

Cracking the curate's egg of EASA-FCL

AOPA is collating a Europe-wide response to EASA's proposals on flight crew licensing, some of which are promising, and some of which are catastrophic for GA. While EASA proposes to make many positive improvements, like restoring the PPL instructor and returning to ICAO medical standards, it also wants to drive the N-reg out of Europe without addressing any of the reasons why foreign registry is so necessary.

The 27 AOPAs in Europe got together in Zurich in October to lay the groundwork for a single response to the FCL document. The deadline for comments on the proposals has been extended to December 15th after it was pointed out that FCL could not be considered in isolation from EASA's proposals on Operations, which have not yet been published. The deadline may yet slip further.

Jacob Pedersen of AOPA-Denmark reported to the Zurich meeting that there's a lot of good in the EASA proposals. He referred in particular to EASA's reversion to ICAO medical requirements, which the JAA abandoned, causing much misery and dislocation in general aviation. All those who lost their licences to JAR medical requirements would be able to retain them under EASA. It also reintroduces the PPL instructor, killing off the need to show a "CPL level of theoretical knowledge" before you can be paid to instruct.

But there is a certain amount in the NPA that is truly dreadful and is being strongly opposed by IAOPA. The proposals would effectively make it impossible to base an N-registered aircraft in Europe and fly it on an FAA licence, which would render the FAA Instrument Rating useless here. IAOPA's position is that the reasons why so many FAA licenses, ratings and aircraft are in use in



Above: Patrick Goudou is taking the easy way out on the N-reg issue, to the detriment of GA

Europe is because of the manifest deficiencies of European regulation, and these fundamental problems cannot be ignored. European pilots have been forced by bad regulation to go abroad for their flight training, and the solution is to improve the regulation, rather than simply to ban the better system.

In an interview with this magazine in 2005, EASA's executive director Patrick Goudou said the Agency would tackle the N-reg 'problem' by ensuring there were no advantages to be gained by operating on a foreign register. He was coy about how this would be achieved, but it is now clear that no real attempt has been made to provide a positive way forward; a simplistic ban that would cost the industry millions and make many operations impossible is a bureaucrat's solution to a very real problem.

It is expected that the Operations proposals will make the problem worse, requiring foreign-registered aircraft to conform to EASA rules even if it invalidates their Certificates of Airworthiness. Removing the opportunity to operate on an FAA IR would be especially harsh as EASA's own moves towards a reasonable and feasible IR seem to be running into the sand.

EASA cannot be allowed to take the easy option (for them) of banning third country aircraft and licenses. Such an action would impose massive costs and disruption on general aviation, and make flying in Europe less safe. It also begs the question – what is ICAO for?

IAOPA-Europe is making common cause with the business aviation lobby, with flight training organisations and with companies like FlightSafety, who would be effectively forced to close down if EASA has its way.



Insurance falls into bureaucrats' playpen

The CAA is threatening to ground aircraft if owners do not increase their insurance premiums to take account of exchange rate fluctuations.

Some owners have received letters from the Aircraft Registration Department seeking proof that they have paid more as the pound slid against the euro and the dollar. As an alternative, the CAA says, they must provide proof that their aircraft is grounded.

By EU regulation, compulsory third-party insurance requirements are set in 'SDRs', a complex unit based on the value of gold as it relates to a basket of currencies including the dollar and the euro. In 1996, when it was established by the IMF, it was worth roughly one dollar. Today its value is nearer \$1.50. The EU requires aircraft under 2,700 kg to carry minimum insurance of three million SDRs.

The insurance companies take account of fluctuations when setting annual premiums and are nonplussed by the CAA's demand that premiums be topped up between renewals. One said: "There is little to be lost in waiting for premiums to come due. SDR rates are calculated daily by the IMF. Does the CAA expect every pilot to include checking the daily rate with the IMF as part of a pre-flight? Demanding the grounding of aircraft is totally over the top."

AOPA's Martin Robinson says: "This is outrageous. Sterling climbed inexorably to historical highs against the dollar and the SDR in recent years; did anyone get a letter from the CAA saying they were over-insured? Three million SDRs is an entirely arbitrary number invented by a bureaucrat. If third party claims have to be paid, they are paid in sterling, so the value of three million SDRs in sterling equivalent rises as sterling falls, balancing the ratio of premium to payout.

"What we have here is one bureaucracy playing another bureaucracy's game, with the GA pilot as the loser. I wonder if the Aircraft Registration department is short of work and needs to justify its money. The threat to ground aircraft is completely unacceptable and we are seeking urgent clarification from the CAA on this issue."

Five more issues:

Apart from foreign-registered aircraft and licenses, there are five main issues of concern in the 647-page FCL document on which IAOPA Europe has established a common position.

More paperwork

- The extensive requirement for management and quality control systems will be completely overwhelming for small training organisations. The current "registered facilities" will have to be fully compliant with much more onerous regulations, while the definition of "commercial operation" seems to include a number of activities that used to be considered non-commercial. The full text on this is, however, not yet available.

LPL safety?

- The 'Leisure Pilots Licence' is a great innovation, modelled on the UK's NPPL, and could help bring new people into aviation. Some of the provisions of the new Leisure Pilots Licence for SEP aircraft up to 2000 kg might raise safety issues. The basic LPL allows a pilot to take a passenger after 20 hours flying, ten of them dual. Is it sufficient? Emanuel Davidson of AOPA-France told the Zurich meeting that the French *brevet de base*, with similar requirements, was not noticeably more dangerous than an ICAO-compliant licence. While some delegates thought the law should prevent a 20-hour pilot flying an aircraft as big and complex as a Seneca V, others thought it should be left to the good

sense of the GA industry; no buyer of a Seneca V would fly it with 20 hours experience, and no renter of Seneca Vs would let him have it, either. No law was required. The LPL does not extend to twins.

Examiner checkride

● The recurrent "flight with an instructor" is apparently being turned into a checkride with an examiner on every third renewal. With 70 percent of PPL holders not renewing after five years, this was seen as a further disincentive. It will be less useful than an instructor flight, where pilots can practice manoeuvres instead of just flying for a 'pass or fail' with an examiner. There is no evidence that the current system was deficient, and in many countries there is a severe shortage of examiners. This proposal is a backward step.

Sensible IR

● There is still no solution for a simplified instrument rating targeted at the PPL pilot, and also no solution for the holders of a UK IMC rating who risk losing their current privileges. This problem already has been recognised and EASA is now forming a working group specifically to deal with these issues. Whether

anything will come of it is another matter; often, working groups are simply a smokescreen for a lack of action.

What's in a name?

● The name of the Leisure Pilots Licence, which IAOPA has criticised from the start and which EASA's Eric Sivel told us would be changed, has not been changed. IAOPA has always said that the name misrepresents the nature of the licence and will be a gift to those who would stop us flying and shut down aerodromes. It is deemed vital to convince the European Commission that a name change is relevant and necessary.

