

French study 'sensible IR' option

The French are looking at an initiative which could help general aviation avoid some of the damage caused by EASA's proposals on instrument flying and its attack on the N-register in Europe. Before EASA takes over responsibility for flight crew licensing in April next year, France intends to have an ICAO-compliant, genuinely achievable PPL instrument rating. Holders will seek grandfather rights under EASA, and the French believe that if a handful of European countries adopt their IR, EASA might be persuaded that there's no point in persisting with its own destructive plans.

Emmanuel Davidson, Executive Vice President of AOPA France, outlined the plan to the IAOPA-Europe Regional Meeting in April. The new IR enjoys active support at the very top of the DGAC, the French CAA. The practical will require a minimum of 45 hours' training, which is greater than the ICAO standard, but the major difference will be on theoretical knowledge. Instead of seven written exams covering a mass of arcane and often nonsensical questions on how many megaphones are required on a 747, or fire axes on an A340, or calculating the mach number of a PA-28, there will be a single exam with questions relevant to the pilot flying a single-engined aircraft.

"On the private side, the European Instrument Rating is totally out of reach of 99 percent of private pilots," M Davidson said. "EASA's Working Group FCLO08 was working at a snail's pace at building a new IR and got nowhere. M Patrick Gandil, the Director of Civil Aviation at the DGAC, recognised that urgent action was required."

The JAA/EASA theoretical knowledge requirement, which calls for about a year of study, is the reason so many Europeans go to the United States for their instrument ratings and fly on the N-register in Europe. Under the FAA, the practical flying standard is as high or higher, but the theory is sensible and commensurate. Thousands of FAA IR holders fly in Europe every day, and EASA admits there is no safety issue with the rating. DGAC Director Gandil is to travel to the USA this month to fly with Bruce Landsberg, Director of the AOPA Foundation, to see the FAA IR in action.

M Davidson said: "In the UK they seem to have saved the IMC rating for those who already hold it by forcing EASA to accept that it cannot take away rights that pilots already have. Unlike the IMC rating, the French IR will be ICAO-compliant and will meet or exceed every international standard. The DGAC is talking to other CAAs, who are looking at whether they can

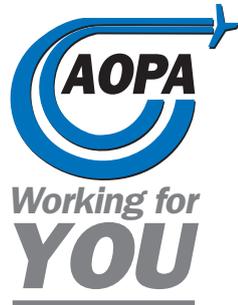
do this too. The DGAC is asking whether they will accept French pilots flying into their countries, and if so, why not adopt it? If five or six countries in Europe do so, we can ask EASA whether it's really necessary to continue with FCL.008's proposals – why not simply adopt what will already be in existence?"

Dr Michael Erb, who sat on the FCL.008 Working Group for IAOPA, confirmed that even for the so-called 'attainable' IR, the En Route Instrument Rating – which would allow flight on airways but not instrument approaches – candidates would still have to study for and pass the seven written exams needed for the full IR, which constitutes the greatest barrier to obtaining the rating for private pilots in Europe. M Davidson said this fact alone meant the EIR was no improvement. "Few people realise how the questions for these examinations are set," he said. "They exist to make money for the people who write them. Each country has people who submit questions, and if they go into the

number for a Cessna 182 flying at 2,000 feet at 100 knots indicated on an ISA day, it goes into the bank and the EIR or IR candidate must study to know it.

"For the new French IR we have teamed up with the DGAC to write the first knowledge book for the IR, and we intend to stay logical and relevant to the IR."

Dr Erb, Managing Director of AOPA Germany, reported that the holders of FAA Instrument Ratings would be forced by EASA to go back to flight school, no matter what standard they had attained, in order to have a check ride. They would also have to undertake the full theory course. "This is unacceptable for people who have held their ratings for decades, that they must disappear for weeks, months, do all this theory learning again," he said. "Even



instead of seven arcane exams, questions in the French ICAO-compliant IR will be relevant to the pilot flying a single-engined aircraft

database, those people are paid. So the sport is, let's get more questions in, we get paid more. The selection panels in each country have very few general aviation representatives – most of them are airline captains. I've been to one meeting, where the panel members have said, 'This one is funny – let's put it in'. I asked whether anyone there could answer the question, and the failure rate was 95 percent. And they still put the question in the bank.

"Each national panel submits its questions to a central committee, and the questions are then translated into each language. So if the French panel thinks it's funny to ask you to calculate the Mach

EASA accepts that the theoretical knowledge requirement for the IR is much too ambitious for private pilots.

"We met with EASA's Director of Rulemaking Jules Kneepkens and came away believing that this was a fruitful meeting, but then we found out that EASA FCL has effectively gone to the European Parliament and nothing can be changed. There may be a solution, but there is a high risk that thousands of pilots will be stranded and it will be a shock for our industry, which is economically in a very bad state. There has never been a safety concern over this. We must allow people to continue to fly as before with their licences, and we need methods by which they can validate their licences and ratings without unnecessary burden."

*IAOPA Europe Regional Meeting – page 36 ■

Jobs hinge on Olympic relief

The legacy of the 2012 Olympics will be one of broken companies, closed airfields, jobless instructors and redundant engineers unless the Home Office can be persuaded that its stifling security blanket should be modified in order to meet the government's promise of 'business as usual' during the London Games.

