible to take this further. The matter is being pursued, however, in order to ensure that best practice can be encouraged at the lowest possible administration cost.



Ian Marshall, White Waltham flying instructor and Head of Safety for BMI, with Carol Cooper, who has 20,000 instructional hours

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# Liaison between AOPA groups

Chris Royle, Chairman of the AOPA Members Working Group, gave the Instructor Committee an update on the proceedings of the group, while AOPA Chairman George Done reported on the Maintainers Group. The activities of both have been widely reported in this magazine, and the Instructor Committee expressed appreciation of the work being done in both forums.

Chris Royle said he was stepping down from the Chairmanship of the Members Working Group and thought this presented an opportunity to appraise the achievements of the group and look at its future. It had been responsible for the Duxford Bonus Day, the

airfield representatives, the mentoring scheme, the revivification of the Wings Scheme, the remaking of the AOPA website and the policing of the web forums.

George Done said that aside from the group's activities, in the six years of its existence it had identified some dedicated people who had moved on to the AOPA Executive Committee and the Board, including

Mike Cross, Mick Elborn, Chris Royle and Pauline Vahey. "Where would these people have come from had it not been for the Members Working Group?" George asked.

He paid tribute to Chris Royle's consummate diplomatic skills in chairing an often opinionated and sometimes difficult group and managing to get through a busy agenda.

Chris Royle said the next meeting of the group, in February, would be chaired by Martin Robinson or George Done, and would look at the future direction of the group. "It may be that it turns into more of a project group," he said. ■



**Instructors Committee – clockwise from front, Dorothy Pooley, Nick Wilcock, Geoffrey Boot, Pam Campbell, George Done, Ian Marshall, Carol Cooper, Chris Royle, Matt Lane**

**Geoffrey Boot and Pam Campbell, a former RAF fighter controller and instructor whose log books include the Meteor and the Jaguar**



**Dorothy Pooley, wife of Robert and a fixed-wing and helicopter instructor at Shoreham**



## Airprox misunderstandings

Geoffrey Boot posed a couple of interesting questions on procedures and privileges, starting with the definition of a formation flight... Nick Wilcock pegged it as within one nautical mile, same altitude and a single speaking unit. Geoffrey said the question had arisen because the Airprox Board, on which he represents AOPA, had been looking at an incident in which two aircraft were deemed to be flying in formation despite being almost a mile apart, and one didn't have a radio licence.

"There is no standardised instruction for formation flying in the civilian world," he said. "It's going to become pertinent because they're proposing that people can depart as a combine in certain areas during the Olympics, and it would be useful if certain elements of it were tidied up – for instance, the fact that only one would speak."

It's illegal for one aircraft to speak to another in flight according to CAP 143, which stipulates that you may only communicate with the ground. Gliders have a safety broadcast frequency, and a number of ad hoc work-rounds have grown up over time, but pilots should be aware that there's a law against it.

Geoffrey also asked whether pilots understood what it meant to be under radar control in Class D. This also arose from an incident that came before the Airprox Board, where a pilot "under radar control" in Class D believed he was assured of separation. It was worth reinforcing the fact, Geoffrey said, that it means you have to do what they tell you, but you're responsible for your own separation and terrain clearance. "Most people would think it was a traffic service," he said. "It's a strange anomaly."

Finally he asked: if you're flying through a MATZ, you approach the ATZ and it's outside hours of watch, what do you do? Deem it to be active and avoid it, was the answer. You're perfectly entitled to enter a MATZ at any time, even without making a radio call, although to do so would be rank bad airmanship. "But out of hours, a lot of people seem to feel able to transit the ATZ, which could be active with gliders or other traffic. If you don't have a clearance, avoid the ATZ."