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renewed upon. Martin Robinson of AOPA-UK stressed the need for delegates to go back to their national authorities and make them aware of IAOPA-Europe's standpoint on these matters. The national authorities would then reinforce IAOPA's voice at EASA and the Commission. More from the Zurich regional Meeting of IAOPA-Europe on page 16 ■

Saving the FAA IR

The biggest single reason for operating on the N-register in Europe is the FAA instrument rating. While there have been moves in Europe to revisit our own IR to make it achievable for more pilots – fewer than one percent of British PPLs have a JAA IR, while 50 percent of US PPLs have an FAA IR – little progress has been made, and EASA's deputy head of rulemaking Eric Sivel has privately warned people "not to expect anything" from the deliberations.

The fact is that the practical tests for the FAA IR are more stringent and call for better piloting than anything Europe demands. But the JAR rating is so loaded with irrelevant claptrap about the theory of jet engines, safety systems on Boeing 747s and so forth that the applicant must take a year out of his or her life to be able to regurgitate it on paper – not something most PPLs can afford to do. Certain vested interests want the status quo to remain because they think they'd have PPLs cluttering up the airways, and they don't give a hoot about the dangers of forcing PPLs to scud-run down among the bushes. No safety argument has ever been advanced for banning the FAA IR, which hundreds of pilots every day, private

Chief executive's diary:

Moving among men of letters

I've just had a thought: I could have written the whole of this diary in acronyms. Is there any other field of endeavour that mints more acronyms than aviation? I suppose that working for a glass house like AOPA, I can't really throw stones at the CAA, EASA or ICAO. But we can all speak in a language nobody understands. Sometimes we even baffle each other.

In this, my bi-monthly round-up of news that doesn't necessarily make the news, I'll translate most of the acronyms, leaving in the ones you're familiar with because I use them over and over again; if you need further enlightenment, send an SAE.

On September 22nd I had a meeting with Ben Stanley of Helios to discuss the SESAR Joint Undertaking and where GA will fit into the future plan. The discussion centred on IAOPA and the proactive moves it can make in the SJU during its development phase, which has already started. IAOPA-Europe spent about €400,000 on the first phase of SESAR, and it's one of the most important issues in which we are involved, even though the fruits of SESAR won't be felt for years.

On the following day I had a meeting at the DfT in support of PPL/IR, represented by Vasa Babic, to discuss IR issues coming out of EASA. AOPA supports the proposals PPL/IR is making. Recently EASA announced the formation of FLC 068, at which IAOPA shall be represented

by Dr Michael Erb, managing director of AOPA Germany, who is a holder of an IFR rating and in current practice.

On September 24th I had a preliminary interview with an AOPA member who is accused of low flying in a helicopter whilst doing some filming for a hospice. It is alleged that he flew in breach of Rule 5 and that he failed to comply with the rules regarding the aircraft's permit to fly.

On September 29th I went to a meeting of a sub-working group of EASA's Industry Consultation Body looking at Single European Sky issues, primarily the further separation of regulation and service provision. We need to keep a watchful eye on SES, where there are a lot of voices who don't have GA's interests at heart.

The next day I met with Alain Sabert of SESAR JU. We had an exploratory discussion about further IAOPA involvement in SESAR and the proposed IAOPA Europe-sponsored workshop in 2009. Our aim is to make sure that future air traffic management evolution takes into account GA's changing requirements.

October 1st was a busy day which began with a meeting at Farnborough airport with representatives of the Aerodrome Operator's Association's GA committee, chaired by John Haffenden, airport manager for Shoreham. Part of my role in AOPA is networking, and my thanks go to Tom Needham of the AOA who is also



keen on the idea of networking. AOA members service the needs of AOPA members so we have many common interest as well as common members. The AOA has essentially

resurrected the GA part of their business, which hopefully will mean regular AOPA/BBGA involvement.

Next day I attended a CAA interview with the AOPA member who stands accused in the above-mentioned low flying incident, and on October 7th I went to an ACEP meeting at Gatwick. It is now recognised that the work of ACEP in the Communication and Education role of ATSOCAS has been extremely valuable. I would like to pay tribute to Dave Chapman, who retires from chairing ACEP to take over as head of SRG, replacing Mike Bell. We wish him well in his new role. I think that Dave will have a better understanding of GA than any of his predecessors.

October 9th brought a meeting of NATMAC, which looks after UK air traffic management; issues included SES II, Ofcom, 8.33kHz radios and airspace charges. It was the final NATMAC meeting for the CAA's John Arscott, who retires in February. I wish him well.

On October 10th there was a meeting of the General Aviation Consultative Committee at CAA HQ, followed by a meeting at Biggin Hill with Steve Copeland and Timothy Nathan of the AOPA

and professional, use in European airspace.

AOPA-Denmark's Jacob Pedersen says: "EASA says to us, 'don't you think it's nice that we would get business in Europe that's going to America?' but we want to do that by making European licenses attractive, not just banning everybody. They admit they have no safety issues with foreign registry, it's just a barrier to free competition."

Martin Robinson from AOPA-UK said it was not just on licensing, but on Ops that EASA planned to ban N-registered aircraft out of the system. "Forcing all foreign-registered aircraft to comply with EASA regulations would mean a huge financial hit for the thousands of owners of N-registered aircraft in Europe," he said.

"EASA says the FAA will exercise no regulatory oversight of N-reg aircraft in Europe, but we have spoken to the FAA office in Brussels and they say that's not true – they will provide oversight. But EASA and the FAA have bigger problems to resolve between them, most notably EASA's fees and charges."

Emanuel Davidson of AOPA-France said there were more people coming back to France with US licenses than there were professional pilots being trained in France, and that this situation had been tacitly encouraged by the French authorities. Training for FAA ratings in France was big business. "We don't understand why France as an ICAO member



doesn't recognise ICAO licenses," he said.

"The professionals they want to protect don't want to be protected.

"There's a little school with five CFIs 80km outside Paris, and last year trained 200 FAA IR pilots – more than the total number of CPL IRs at all FTOs in France put together. Pilots are there because they have a Cirrus or a Cessna

There are more pilots coming back to France with US licenses than there are professional pilots being trained in France

182 with a glass panel. Who would fly such an aircraft at 1500 feet VFR?

"Look at aircraft sales in Europe – who's selling? Cirrus, Piper, Cessna. In the last five years, about 90 percent of aircraft sold on the N-reg in Europe cannot be certificated in Europe because the STCs have not been converted. Lots of AOPA members out there cannot change their licence or transfer their plane, except if EASA and the FAA reach agreement.

"If these certification issues were resolved, something like a Mooney Ovation could go on the French register. There are no safety issues. No owner of an American aircraft in Europe goes from one annual to the next without checking and changing his oil. Safety arguments are just protecting the bunker."

Lars Hjelmberg of AOPA-Sweden said that Sweden was currently rewriting its own air law to effectively ban third country aircraft from being permanently based there. They claim they are acting on directives coming out of Brussels that indicate they want only European-registered aircraft in Sweden.