Martin Robinson says that while AOPA can demonstrate that security will only be

enhanced by making changes that will allow flight schools and GA businesses more leeway to continue operating over the two months the restrictions will be in place, there's little evidence that the government is willing to consider substantive change.

On April 5th AOPA organised a meeting in London between clubs, schools and airfields affected by the restrictions, and officials from the Department of Transport who were collecting data ahead of high-

level Home Office briefings. Also present was CAA Chief Executive Andrew Haines, whose advice mirrored that of AOPA: don't attack the restrictions on security grounds because it's something you know nothing about; instead be positive, propose alternatives, go with the grain. Engage in educating government about the facts, and offer constructive solutions.

Martin says: "This is that rare beast these days, a UK-only issue where we can join with our colleague associations in the



Chief executive's diary:

A tribute to The Few

"Nobody made a greater mistake than he who did nothing because he could only do a little." *Edmund Burke*

April and May have been quite busy for us at AOPA. The workload continues to increase but membership is bouncing along. I find it difficult to understand why so many people leave it to the few to support the work of the Association. When Churchill said: "Never in the field of human conflict has so much been owed by so many to so few" he could have been describing the situation in general aviation at the moment. I would like to thank our loyal membership for continuing to support us. Whenever I'm out and about and meet AOPA members I'm amazed and gratified by the generosity and kind words directed towards myself and AOPA. We have a very small team of dedicated professionals in AOPA, but it is a team effort and without their support I could not do half the things I do.

As I write these lines I am en route to Iceland to attend the board meeting and AGM of the Icelandic AOPA, who are affiliate members of International AOPA. The iPad is such a great tool for working in confined spaces such as low-cost airliner seats! I'm attending as Senior Vice President of International AOPA. Iceland has a vigorous GA community and some truly stupendous territory over which to fly. But to go back to where I left off in my last diary – towards the end of March I had a meeting with Anthony Bowles, the chairman of PPL/IR. We had a good discussion of how our two organisations can continue to work productively together. Next day, March 29th, I had two meetings, the first being the CAA's Finance Advisory Committee, where I try to keep the pressure on for cost reductions at the Authority. I went on from there to the CAA's Personnel Licensing Department to meet with Ray Elgy, head of the Safety Regulation Group. The people in licensing are conscientious and hard-working and they are multi-taskers, handling work for all types

of licensing from pilots to engineers. But I questioned whether it's really necessary for us to send in log books for checking... it costs £5 just to post them, and when the Examiner has signed off the pilot as able to do what he's applying to do, that should be enough. Some log books and forms are sent back for the most trivial and pedantic reasons – the wrong box ticked, perhaps – and while the CAA has already cashed the pilot's cheque, it can create long delays in issuing a licence. I would like to see Examiners treated like AMEs, who each get a unique code which allows them access to the CAA database, so that Examiners could issue the licence themselves at the push of a button. After all, the CAA will be auditing the FTOs and the Examiners; not allowing them to issue licenses seems like a costly duplication of effort.

Next day I was up in Perth in Scotland, where I gave the Robinson Roadshow at the Scottish Aero Club. I received a very warm welcome on a damp and dull day, and I gave a presentation on the work that AOPA and IAOPA are involved with. The visit was very worthwhile since the SAC has agreed to become an AOPA regional representative.

On April 5th I organised a meeting for our corporate members who will be affected by the Olympic airspace restrictions. The meeting was attended by Department for Transport people and CAA Chief Executive Andrew Haines, who again gave an hour of his time to listen to their concerns. The Olympic situation is covered elsewhere in these pages; it's worth recording that this is that rare thing these days, a UK national issue where we can join with other UK organisations in the GA Alliance to voice our concerns together.

Next day I went to Rochester to do the Robinson Roadshow there, and again I had a very warm welcome from AOPA members. The event was organised by Kelvin Carr, and of course one of their major concerns was



the Olympic restrictions – they'll be caught right in the middle of it. I briefed them on what AOPA has been working on, together with our colleague association.

On April 7th we had a meeting of ACEP, the Airspace Communications Education Plan, where again the Olympic restriction was at the forefront of everyone's mind. Then on the

10th I was at the General Aviation Strategic Forum, which was one of the few outcomes of the CAA Strategic Review that has seen the light of day. To say that I'd become frustrated with the GASF would be an understatement. However I have re-engaged, given the high level commitment of the CAA to make the GASF a worthwhile group for looking at the strategic issues facing GA. Similarly, the DfT and DAP have agreed to play a more active role. The chairman of the LAA Roger Hopkinson continues to chair the meetings, which include representatives from all of general aviation, and this latest meeting for me was much more positive.

By the time you read this the CAA will have issued another consultation on how they regulate GA and what the Authority is aiming to achieve as it modernises. Other issues discussed included, again, the Olympic airspace issue and areas of possible devolvement of CAA tasks to industry.

On April 12th I had a meeting with CAA Chief Executive Andrew Haines at Kingsway to discuss a number of pressing issues, starting with the CAA's new business plan, which will be delivered in September. I was critical of this when it was announced at the Finance Advisory Committee because of poor project management; it postulates moving the CAA onto an e-business platform, to reduce costs and improve efficiency. I think it's wise to take a phased approach, starting perhaps with PLD, rather than trying to take everything over at once. We discussed the transition to EASA FCL, and in particular when they are going to get the approvals for Aviation Training Organisations. I'm also concerned about the CAA medical department, where I believe there are significant savings to be made.