Craig Fuller, the new President of AOPA-US, said that companies like FlightSafety, who had recently invested hundreds of millions of dollars in European flight training, did not see how they would be able to function under the new proposals. "They are looking for allies, and we are engaging with them," he said.

Jacob Pedersen said IAOPA-Europe was making common cause with the business aviation lobby, the EBAA, with the FTOs and with other organisations to present a united front on the issue.

Dr Michael Erb of AOPA-Germany said EASA had the cart before the horse because FCL 008 would introduce the long-promised 'IR lite' from which all the extraneous and pointless theory would be removed – but that needed to be done before any move was made against foreign registry. "They are closing down the pressure-relief valve, and causing great damage to our industry," he said. Jacob Pedersen, however, cautioned that general aviation should not expect much from the review of the IR. He added that the FCL NPA is based on the underlying Essential Requirements, and therefore this issue has also been raised with the European Commission. ■

Members Working Group to discuss their AOPA Mentoring Scheme. More on that in the next issue.

Then there was a Department for Transport meeting on the 14th to discuss points that should be brought out in their consultation on aerodromes and air traffic management. We had a National Air Traffic Services meeting at Swanwick on the 15th, and I went to Zurich on the 17th for the 119th regional meeting of IAOPA-Europe. The basic idea was to get our story straight on EASA-FCL, and the meeting is reported on fully elsewhere in these pages. It gave me an opportunity to meet Craig Fuller, who takes over as AOPA-US president from Phil Boyer at the turn of the year. Craig is already up to speed on most of the issues we face, and with his expertise in lobbying he will be a useful leader at this difficult time. He also seems to be an all-round nice guy.

I went straight on to Brussels on the 20th for a SESAR JU meeting. Dr Erb and myself had a good meeting with Alain Sebert, the chief economist and environmental expert in the SESAR JU. I was in London on October 29th for a meeting of the AOPA executive committee, discussing mainly membership issues, and in the afternoon I went to Sabadel near Barcelona to speak at a conference on GA in support of AOPA Spain and the Fira Sabadel – an excellent air show. I also spent time with the new president of AOPA Spain Carlos Mairti and some of the board. Marlies Campi continues as Vice President and IAOPA representative.

I managed to get two clear days on

November 3rd and 4th to deal with members' individual problems in the office, and on November 5th I went to the AOPA Expo in San Jose, California. There's a brief report elsewhere in these pages; I had many discussions about what the future holds, the impact of the credit crunch on business and the volume of regulatory change. The Americans are keen to hear about EASA, on N-reg aircraft in Europe and the future of avgas – as we've reported before in these pages, AOPA-US and GAMA are researching what kind of alternatives may exist. Interestingly, a few people in the USA are waking up to the fact that Europe is an early warning system for America, and regulatory problems we're currently experiencing here will hit them tomorrow. There is also a fear that Barrack Obama may go down the ETS route, introducing emissions trading schemes for all of aviation. Generally ETS is seen as a red herring which doesn't reduce emissions but makes middlemen rich – rather like selling pardons in the Middle Ages. Overall, the mood of Expo was optimistic.

Coming up (at time of writing) there's a CAA EASA FCL briefing at Gatwick on the 17th, the NPPL AGM on the 19th, an ICB meeting in Brussels on the 26th and 27th, and in early December we've got DFT discussions on EASA, meeting with ICAO and Eurocontrol. And while I remember, the AOPA office is closed for the holidays between December 22nd and January 5th, so have a great Christmas and let's hope the New Year is as good as the old.

Martin Robinson

How much will Part M cost?

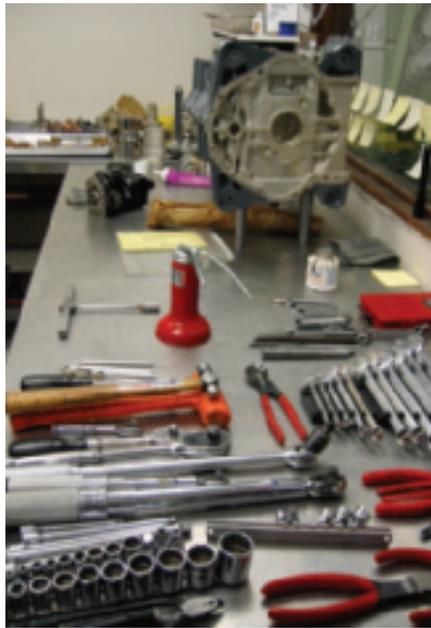
A number of AOPA members have sought the Association's help and advice over charges being imposed by engineers to cover costs associated with the implementation of the Part M, sub-part G maintenance requirements imposed by EASA. These seem to average about £1,000 per aircraft per year, or up to £2,500 in the case of helicopters.



AOPA chairman George Done, who deals with engineering queries on behalf of members, has looked into the situation and says that solid conclusions are difficult to arrive at. Engineers have certainly been made to jump through hoops in order to qualify as certified maintenance organisations under EASA, and there is more administration and more paperwork than before. But some of this work is one-time-only and the real cost of Part M won't be established until all aircraft have had Annual Review Certificates for a year.

Part M is an unattractive piece of one-size-fits-all EASA legislation designed for commercial aircraft but catching GA in its net. Promises from EASA that they would introduce a 'Part M lite' for GA have come to virtually nothing. (See George Done's Chairman's Column on page 4). But are engineers using it as an excuse to hike charges?

The CAA says so. In a letter to Jeremy James, secretary of the Helicopter Club of Great Britain, who have queried the imposition of new charges, the CAA's Neil Williams says: "The maintenance needs of individual aircraft are determined by its general condition and the tasks required to be performed by the approved aircraft maintenance programme.



Engineers say nobody's getting fat on light aircraft maintenance revenue

The records that must be kept for an aircraft subject to EASA regulations are very similar to those required by the ANO. Therefore, costs associated with accomplishment of any required maintenance task and the production of the necessary records should not change significantly as a result of the implementation of Part M.

"It is fair to say that aircraft records may be subject to closer scrutiny by Continued Airworthiness Management Organisations in the period immediately after the implementation of Part M, which may result in some additional time being consumed to resolve any issues that come to light. I believe that this will settle down quickly and should not result in any significant increase in overall workload and therefore cost."

Some engineers, however, call that disingenuous. One said: "It's taken me the best part of a year to get my approvals – probably about eight man-weeks of work. Part M continues to cost me time and money, and I cannot absorb it. It's not just EASA – the burden of paperwork has increased inexorably over the last ten years, and there's an element of payback in it. We should have been charging more in the past. But even we don't know what will be required and how much it's really going to cost. The CAA have started auditing CAMOs already, and that's an expensive business for us. If we charged as much for administration time as the CAA does, the bill would be perhaps ten times higher."

A second engineer at a rural airfield said: "I have to raise new documentation for all aircraft covering everything from weight and balance, compass swings and out of phase components and that's a big job for every aircraft. I'm making a charge of £300 for each plane to cover that work, but I don't know what the ongoing cost will be. I've just paid the CAA £2,700 to renew my CAMO approval.

"The fact is that nobody's getting fat maintaining light aircraft. I'm charging labour costs of £39 an hour, or about one third of what you'll pay for your car. People in this business know they'll always be scratching a living. The idea that we're ripping off owners just doesn't stand up to scrutiny." ■

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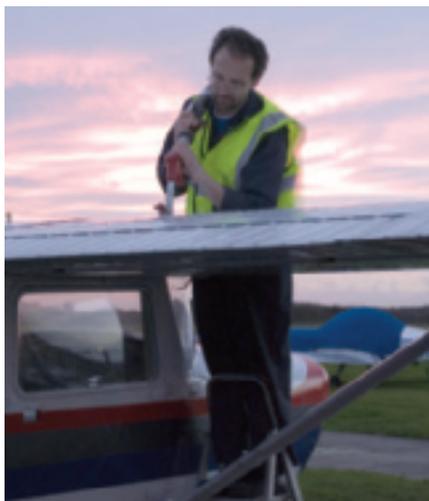
Relief on avgas tax

At the end of a two-year campaign, the UK government has agreed to reclassify avgas as a specialist fuel and to impose an EU-mandated tax at a level which means GA pilots will notice no change in taxes at the bowser.

This is a major triumph because the original EU proposal would have added up to 40p a litre to avgas, enough to drive many pilots out of GA. It has come about after AOPA was involved in dozens of meetings with Treasury and Department for Transport officials, the CAA and avgas suppliers like Air BP, and it will save the average GA pilot hundreds of pounds a year.

The problem arose in 2006 when the UK government applied to Europe for a continuing 'derogation' to allow it to levy tax on avgas at half the rate of that for motor fuel. This concession had been negotiated by AOPA some 25 years before on the grounds that most avgas was used for training and business purposes, and over the years it has saved GA pilots millions of pounds.

Unexpectedly, Europe refused the derogation, and the UK was forced to consider raising avgas duty to the level of car fuel, effectively doubling the tax. In fighting the proposal, AOPA found it was knocking on an open door as far as the Treasury was concerned, and throughout the debate there has been positive support from Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs, the DfT and the CAA. Treasury specialists suggested investigating the possibility of reclassifying avgas as a specialist fuel, which would allow them to tax it at a different rate to motor fuel. AOPA, working



with other bodies like the Helicopter Club of Great Britain, held out for the EU minimum rate of 30.35p a litre, which is as near as makes no difference to the current rate. With technical data obtained from Air BP, the CAA and others, the Treasury was able to establish that avgas could legitimately be classified as a specialist fuel, and HMRC has announced that duty will be unchanged.

AOPA chief executive Martin Robinson says: "This is a fantastic result. Since the early 1980s the tax concession negotiated by AOPA has saved pilots literally millions of pounds, and now it is clear that this

concession will continue. Had we failed, it could have been disastrous for our industry."

Unfortunately the same EU law means the UK is required to introduce a tax on avtur used for recreational purposes, and this has been fixed at 50.35p a litre. Because only a tiny amount of avtur is used for private pleasure flying, HMRC will gather the tax on an 'honesty box' system where users will declare each month what proportion of their fuel was used for pleasure. All flight training and business use will be exempt.

None of this affects the UK government's proposal to introduce Aviation Duty on domestic avtur in place of departure tax. AOPA has proposed that this new tax, if it cannot be forestalled, be collected on the same 'honesty box' system. The proposal is still being consulted on. ■

Brock Farm success

Congratulations to Robert Napp and all who use Brock Farm airstrip near Stock in Essex following their successful planning appeal against an enforcement notice issued by Chelmsford Borough Council. The airstrip, which has been in use since 1982, was said by the council to be an inappropriate development in the Metropolitan Green Belt. The planning inspector quashed the enforcement order subject to several conditions agreed to by the users of the airstrip; no take-offs before 0830 or after 1900 and no landings after 2100, no circuit training, and no air rallies or events.



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GPS approach at Shoreham

The first GPS approach in Britain came on line at Shoreham on November 20th following two years of evaluation by the CAA.

Details of the approach at Shoreham are included in the AIP update published on October 9th. Full details of the requirements and further information on flying the approaches are set out in CAP 773 which is available on the CAA website at www.caa.co.uk/application.aspx?catid=33&pagetype=65&appid=11. Type 'CAP 773' into the 'Search' field if you don't get it first time.



The requirements for pilots and aircraft are that pilots flying the approach must have a current Instrument Rating (IR) or an Instrument Meteorological Conditions Rating (IMCR), and the aircraft navigation system

installation, based upon GNSS receiver equipment qualified to (E)TSO-C129a (certain classes only) or (E)TSO-C145 or (E)TSO-C146, must be approved for the purpose.

Trying to find out what's approved and what's not is difficult. Many GPS units currently installed in aircraft don't qualify. No hand-helds are approved.

CAA requirements state that an airfield must have a CAA licence, a runway meeting the physical characteristics required for an instrument runway – this covers the runway strip width, its clear and graded area, surface markings, holding points and lighting (if used at night); and an air traffic control service – not Flight

Information Service or air-ground operator.

AOPA has tried to persuade the CAA that GPS approaches are needed for backwoods aerodromes like Enstone and Headcorn, not for costly provincial airports which are steadily trying to shut out GA. The CAA's stipulations, however, make that impossible, and the home-made GPS approaches which are currently in use, with all their attendant dangers, will continue to be the norm. ■



Change at GASCo

The General Aviation Safety Council, or GASCo, was established in 1966 and was one of its founder members. Its sole objective is to 'save lives in general aviation'. AOPA has supported this important safety body throughout with annual donations and is one of 32 aviation member organisations that do likewise. The largest donation to GASCo's funds is provided, however, by the CAA. At the Council meeting in September 2008, the GASCo Chairman, Gerald Hackemer, referred to the wish of the CAA to outsource its safety education and promotion remit. To this end, a group of GASCo Board members, including the AOPA Chairman, has been working on a proposal for a 'new look' GASCo.

The CAA has also been pursuing its own thought processes, and has planned a meeting for the 9th December 2008 at which its conclusions will be made public. In the meantime, we can only speculate, but it seems likely that the colleague flight safety organisation also supported to some extent by the CAA, the UK Flight Safety Committee (UKFSC), which is concerned with civil air transport, will form part of the overall picture. A scan of its website indicates a body having a longer history, with its origins stemming from an announcement to the House of Commons in 1959, than GASCo and, as would be expected from its remit to CAT, a higher degree of structure within its constitution and objectives.

AOPA UK members interested in the future of flight safety in the UK may also wish to explore the wide scope of the AOPA US Air Safety Foundation, established in 1950, on its website www.aopa.org/asf

Got your 406 PLB?

The day is fast approaching when all ELTs and PLBs must be operating on 406 MHz. If you have a 121.5/243 analogue model, it'll be almost useless after February 2009 because the satellites will stop monitoring the frequency.