General Aviation Alliance to make common cause. But there are still some who want to tackle this issue on the basis that the security arrangements are overblown and unnecessary. That's not going to cut any ice with the people who are making the rules, who believe that the risks far outweigh the imperative of keeping flying clubs in business.

"Of all the replies AOPA has received to its lobbying over the restrictions on aviation during the Games, one from the Mayor of London is perhaps the most telling. It says, among other things, 'comparable measures have been implemented at previous summer and winter Games.' This tells me

ICAO requires the CAA to keep medical records, but the CAA's insistence on doing all initial Class 1 medicals itself is unnecessary. Why can't an AME do a baseline Class 1 medical? They're perfectly capable of doing the initial, and they're trusted to do renewals. Even British Airways' in-house medical staff cannot do initial Class 1 medicals for BA pilots. The CAA's medical department also seems to be generously staffed. I think the system is a throwback to the days when the RAF did all medicals, civil and military, and I wouldn't mind but for the fact that I'm paying for it.

I also discussed with Mr Haines the reform of advisory committees, and safety promotion. Insurance companies have lots of accident and incident data because they're paying out all the time, but it's not being mined properly for preventative strategies. We have been talking to insurance companies about pilot education, and they're very keen to help, for obvious reasons. We talked about support for GASCo – AOPA member Mike O'Donoghue represents IAOPA at EGAST, the European General Aviation Safety Team, because of his involvement with safety at GASCo. We discussed the lack of standardisation among CAA inspectors – an inspector demanding a rewrite of a manual which the previous inspector had found to be perfectly in order is costly and time-consuming and simply shouldn't happen without good reason. And finally, we talked about Olympic airspace – Andrew has been very supportive of AOPA's position on this, and very helpful with sound advice.

On April 15th I went to Aero at Friedrichshafen, where IAOPA had a stand which was jointly organised by AOPA Germany and AOPA Switzerland. I met many AOPA members during the event and had a number of meetings, including EASA, Jeppesen, the Swiss Aviation Maintenance Association and Nflyers. On the second day I chaired the 126th IAOPA Europe Regional Meeting, covered at length in these pages, and on the Sunday morning we had a meeting of the IAOPA Europe Co-ordinators – that's where all those who are involved in meetings and working groups in Europe get together to plan strategy, clarify policy and

that whatever we say, whatever we do, we're not going to get much change out of the government. What has been delivered today is what will be in 2012...

"Boris Johnson's office approached the Department for Transport on our behalf, but of course we've had our own detailed discussions with the DfT so we couldn't really expect to hear anything new. But the DfT has never said out loud what the Mayor is saying – basically, we're not doing anything out of the ordinary, so you can like it or lump it.

"They have looked at the situation surrounding the Winter Olympics in Canada, where flying clubs are now suing

exchange information. Chaired by Dr Michael Erb, Managing Director of AOPA Germany, it's a vital meeting for ensuring consistency and adherence to policy.

I then had a period of leave, after which, on May 3rd, I had another meeting with Andrew Haines. In fact, I was able to take him flying in a Cessna 172, which was a new experience that he greatly enjoyed. We took along a friend of mine, Tony Ryan, who's an airline pilot and an instructor, so Andrew could manipulate the controls legally – it wouldn't do to put him in an invidious position. We flew to Popham for a look at the light end of GA, then went on to White Waltham where we had lunch. We then flew to Bournemouth via SAM – and yes, we got a clearance through the overhead at Southampton! It was a beautiful day for flying, with great visibility. After Bournemouth we returned Andrew to his local airfield, Kidlington. He handled the aircraft for most of the flight, and I know he enjoyed it because he said: "Doing this, or playing golf... there's no comparison." I think it is fantastic that the CEO of the UK CAA takes the time to learn more about GA which is a significant part of the industry he is responsible for regulating. (See page 14)

On May 5th we had a meeting of the DfT European ATM stakeholder forum; this is where the DfT provides the UK aviation industry with an update on what changes are happening to ATM across Europe and how Single European Sky legislation is changing the way in which ATM is organised. Key issues like Functional Airspace Block development and the extension of 8.33 kHz radio can affect general aviation.

Then I was finally able to have a long and very satisfactory discussion with David Lloyd, an instructor member of AOPA who has been through hell for the past two years because he was unwittingly used in the smuggling of drugs. There's a separate story in these pages about his ordeal, but it's worth recording that there was no happy ending in his acquittal; no innocent man should ever be forced to go through what he has suffered. We must all learn from what happened to David Lloyd.

Martin Robinson

the government for \$6 million in compensation. The Home Office seems inclined to let the damage be done now and worry about the lawsuits afterwards.

"Some of us are shooting at the wrong targets. The CAA is largely with us on this issue, as are some in the DfT. In particular, Dawn Lindsey at DAP has been taking Home Office personnel to small aerodromes to make sure they have a full grasp of the effects of the restrictions and an understanding of the viable alternatives. Yet she is being attacked in some circles as though she was responsible for the problem."