AOPA's position is that every pilot should buy the best ELT or PLB they can afford. The digital 406 MHz system is more accurate and can incorporate encoded data including a unique identifier. PLBs like the McMurdo Fastfind incorporate a GPS unit which allows rescuers to home accurately onto the signal and makes you much easier to find. The Fastfind and other 406 MHz units still broadcast on 121.5 because rescuers will use that frequency in the final stages of the search.

Robb Metcalfe, head of the General Aviation Inspectorate at the CAA's

Safety Regulation Group, says: "Owners of ELTs need to check that their transmitters can broadcast on the new frequency, as 406MHz beacons are superior to their analogue predecessors and with GNSS input provide far more accurate information to rescue teams, bringing help to pilots in distress much faster than was possible with the old system."

An additional advantage of 406 MHz is that false alarms are massively reduced. With 121.5, only about one alert in 50 is genuine, but it's believed that 406 improves this to about one in 17. Given these figures, it's important to register your ELT or PLB when you buy it – the paperwork comes with the unit and it's the work of ten minutes to fill in the form. A significant number of buyers don't do so, apparently. That means when an alarm is received its veracity cannot easily be checked, and a full S&R exercise will be launched.

It is important when members are flying overseas that they check the individual country's rules on the carriage of all equipment, including transponders.

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Oxford costs

Charges at Oxford Airport have been increased again, and new charges have been introduced for aircraft owners who must now pay to use the car park.

AOPA members at Oxford have been hit with a series of cost increases and some are looking for new airfields at which to base their aircraft. Oxford has ploughed money into upgrading the airfield as a business aviation centre, and owners of light aircraft are questioning whether the airfield is using price to drive them out.

In summer, the price of the monthly landing card was raised from £84 to £120, and VAT was added in November. As one owner points out, that's a 68% increase since May. In addition, the card now entitles the holder to only ten landings a month – any more must be paid for at £7:50 each.

Since June, users of Oxford have had to pay £29:50 every time they use the ILS, and some pilots have voiced concern that scud-running and discreet use of a partial ILS approach will lead to safety issues.

Oxford's problems stem from the fact that its biggest tenant, Oxford Air Training, has been forced to take its business abroad, leading to a catastrophic shortfall in activity at Oxford. The airport manager James Dillon-Godfray answers owners' complaints with sympathy but adds: "School flying once represented 95% of activity here. It is now down to just 36% and

we are the quietest we have ever been in our history. Our operating costs have doubled in five years whilst our movements have dropped by 70% in ten. We are no longer a profitable business today, but have made substantial investments with the aim of becoming so in the near future."

Some £15 million has been invested in the airport in the last few years, he says, and that money must be recouped. "If you looked at the books, you may well conclude that we should have become an industrial estate, housing estate or business park some time ago – a lot more money to be made a lot quicker. Believe it or not though, we are determined to keep it all going as a viable



'regional airport' in preference to any other avenue. Any suggestions on alternative means of making a living are warmly received. I've looked at motor racing, horse racing, film studios, Sunday markets, exhibition centres and golf courses, but aviation remains in the blood. As the only 'commercial' airport between Heathrow and Birmingham, we definitely have an aviation future."

One Oxford owner says: "I have sympathy, but the cost burden cannot continue to fall on the GA user. Every new charge breaks somebody else's back. If I leave they will no longer have my £5,000 per annum fees for doing very little." ■

Left: Oxford airport manager James Dillon-Godfray says the airfield has never been quieter
Below: Oxford has invested millions in facilities for business jets



Hold your horses

The credit crunch should be used by the regulatory authorities as an opportunity to slow down the pace of change across Europe, allowing more consideration of contentious issues like airspace restrictions and mandatory equipment, AOPA has suggested.

Despite the signs of contraction in the industry – airlines failing, aircraft being parked, pilots given gardening leave or laid off altogether, load factors falling – EASA, Eurocontrol and national aviation authorities have not officially altered growth predictions on which the timing of new legislation is based. AOPA's Chief Executive Martin Robinson says: "In fact, growth has flat-lined and seems likely to go into reverse, the need to get to a certain point by 2010, 2015 or 2020 is driving programmes like SESAR, and consultation is cut short because of the urgency of the situation. We should be reappraising our timescales because of the current economic situation and giving ourselves more time to get things right first time."

On June 27th this year there were 34,476 IFR movements in European skies, an all-time record, but year-on-year growth is now below one percent. Eurocontrol's forward planning predicts a

contraction before the end of the year. Its aim is to handle up to 50,000 movements daily by 2020 at an average of 37,500 per day with a mean delay of one minute or less – a 35 percent increase in capacity. The drive towards that goal is a factor behind many of the problems faced by GA – Mode S equipage, 8.33 kHz radios, the continuing encroachment of controlled airspace.

"We have been granted a breather and we should take advantage of it," says Martin Robinson. "The headlong rush for change is bad for decision-making, especially at a time of wholesale disruption such as the transfer of authority from the JAA to EASA. The nonsense that is Part M is a consequence of not giving consultation enough time, or taking it seriously. Unless the brakes are applied, EASA is going to make the same mess of Ops and Licensing."

The issue was debated at the European regional meeting of International AOPA in Zurich at the end of October. Martin Robinson says: "In the medium term we expect growth to resume at the same steady pace we have seen for the past 60 years, but unless we face up to the realities of today's situation we will find that the GA industry has been compromised in the rush to provide for a CAT industry that hasn't yet turned up for the game. On one hand the airline industry yells for more capacity and on the other they claim to be going broke. Which is it? Boom or bust - it cannot be both."

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Who deserves recognition?

AOPA invites and urges members to submit for consideration the names of worthy candidates for its prestigious achievement and endeavour awards, which recognise the special contributions of individuals and organisations to private aviation.

The AOPA Awards are made every two years and cover almost every facet of GA, seeking to reward the contributions of pilots, flying schools and instructors, ATCOs, aerodromes and engineers – in fact anyone who has improved the lot of aviators anywhere.

If you would like to nominate someone for an award, please send a letter or an email to AOPA with enough supporting evidence to help

a panel of judges form a decision. About 200

words should be enough, but more is welcome. The postal address is 50a Cambridge St, London SW1V 4QQ, and the email address is info@aopa.co.uk. If you have someone or an organisation in mind for a possible award, please do not delay – get an email or letter off to us straight away. All nominations will be acknowledged. Achievement and Endeavour Awards are:

Lennox-Boyd Trophy. Awarded to a person, club, group or organisation who has contributed significantly to the furtherance of flight training, club flying or piloting standards. The trophy is a cup in a

special presentation box which was originally given to the Association of British Aero Clubs by the late Rt Hon Alan Lennox-Boyd PC CH MP (subsequently Viscount Boyd of Merton) in 1953. In 2007, the trophy was awarded to the British Business and General Aviation

Association (BBGA) in recognising the pivotal role played in furthering the interests of general aviation in the UK.

AOPA Special Award. Awarded to a pilot, controller or engineer, or other person who has made a special contribution to safety, or other areas of general aviation. The trophy is a cup originally presented by the British Precision Pilots Association in 1987. The trophy was awarded in 2007 to the well known Flight Instructor/Examiner Irv Lee.