Many AOPA corporate members said

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Above: restricted area covers an extraordinary 4,900 square miles

they appreciated the meeting because their approaches to the government had not even been acknowledged, much less addressed. Their message was unequivocal – the restrictions as they are now proposed will near enough shut them down for their two busiest and most lucrative months. Smaller outfits face turnover reductions of around £250,000, larger companies fear losses of £1 million, and some aerodromes believe they will not survive. AFPEX cannot handle the volume of VFR flight plans required, and even with operations at the limit of AFPEX's capacity, security will be compromised by transponder clutter which will mean that ATC may be unable to separate an

→ undesirable intruder from legitimate traffic.

The solution is to create 'bubbles' of airspace and entry/exit corridors around aerodromes so that traffic known to them may move freely without creating transponder returns. Airfields themselves will police who uses that airspace – the required 'known environment' will be created within these areas because they will know exactly who's flying. That leaves the transponder requirement only for transit traffic in the restricted zone, which will massively reduce the radar screen clutter, take the load off AFPEX, allow controllers to deal instantly with any unknown traffic, and improve security.

The government, however, seems immovable on the issue of transponders. While they are willing to allow aircraft to fly in the circuit without filing a flight plan, they insist they be transponder-equipped.

AOPA is looking at the old RAF convenience of having a 'loiter' field on a flight plan which allowed a pilot to spend time in a certain area doing upper air work. We also believe a system must be devised of separating the affected zone into areas in which restrictions can be turned on and off as required.

Martin Robinson says: "Unseen hands are guiding this process. The restrictions are nothing to do with the CAA, and nothing to do with the DfT – these people

● All European AOPA members will be able to file VFR flight plans free of charge for flights within restricted airspace during the 2012 Olympics through an arrangement with RocketRoute and Airbox. RocketRoute's co-founder Kurt Lyall says: "Although we are still awaiting precise details of how the authorities will manage flight approvals, RocketRoute and Airbox are committed to ensuring that our online flight planning and navigation technologies will overcome any hurdles. We will be offering our VFR flight plan filing service free to AOPA members and our customers while Olympic airspace restrictions apply."

Martin Robinson says: "This is a fantastic offer to AOPA members from two of the UK's most innovative companies serving the needs of general aviation."

Between 13 July and 12 September 2012, any VFR flight plans entered into RocketRoute's online planning system or submitted to Airbox Aerospace's FastPlan planning application will automatically be provided free-of-charge if the flight includes a departure, destination or alternate airfield within the restricted Olympic airspace zone, including ZZZZ (or non-airfield) locations.

RocketRoute members receive 24/7 flight planning, filing and management support, and many AOPA members have made highly positive comments about the company for both its VFR and IFR offers. Since its introduction in late 2010, RocketRoute has processed over 40,000 routes and close to 5,000 flight plans. RocketRoute and Airbox Aerospace recently announced a partnership through which they will share VFR flight planning information and pool technical resources to benefit the customers of both organisations.

are, however, our best conduit into the councils where the decisions are made. Politicians have little sway; and even if they had significant influence they're not going to take a risk with security in order to address the concerns of general aviation.

"Certainly, in the back of the minds of the decision-makers is the idea that all private pilots should stay out, and that only training and commercial flights should attempt to use the restricted area. But

that's a killer for the industry, because private pilots contribute so much to the revenues of airfields and flying clubs. It's like saying to a shop, you can carry on trading as normal but we're not allowing any customers to come in.

"Nobody wants the 2012 Olympic Games to be remembered for lost livelihoods, closed companies and people put out on the street when all of this is entirely avoidable." ■



GA White Paper withering on the vine?

It's time to take up your pen and write to your MEP. Back in 2008 general aviation got the biggest boost it's had in this century when the European Commission came out with its 'White Paper on a Sustainable Future for General and Business Aviation'. We'd done a lot of work with the EC before this document was finalised, but even so we were gratified to see the extent to which the White Paper gave us what we were looking for. It set out seven priorities for action, which were:

- Improve statistics; without data, you can't regulate effectively
- Clarify definitions; legalistic language is bad for safety
- Ensure proportionate regulation; million-dollar operational requirements for 747s should not be applied to Cessna 150s
- Increase airspace and airport capacity to take account of the needs of GA
- Facilitate access to global markets; GA and its associated technologies are innovative and no impediment should harm export markets
- Encourage research and development; GA's dynamic technological environment should be supported (this is one of the reasons IAOPA is investing so heavily in SESAR – we are the only GA organisation working directly on this vital programme).
- Ensure environmental sustainability; increase pilot understanding, support and research alternative fuels.

The White Paper went to the European Parliament's Transport Committee and was overwhelmingly approved – but it's one thing to write down fine words and give them a ringing endorsement, it's quite another to translate them into action. We have made little progress on any front; EASA continues to write regulations

with deadlines in mind rather than data, and opaque legalese is its stock in trade. Unlike the CAA, EASA carries no liability insurance, so its lawyers try to ensure that it's not left holding the baby if something goes wrong. That might be okay in court, but it does nothing for the clarity of the rules. What's more, EASA seems to be engaged in rewriting JAR-OPS, something the Commission specifically told it not to do – this is where the idea of requiring an AOC to do trial lessons and other undesirable proposals come from. There's precious little evidence that EASA has even read the White Paper, much less acted on it.

The MEPs called on the European Commission to give a progress report to the Transport Committee by the end of 2009, but no such report has been made public. It would be helpful if you would ask your MEP if he or she could find out what the report contained as we would like to follow up on its contents, if it exists. A little bit of gentle lobbying may help to get some action going. Please email AOPA a copy of any reply you get – info@aopa.co.uk.

As general aviation pilots we have a lot of friends in Brussels, including Timothy Kirkhope, MEP for Yorkshire and the Humber and leader of the Conservative group in Europe, who's a PPL with an IMC rating; Jacqueline Foster, MEP for North West England and Conservative spokesman on Transport and Tourism, and Brian Simpson, Labour MEP for North West England and Chairman of the Parliament's Transport Committee; these and others have been very helpful in fighting our corner for us. They asked for a progress report with good reason, and they really ought to have had one, although it's hard to see what progress could be reported. Time to stir things a little. ■

Do you know what your passengers are carrying?

Over the past two years members may have become aware of articles in this magazine, apparently *a propos* of nothing, urging them to physically check the baggage of their students and passengers when leaving or entering the country, however impolite it might seem. The conclusion of a court case in Liverpool now gives context to those articles. A flying instructor who took a student to France, picked up a third party and returned to Mona in Anglesey was accused of complicity in drug-smuggling when cocaine was found in the passenger's bag.

The instructor is AOPA member David Lloyd, and AOPA has been providing expert advice to his legal team since his arrest. Although Mr Lloyd has now been found not guilty, his acquittal comes at the end of almost two years of real hardship and enormous stress. His bank accounts were frozen, he was unable to work – the CAA suspended his FI rating pending his trial – and he was electronically tagged and unable to leave his house, even to go into his garden, for months at a time.

The case has been widely reported on TV and in the newspapers. Mr Lloyd, a former RAF pilot, was CFI at Mona Flying Club. He was in the dock with three other men, two of whom he knew well – he had taught them to fly. They had asked Mr Lloyd to accompany them to France in July 2009, something Mr Lloyd had done on previous occasions because they held NPPLs. On this occasion, one of those on the aircraft is said to have picked up an overnight bag from a third party, also on trial, at Le Touquet. On landing back at Mona, the bag was found to contain 31 lbs of cocaine with a wholesale value of £630,000.

Mr Lloyd, who was technically pilot in command, was arrested, while others allegedly involved in a conspiracy to import drugs were detained elsewhere.

It took 21 months for the case to get to Liverpool Crown Court, during which time Mr Lloyd lived under a heavy burden. Apart from having his instructor rating removed and having no access to money – they even took £500 he won on Premium Bonds during

that time – he was tagged and unable to leave his home for four and a half months. And it was always possible that his story would not be believed in court, and that a jail sentence would ensue.

During this time AOPA's Chief Executive Martin Robinson provided expert advice to the lawyers preparing to defend Mr Lloyd, and also wrote a number of articles for General Aviation on the importance of knowing what students and passengers were carrying onto an aircraft of which you were the pilot, no matter how embarrassing it might feel to ask for a look through someone's bag.

When the case finally came to court Mr Lloyd was defended by Meirion Lewis Jones, who portrayed him as an unwitting helper recruited to 'provide respectability' as a 'front' for the drug smugglers. Mr Lloyd, he said, had served for 25 years in the RAF, including lengthy spells in search and rescue, as well as being part of the crew which flew Terry Waite home after his four years as a hostage in Lebanon. "Would a man of these attributes willingly involve himself with a plot of this kind?" Mr Lewis Jones asked. Towards the end of the seven-week trial, Mr Lloyd was acquitted.

Martin Robinson, who was on standby to appear for the defence but whose written statement was accepted by the prosecution, said: "After the trial I had the pleasure of being able to have a long conversation with David Lloyd, and he'd be the first to agree that it doesn't matter how long you might have known someone, or whatever trust that exists between pilots – the fact is that your life can be ruined if someone carries an illegal substance and brings it into the UK in an aircraft of which you are technically in command. The lesson here for any pilot is to make sure you know what your passengers are carrying, and that means actually looking in their bags. Brief the passengers on the likelihood of being stopped on returning from overseas by the police or Customs – do not end up being accused of being the 'getaway driver', as Mr Lloyd was in this case. As his experience shows, proving your innocence can be enormously stressful and costly, with the added risk of your being unable to do so." ■



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Government stonewalls on GA's pressing issues

The government again demonstrated its lack of understanding of, or interest in, the aviation industry with a series of hard-nosed answers to questions posed by AOPA President Lord Stevens in the House of Lords.

Lord Stevens' questions aimed to tease out details of the UK government's position on issues including the European attack on N-registered aircraft, the impact of the possible loss of the IMC rating, and the restrictions on aviation during the Olympic Games. True to form, the official replies could be said to answer the questions without giving anything away or shedding any light on the prospects for alleviation.

AOPA Chief Executive Martin Robinson says: "We are grateful to Lord Stevens for bringing forward these questions, but the replies would tend to indicate that the government has no interest in the aviation industry beyond its status as a cash cow for Revenue and Customs."

N-reg

Some of the replies repeated bare statistics with little elaboration. The first question from Lord Stevens, the former Metropolitan Police Commissioner who flies a Navajo and a Jet Provost, was:

"To ask Her Majesty's Government what reports they have received of safety concerns in relation to American registered light aircraft owned in the United Kingdom."