Best Aerodrome. Awarded to the aerodrome that has been an outstanding place to visit, offering value for money and helpful service. The trophy is a sword donated to AOPA by Airtour International Ltd (now Pooley's Flight Equipment Ltd) in 1982. The sword was presented to Lands End Airport in 2007.

Customer Care.

Awarded to the flying school, club or organisation that has provided outstanding customer care, as recommended by students or private pilots. The trophy is a shield, and was awarded in 2007 to David Cockburn, Editor of GASIL and presenter of the CAA Safety Evenings.

Contribution to the Community. Awarded to a person or organisation who has made an outstanding contribution to the aviation community. The trophy is a cup donated in 1997 by Flyer magazine. In 2007 it was awarded to Howard Clayton for his outstanding contribution to the AOPA Ground Instructors Course.

Controller of the Year. Awarded to a controller, FISO or ATC team who has or have provided especially good service to pilots. The trophy is a shield, originally donated by International Air



David Cockburn with his Customer Care award

Radio Ltd, who developed the AERAD charts, in 1982. The shield was presented to Farnborough ATC in 2007 for its dedicated service.

Individual Merit. Awarded to a pilot who has made an outstanding aviation achievement. The trophy is a cup on a granite plinth. It was awarded in 2007, posthumously as it happened, to Barry Dyke, much loved and respected CFI at Western Air Ltd, Thrupton.

Instructor of the Year. Awarded to an instructor who has made a special contribution to the training of student pilots for the PPL or NPPL, or to private pilots for added qualifications. The trophy is an art deco cup donated in 2004 by Virgin Experience Days. It was awarded in 2007 to Carol Cooper, dedicated CFI at Andrewsfield.



Irv Lee won the AOPA Special Award



Instructor of the Year award was won by Carol Cooper

Friend of AOPA. Awarded to a person or persons who has or have made a special contribution towards the work of AOPA. The award is normally a tankard for the recipient to keep. In 2007 it was awarded to AOPA member David Tang for helping establish an AOPA UK and IAOPA presence in China. ■

There's always one

If you don't expect air traffic control to be helpful, you'll never be disappointed. That's the message coming out of a CAA investigation into an incident at an airfield in central England where AOPA is representing an engineer who is alleged to have taxied an aircraft on the manoeuvring area without ATC permission.

The engineer, new to the airfield, had previously been shown where his company did their ground runs and had expected to go there to do some engine checks. Instead, he was directed by ATC to go to holding point Echo.

"Where is Echo?" he asked.

The correct answer was: "A few yards up on your left". Instead, the engineer was brusquely instructed to go back where he'd come from, get a map of the airfield and not to come out again until he'd learned where the holding points were.

The engineer, under time pressure, did a 180, performed his power checks where he was, then taxied back to the hangar. ATC reported him to the CAA for allegedly taxiing on the manoeuvring area without permission.

Martin Robinson says: "It may be that his wing went over the white line onto the manoeuvring area when he was turning. He certainly did his ground run in an unauthorised area, but that's not a matter for the CAA. This investigation, which has surely cost the CAA hundreds of pounds, is ill-conceived; the CAA is not there to back up the ill-tempered compositeness of someone in the tower. While 99 percent of controllers are unfailingly helpful even in trying circumstances, one or two can be very petty. If pilots plan in the expectation that today's the day they run into the dictatorial fringe, they'll be ready for anything."

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Lee on Solent guide

The Lee Flying Association has produced an 11-page guide for power pilot using the aerodrome as progress continues in the battle to retain the airfield for general aviation.

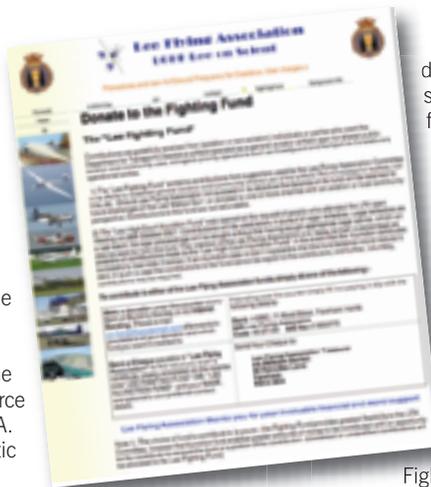
Hampshire Constabulary, who have been fighting to keep Lee on Solent to themselves, have agreed an annual landing card of £550, as opposed to the £2,511 they originally proposed. The LFA says that while the card is two or three times the market rate, it is substantially more realistic than the charge originally proposed. The fee will be £275 for microlights.

The police have also abandoned plans to back-date the charge to 2006. Charges have not been enforced since October 2006 because, according to the police, they needed to establish a level of charges with the Maritime Coastguard

Agency. But the Police Authority has directed Hampshire Constabulary that "charges would not be invoiced retrospectively for the period when, based on legal advice, charges were not made in order to protect the Authority's position". So either somebody's got their wires crossed or the police have been feeding everyone a load of bunny.

In its latest newsletter the LFA says: "Local councillors, MPs, HPA and Daedalus Strategy Group Members are now aware that the damaging assertion that 'GA is present at Daedalus on a Grace and Favour basis only', often repeated throughout 2007, was not an accurate representation of the situation."

The newsletter goes on: "The terms and conditions for the User Licence associated with the User Fee remain the subject of discussion with the Constabulary's Force Solicitor and AOPA. AOPA are optimistic that these



discussions will come to a satisfactory conclusion in the near future."

A new aerodrome manual has been written, incorporating procedures agreed with the CAA and the MoD.

Restrictions remain and it cannot be claimed that Lee on Solent is fully open to general aviation, but progress continues. For the current situation and a copy of the guide, have a look at the website www.eghf.co.uk. You can also contribute to the Lee Fighting Fund online. ■



Wind turbines

A proposal to build a wind farm under the Manchester low level corridor threatens danger for users of the route, and AOPA is seeking amendments either to the plans or to the corridor to maintain its viability.

Wind turbines reaching up to 300 feet on a route with a ceiling of 1250 feet agl is a recipe for trouble, and AOPA is asking either that the turbines be restricted to 200 feet or the 1250 feet restriction be raised to 1500 feet.

The route allows GA traffic, including non-radio, to transit north-south between Manchester and Liverpool. After a meeting with the CAA on the subject AOPA's chief executive Martin Robinson said: "A 1250 foot limit seems to be erring too heavily on the side of caution, so much so that the risks are

materially increased for aircraft using the lane, especially if tall wind turbines are built. If it was raised to 1,500 feet there would still be a minimum of 1000 feet clearance between lane users and commercial traffic approaching O6 at Manchester. As far as take-offs are concerned, modern airliners are often at 1000 feet before the end of the runway."

The route is exempt from the 1000-foot component of Rule 5 on low flying, but aircraft must be able to alight clear of persons or property in the case of engine failure.

The wind farm proposers have yet to specify the exact height of their turbines. The case is added to a portfolio of planning applications where wind farms impinge on aerodromes. Official 'safeguarding' of flying sites often helps, and information on how to safeguard your site can be obtained from David Ogilvy at AOPA.

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Members drive progress



The AOPA Members Working Group at White Waltham with Timothy Nathan's Aztec

The AOPA Members Working Group is forging ahead with a series of projects it has instigated, including the mentoring scheme, the network of area representatives for AOPA and the establishment of a communications strategy for the Association.

At a group meeting at White Waltham late in September it was decided that Timothy Nathan and Steve Copeland should meet with Martin Robinson to resolve the final outstanding matters on to the mentoring scheme with a view to launching a VFR scheme early in 2009. Issues remain concerning liability insurance and decisions must be made on qualifications, interview procedures and administrative matters, and given that the members group meets every two months, it was deemed unnecessary to have to wait for decisions.

The Group discussed ways of getting to the non-club fliers who might benefit from the mentoring scheme, and reiterated the need to ensure there was clear blue water between mentoring and instruction. Martin Robinson noted that the scheme took on an even greater importance given the situation at GASCo, with the CAA looking to the GA organisations to work proactively to improve flight safety.

The question of whether the scheme should be limited to AOPA members was raised but not settled; the possibility of involving other GA organisations in the scheme was also mooted. It is planned that selection of mentors should begin in January 2009.

The network of area AOPA representatives will be launched in December with about 20 on board – a separate story in this issue covers the topic. Andy Reohorn has done much of the spadework on the reps plan despite studying for his ATPLs. If you would like to act as an AOPA representative at your club or airfield, please contact Andy via email – andy.reohorn@gmail.com.

The working group discussed procedures for updating information on reps' boards, special AOPA email addresses for reps, and mechanisms by which reps can be recruited.

Various ideas for bolstering the Wings Scheme were debated, including the recruitment of well-known figures who are pilots to promote the scheme. Flyer magazine and Cabair have expressed an interest in supporting the scheme, and Roger Keen has taken ownership of it. Some enhancements,

such as a facility to apply for your Wings online, were recommended.

Comms

The discussion of AOPA's communications took up more than half the meeting. Richard Seth Smith, a PR and journalism professional, had prepared a comprehensive and detailed paper on what AOPA's strategy should be. There was widespread ignorance and confusion, he said, about what AOPA was and what it existed to do. A prerequisite for understanding was a clear and concise statement of aims, which should ideally tell the whole story while making up a maximum of eight words.

AOPA used several such statements in its promotional literature but all of them were imprecise and amorphous. "None of them" said Richard, "will allow AOPA members to say 'I joined AOPA because of this...'"

Richard was supported by Michael Ryan, who said the Association could only have one aim, which must be succinctly encapsulated in a statement which conveyed to people that AOPA was about 'making Britain a better place to own, to fly, to operate GA aeroplanes.' AOPA needs to understand its aim and be able to measure progress towards achieving it. The whole general aviation sector, Michael said, exploited the leisure market badly and failed to add value.

Richard's strategy involved refining the message, then disseminating it in a controlled and comprehensive way. AOPA must register its existence with the general media, and rework its own website to carry the right messages in the right way.

"Retention of members will be especially difficult in the coming year, given the economic situation, and the recruitment of new members will also suffer. It is therefore doubly important that we improve and refine our communications, and do it now."

There was some debate about the value of web forums, in particular the AOPA forum on the Flyer website (www.flyer.co.uk, click on 'forums' and you'll see it). Richard thought it was counter-productive because it simply allowed those who for some reason had conceived a hatred for AOPA to attack the Association. Mike Cross, however, defended the forum, saying that every attack could be countered with reason, allowing people to

make up their own minds about the merits of the arguments.

Proposals were advanced to create electronic news streams carrying headline information which would be cross-referenced to the website, and would be disseminated by several means. More on this later.

Good news

Martin Robinson's review of the Association's work was upbeat and positive, with good news on several fronts – the avgas tax concession negotiated by AOPA 25 years ago, which has saved all GA pilots millions of pounds, has effectively been saved after two years of hard work – full details elsewhere in this issue. He had recently returned from a European Parliamentary hearing on

general aviation at which positive things had been said about revisiting the very foundations of EASA to find out why it had spawned such monsters as Part M, why it was threatening foreign-registered aircraft owners with financial disaster for insufficient reason and with no viable alternatives, and why the EASA system delivers such poor regulation. They had received a sympathetic hearing from the aviation commissioner Daniel Calleja, who agreed that the situation needed to be reviewed.

The failure of EASA was generally deplored, with members noting that the price for such indefensible actions as the killing of the IMC rating would be paid in lives. Timothy Nathan summed it up: "The European Commission needs to understand that EASA is not competent to legislate for us, and we should give them ten examples of where they have signally failed to produce workable regulations."

Members spent a certain amount of time laughing at Ofcom's proposals for radio spectrum pricing, but they're deadly serious – Martin Robinson outlined the measures AOPA is taking to try to introduce some common sense into the debate.

Mike Cross also gave a heartening review of the situation at Lee on Solent, which has been saved for general aviation use thanks to the work of the Lee Flying Association, supported by AOPA. There are many problems remaining to be addressed, but they are being worked on and there is no reason to suspect that the outcome will not be positive.

Members discussed other airfields which are facing problems, including Wycombe Air Park and Sandown.

Steve Copeland gave an update on his much-delayed IMCR survey, which should be up and running shortly, and also reported on the Met Office Working Group on which he represents AOPA – separate story on that elsewhere in this issue.

Overall, the meeting heard a lot of good and positive news about GA which reflected great credit on those who have worked hard, sometimes for years, to achieve results from which all pilots will benefit. Plans and proposals are in hand to keep the momentum of improvement going, and all those involved in the Members Working Group can be well satisfied with progress. ■



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New AOPA President

Aside from discussing EASA FCL (see page 5) the Zurich meeting of IAOPA-Europe in October was the first attended by the new AOPA-US President (and President-elect of IAOPA) Craig Fuller, who officially takes over from Phil Boyer on January 1st 2009.

Craig, a pilot since his teens, is a highly successful lobbyist who is currently executive vice president at the Washington public relations firm of APCO Worldwide. He first went to Washington in 1981 as President Ronald Reagan's assistant for cabinet affairs and served as Vice President George H Bush's chief of staff. He was headhunted for AOPA in a year-long elimination contest with a number of heavyweight contenders.

The Chairman of AOPA-US, William C Trimble, said: "After hundreds of interviews and painstaking review of 100 potential candidates, it was clear that Craig Fuller, a recognized leader in business, public affairs and association management, would be ideally suited to carry on Phil Boyer's tremendous legacy."

The 18 years of Phil Boyer's tenure have been distinguished by signal victories in a number of important areas, and by continued increase in AOPA membership in a declining pilot population. Of the 597,000 pilots in the US, 414,000 are members of AOPA, giving it tremendous lobbying power.

Lobbying is what Craig Fuller knows best. After serving in the Reagan and Bush White House he worked with a number of international public affairs companies before becoming President and CEO of the National Association of Chain Drug Stores (NACDS), a \$40 million organisation linking retailers, manufacturers and suppliers in the pharmaceutical industry. From there, he joined APCO Worldwide.