The reply, under the name of Conservative whip Lord Atlee, was:

"Under the Air Navigation Order any occurrence which endangers an aircraft, its occupants or any other person has to be reported to the Civil Aviation Authority. In 2010 the CAA received 114 reports related to occurrences involving US registered aircraft with a maximum take off weight of less than 2,730kg. In 2009 it received 123 such reports."

Martin Robinson says: "It's a reply that answers nothing. There are no concerns about the safety of the current set-up, but the government is keen not to admit that."

Next, Lord Stevens posed the question:

To ask Her Majesty's Government what consultation they have undertaken with owners of American-registered light aircraft in the United Kingdom; and what steps they are taking to protect the interests of those owners."

Earl Atlee's reply was:

"In accordance with EU Regulation 216/2008, US registered aircraft based in

the UK will be subject to the same safety requirements as UK registered aircraft. The European Aviation Safety Agency is responsible for developing the applicable safety requirements. I would encourage the owners, operators and pilots of US registered aircraft based in the UK to respond to EASA consultations on the development of those requirements. The need for US licensed pilots of US aircraft based in the UK to obtain an EU licence is a particular cause of concern for these pilots.

"The Government wish to minimise the administrative burden caused by the implementation of the requirement to obtain an EU licence. The European Commission has indicated that it intends to negotiate an aviation safety agreement with the US Federal Aviation Administration. If such an agreement is reached it should help minimise the requirements for US licence holders to obtain an EU licence."

Martin Robinson says: "It's possible Earl Atlee genuinely believes that obtaining an EU licence is merely an administrative matter, but if so it doesn't say much of his understanding of the issues."

A second question by Lord Stevens along similar lines, although worded slightly differently to try to elicit an insight into the UK government's stance on the issue, also got Earl Atlee's dead bat treatment.

Lord Stevens' next question was:

"To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the likely impact on United Kingdom-United States trade relations of the proposals by the European Aviation Safety Agency to prohibit American-registered light aircraft owned in the United Kingdom from flying in the European Union; and what steps they are taking to mitigate any negative impact."

Earl Atlee replied:

"The EU has no proposals to prohibit US registered aircraft based in the UK from flying in the EU. However, under EU Regulation 216/2008 the pilots of such aircraft are required to be licensed to the same standards as pilots of aircraft registered in the EU. The US Government

understand the reason for this requirement and have given no indication that it will affect UK/US trade relations."

Martin Robinson says: "This is a deeply unsatisfactory answer. There is no indication that the government understands the reasons why there are so many N-registered aircraft in the UK, or the effect on the market in those aircraft when the new rules are driven through."

IMC rating

On the IMC rating, Lord Stevens' question was:

"To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the likely loss of revenue from training for the British Instrument Meteorological Conditions

(IMC) rating under proposals by the European Aviation Safety Agency for a standardised safety requirement across the European Union; and what impact this is likely to have on the light aircraft industry and the United Kingdom economy as a whole."

The official reply was:

"No assessment has been made of any potential loss of revenue from training for the UK instrument

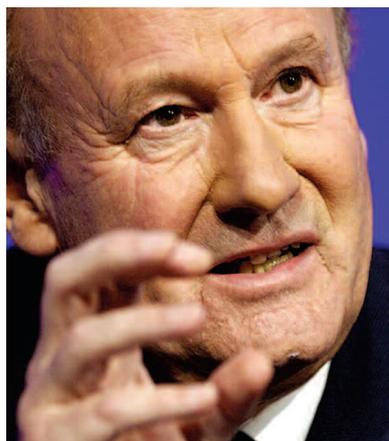
meteorological conditions (IMC) rating. The European Aviation Safety Agency has been given the responsibility for establishing a rating which is broadly equivalent to the IMC rating. If such a rating is established there will be opportunities for existing providers of IMC rating courses to become approved to provide training for the new rating and to develop that business both in the UK and in other member states."

Martin Robinson says: "It looks like we're being set up for a semantic argument over whether anything EASA proposes is 'broadly equivalent' to the IMC rating. We have yet to see EASA's NPA on this issue, but any alternative that does not teach a pilot to keep control when entering IMC and return his aircraft safely to the ground cannot be said to be 'broadly equivalent' to an IMC rating."

As a follow-up, Lord Stevens posed the question:

"To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will make representations for the inclusion of the instrument meteorological conditions rating in European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) safety mechanisms; and what assessment they have made of the likely impact on the United Kingdom safety record if the EASA proposals are implemented."

Earl Atlee's reply was:



Above: AOPA President Lord Stevens flies a Navajo and a Jet Provost



"We have already made representations for an equivalent to the UK's instrument meteorological conditions rating to be included in the EU implanting rules on pilot licensing. EASA recognises the need for such a rating and has established a rule-making group to review this. If an equivalent to the IMC rating is not established this should not have an effect on the UK's safety record as private pilots would be restricted to flying in visual meteorological conditions unless they hold a full instrument rating."

Martin Robinson says: "This answer graphically illustrates the black hole at the heart of official thinking on this issue. When in February 2009 AOPA compiled the stories of dozens of pilots whose lives were saved by the IMC rating, *not one of them* had set out to fly in IMC. Earl Attlee and his civil servants fail utterly to understand that the IMC rating exists to save those who are caught out by bad weather, something which will definitely happen to pilots in the UK's capricious climate. If the IMC rating is made illegal, the result will be more fatal accidents."