Craig was encouraged in his schoolboy interest in aviation by his father, who had been an instructor on B-17s and had been due to go to Europe when the war ended. With his father paying half the cost of his



New AOPA President Craig Fuller (left) with IAOPA General Secretary John Sheehan

instruction, he got his PPL while studying for a BA in political science at UCLA and was encouraged to join AOPA by his instructor. He has been a member since 1973. He has a Masters degree in urban studies from Occidental College in Los Angeles, where business travel in his early public affairs career allowed him to buy a Cessna 172RG Cutlass, which he later changed for a Beech Bonanza A36.

As a Washington lobbyist he flew 200 hours a year in the Bonanza, but he expects that figure to rise in his new job.

As a member of AOPA US Craig was only peripherally aware of IAOPA, but he says now: "I'm seeing what IAOPA does and I'm impressed by the breadth of the international group. It's important because general aviation pilots all over the world need an organisation to speak for them, because its multinational nature allows us to influence ICAO, and because the problems that some countries experience will no doubt be experienced by others later, so it gives us early warning of what we're likely to have to do. Not all AOPAs can emulate AOPA US, which is a big business in the publishing field, as an insurance company, as a finance company, but all AOPAs however small bring something to global general aviation, and make us all stronger." ■

Radio ga-ga

Dr Michael Erb of AOPA Germany reported on moves towards the imposition of 8.33 kHz radios on general aviation. Already required above FL195, and the planned extension to ground level will cost GA and the military about €2 billion.

IAOPA has always said the frequencies are inefficiently managed, and that there were more than enough for all if the allocation offices were amalgamated. AOPA-Germany performed a frequency reallocation exercise which increased available frequencies by 25 percent. Improved Europe-wide centralised frequency management could generate enough free frequencies to avoid the implementation of 8.33 until the expected implementation of digital radios in the years 2020-2025.

Following protests from IAOPA, Eurocontrol founded a Frequency Usage Analysis Project in 2007 that questioned the way frequency management is performed today. In July, Dr Erb and Martin Robinson, Klaus-Peter Sternemann and Philippe Hauser of AOPA met with Bernard Desperier and Patrick Delhaise from Eurocontrol, and the issue was discussed in a very positive atmosphere. Eurocontrol expressed its recognition to IAOPA for the constructive co-operation and discussions on the way forward. However, there were so many vested interests involved that anything said in public could be subverted behind the scenes, so GA would definitely be forced to adopt 8.33 kHz radios. "IAOPA has to try to push its implementation as far as possible into the future and to claim funding for equipping," said Dr Erb. "The European Commission in its 'Common Charging Regulation' (Chapter 2, section 5, par 3) suggests that charges can be shared for funding costs for airspace users in order to improve collective infrastructure. The cost of certification to EASA requirements could be funded, and this would reduce the cost of the equipment." ■

Mind your language

Are you operating on an FAA licence? If so, have you obtained a stamp to say you are proficient in the English language? If you haven't, you could be operating illegally.

New ICAO rules require you to have obtained a certain level of proficiency in English, and the Federal Aviation Administration will certify your competence with a stamp, no questions asked. But as Lars Hjelmberg of AOPA-Sweden pointed out, some European countries now require that you have that stamp in order to fly in their airspace. If you're a Serbo-Croat with three words of English and the stamp, you're legal, but if you're English born and bred and you don't have the stamp, you're not. Such is the wonderful world of bureaucracy.

Emanuel Davidson of AOPA-France said they had tried to establish exactly what the position was in each country, but it was difficult to find two people who said the same thing. In Germany, for instance, German pilots with FAA licences were not yet required to have the stamp, but French pilots flying into Germany were required to have it. "In France, we cannot cross a single border to leave the country legally without the stamp," he said. ■



IAOPA General Secretary John Sheehan presented Martin Robinson with a plaque commemorating his sterling work on behalf of IAOPA Europe. Martin, Deputy Vice President of IAOPA and chief executive of AOPA UK, is one of two full-time employees of AOPA in Europe.

Peter Skinner retires

Peter Skinner has stood down from the AOPA Board of Management because of ill health at the Association's Annual General Meeting in September after many years of stalwart service. Chairman George Done paid tribute to Peter's work and expressed gratitude for the contribution he has made to the cause of general aviation.

Peter will particularly be remembered for – in partnership with Ron Campbell – proposing, writing and pushing through the IMC rating, which has helped to keep thousands of general aviation pilots safe over the last 30 years. He also represented AOPA at Natmac, GACC and at GASCo,

All other Board members who were eligible for re-election were unanimously reappointed, although AOPA's Channel Islands chairman Charles Strasser commented again on the high average age of the Board members and wondered whether younger people would not be prepared to take some of the load. George Done said there were several AOPA committees, and in particular the Members Working Group, who were made up of younger people, some of whom would become the Board members of the future.

Directors due to retire by rotation were Geoffrey Boot, John Pett, David Ogilvy, Ian Perry and Charles Strasser. Geoffrey Boot offered himself for re-election on behalf of Instructor Members, John Pett, Ian Perry and Charles Strasser offered themselves for re-election on behalf of Aircraft Owner and Pilot Members, and David Ogilvy offered himself for re-election on behalf of Aerodrome Operator Members, and all were re-elected en bloc.

The Association's finances were said to be sound, with membership subscriptions up and a small profit on the bottom line, which was consistent, George Done said, with AOPA's aim of breaking even without making a commercial profit. Graham Rowe, the company secretary and accountant, resigned at the end of the financial year, to be replaced by Gordon Train. The full accounts are available from the AOPA offices or from Companies House. ■

IAN DAVIES 1959 — 2008

Ian Davies, the man who motivated publishers Archant to buy *Pilot* magazine in 1999, was killed in October when a Christen Eagle hit a tractor on final approach to Seething in Norfolk. A second man injured in the accident remains in a critical condition in hospital in Norwich.

Ian, an AOPA member and stalwart supporter, was a formation display pilot with the Red Sparrows Chipmunk team and a Class Rating Instructor with 3,000 hours. He had shares in a Chipmunk and a Brantly helicopter, the latter being featured in this magazine in October 2006. It was at Ian's instigation that we also featured Seething Airfield in *General Aviation* in February 2006. He had worked for Archant for 19 years and was Director of Group Business Development. A director of company subdivisions Archant Regional, Archant Life, Archant Specialist and Archant Dialogue, he was latterly responsible for major online developments. He had previously worked as a journalist and TV presenter. Ian also wrote aircraft flight tests for *Pilot*.

Aged 49, he leaves a widow, Colette, and children Francesca and Josh.

Pilot's editor Nick Bloom said: "Ian Davies died doing what he loved best - flying. All the team at *Pilot* feel his loss deeply and will miss him."

AOPA chief executive Martin Robinson added: "Ian was one of the good guys in GA, and he will be missed. Our thoughts are with his family." ■