Olympics

Finally, Lord Stevens posed the composite question:

"To ask Her Majesty's Government what volume of traffic is expected for the period 13 July to 12 September 2012 within the restricted airspace referred to in the Home Office announcement of 7 March 2011;

To ask Her Majesty's Government what mechanisms will be put in place to manage traffic within the restricted airspace from 13 July to 12 September 2012;

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their assessment of the total loss of earnings for the period 13 July to 12 September 2012 for general aviation aerodromes and flying clubs located within the restricted airspace announced by the Home Office on 7 March 2011; what plans they have for a compensation package for businesses affected; and from which budgets such compensation will come."

Earl Attlee's reply was:

"The Department for Transport commissioned an air traffic review and airport capacity assessment study in late 2009. This estimated that between 17 July and 16 August 2012, the Games could be expected to generate approximately 240,000 additional commercial passengers over and above baseline traffic levels at the five core London airports. This would equate to approximately 200 additional commercial aircraft movements on peak days, an increase of approximately 6 per cent above baseline levels.

"In addition, the study forecast over 10,000 business and corporate aircraft movements and approximately 240 heads of state flights during the Games period. On top of this, an as yet unquantified number of general aviation leisure flights might seek to operate in the airspace over the south-east of England during this period.

"The study concluded that the forecast commercial, business and heads of state traffic could broadly be accommodated, but only by making efficient use of all existing airport infrastructure across the wider south-east. In order to maximise available capacity, of both airports and controlled airspace, the department is currently consulting on proposals temporarily to extend full airport slot co-ordination, currently only applicable at Heathrow, Gatwick, Stansted and London City airports, to some 40 airports across the region expected to attract Games related traffic.

"Separately, NATS, the air navigation service provider, is consulting on proposals temporarily to extend controlled airspace in certain parts of the region to provide increased airspace capacity for commercial air traffic in order to help manage the anticipated additional demand during the peak Games period.

"As part of the commitment to deliver a safe and secure Games, the Government also announced, on 7 March, plans to impose certain temporary restrictions on

the use of airspace over London and the south-east of England during the Games period. Most aircraft seeking to operate in the planned restricted and prohibited zones will be required to file a flight plan, establish and maintain two-way radio communication with the relevant control authority, transmit a discrete transponder code and follow air traffic control instructions. The aim of these security-driven measures is to enable all air traffic in this area to be monitored during this period. NATS and others are currently working to establish a flight plan reception process to deal with the anticipated additional demand. Significant enhancements to existing lower airspace radar service capacity are also planned to facilitate flying within the restricted zone in accordance with the announced requirements for operation in this area.

"Initial work to assess the effect of the planned airspace restrictions on the aviation community as a whole has been undertaken and, through the CAA and others, we are now engaging with them further to ensure the impacts are fully understood. We are encouraging members of the aviation community to help us in this, and we will consider whether certain adaptations to the planned restrictions might be feasible, consistent with the overarching security considerations, before the measures are finalised in a Statutory Instrument to be made later this year.

"There are no plans to provide compensation to those affected by the temporary airspace restrictions. However, as already mentioned, the Government, together with the Civil Aviation Authority and NATS, will work with the aviation community to see if local arrangements might be possible, in some cases, to limit the impact of the restrictions."

Martin Robinson says: "No change there, then. Much of the answer doesn't address the question, and the little bit that does, doesn't add anything we don't know. They've no idea what the impact will be on the GA industry, and they've no intention of compensating anyone." ■

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The shame of EASA and EGAST

EASA's safety team EGAST has produced a booklet on decision-making which includes a brief section about flying in IMC conditions. It says: "More than three quarters of the pilots killed when they lost control in IMC had no instrument qualification. VFR pilots must be able to see and recognise cloud, heavy precipitation and thick haze early enough to avoid it safely. They must always expect, and look out for, bad weather."



So far, so good – but then the needle goes hunting. The section concludes: "...even an Instrument Rating should only be regarded as a

MINIMUM SKILL to 'get you out of trouble' if you accidentally lose visual references."

This turns sound advice into fatuous piffle in the blink of an eye. It completely ignores the proven effectiveness of the UK's IMC rating, which has been saving lives for 40 years. It could be rephrased as saying: "If you're ever caught out by bad weather (as you probably will be if you fly in the UK) then you're dead meat, because EASA is chucking away the only thing that could save your life."

Fewer than one percent of European private pilots have a European Instrument Rating. EASA's proposals for an 'En Route Instrument Rating' (EIR) won't change that because it still requires pilots to study for and sit the seven theory exams (much of which are little more than a comedy turn) which are the main barrier to the IR. These exams call for about a year of study for questions which have been included, in some cases, because they made the selection panel laugh, and they are the reason why so many private pilots obtain an FAA IR – something EASA also wants to choke off. Even if pilots do get an EIR, it doesn't equip or allow them to get safely back on the ground; they cannot use instrument approaches.

The idea that pilots should only take off when there is an absolute guarantee that they won't encounter IMC unexpectedly is utterly unreal and should not be promulgated by any organisation with 'safety' in its title. Two years ago this magazine published the accounts of dozens of pilots whose lives had been saved by the IMC rating – *not one of them set out to fly in instrument conditions.*

In north-west Europe we live under the influence of capricious maritime airflows; British weather is a byword for unpredictability. Even with increasingly sophisticated forecasting systems, pilots

will at some point be caught out. The UK Instrument Meteorological Conditions Rating was developed to cater for this reality. It gives the VFR pilot a minimum of 15 hours' instrument flying training with two goals in view – one, to allow him (or her) to keep control in IMC, and two, to get back onto the ground



using whatever means is available. It is perfectly tailored to the task. It lays emphasis on the realities of the situation, to which many of us can attest; a pilot encountering IMC is at risk of getting into unusual attitudes, and may have to recover on partial panel – this is an important part of the course. On instrument approaches, the course generally lays most emphasis on the approach available at the nearest suitably-equipped airfield to the pilot's home base, because that is where he's most likely to get into trouble. Even though they will rarely or never be used in anger, these life-saving skills must be practiced, which is why the IMC rating must be renewed every two years with a practical test for which preparation is advised. There is also a written theory test.

Once the pilot has laid out a substantial sum of money and put in the time to get the rating, it allows no additional privileges, other than reducing the visibility minima. It allows no access to Class A airspace, and no access to Class D that would be denied to the basic PPL, except for the minima stipulation. Why would tens

of thousands of pilots spend millions of pounds on such a rating? (Including, it must be said, many pilots from the rest of Europe, where the IMC rating is not recognised). Because the IMC rating is the ultimate safety no-brainer. In its entire history, only one pilot with an IMC rating has been killed in IMC conditions in Britain, and the rating makes a significant contribution to the fact that British general aviation is two to three times safer than in comparable European countries.

Enter EASA. The European Aviation Safety Agency was formed in response to the political need for harmonisation of rules across Europe – but it is not harmonising airspace, and in a small number of countries it is illegal to fly in IMC outside controlled airspace. In addition, some organisations like the European Cockpit Association had visions of the ILSs of Europe being cluttered by light singles, and despite the intervention

EGAST assumes pilots will never be caught out by bad weather

of the British Air Line Pilots Association and others in favour of the IMC rating, they were very slow to come round. (Many professional pilots don't want more IR holders sharing their airspace.)

But in seeking to finesse this issue by putting pilots lives at risk, EASA has revealed its own weaknesses. EASA was formed to clear up the mess left by the JAA, an attempt at harmonisation which failed because individual states were under no compunction to comply with its regulations. Because some of EASA's positions are so clearly going to lead to a serious reduction in safety, states are once again looking at opt-outs. In the UK, the CAA wants to preserve the IMC rating as a national qualification; it's not yet clear how this could be done. The French, concerned at EASA's instrument flying rules, are looking at an IR of their own. There are rumblings in other states, not only on licensing but on maintenance and operations. If this fragmentation happens, the whole EASA business will have been for nothing.

Whatever happens, EASA and EGAST should hang their heads in shame at their own refusal to face facts. They have claimed the IMC rating is unsafe – at a recent meeting, a senior EASA official snorted in derision at the mention of a pilot with 15 hours instrument training attempting an instrument approach. Their solution is that he should get an IR, or die, and it's just not good enough. ■

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How can GA's decline be reversed?

The decline of general aviation in the UK is chronicled in an article for *Flight International's* website flightglobal.com, which gives little cause for optimism for the industry's future. The article, to which AOPA UK contributed, points up the new burdens of cost and bureaucracy which have coincided with a remorseless decline in the number of PPL issues. The downward graph has steepened in the last four years.



Author Kate Sarsfield says: "Private flying was once

considered a highly desirable pastime. For decades, experienced and trainee pilots were in abundance at clubs and flying schools across Europe, and light aircraft dotted around the airspace was a familiar sight. But now the numbers are dwindling fast, with many training schools and clubs struggling to attract new flyers." The UK, she goes on, is one of the worst-hit countries in Europe.

The article quotes AOPA's Martin Robinson as saying that flying is no longer a young person's pursuit: more licenses are issued to 40- to 60-year-olds than any

other age group. Since 2007 the number of students is down by an estimated 30%. Factors include the ready availability of alternative calls on discretionary income and the view that private flying is politically incorrect on environmental grounds, but mostly it comes down to money. "The cost of training is expensive in itself; factor in the escalating cost of fuel and you can see why people have to think twice before taking up flying or continuing to fly for pleasure," he says.

Jonny Greenall, managing director of Sloane Helicopters Majorca, supports this view, saying it costs around £15,000 to get a PPL on an R22 and around £60,000 for a CPL. "It takes very deep pockets and a great deal of dedication and determination," he says. He also cites the imposition of



Cessna Skycatcher could help to lower the cost of training

EASA's maintenance system for light aircraft. "They are supposed to increase safety but have just added another tier of bureaucracy and increased costs, which have to be absorbed by training schools or passed on to customers."

But how is the decline to be reversed? Robinson says re-igniting the romance of flying and promoting a sense of freedom are essential if the industry wants to appeal to newcomers and encourage licence-holders to continue flying. He expresses his fears, however, that burdensome regulation surrounding EASA-FCL next year will provide yet another "layer of costly, unnecessary bureaucracy" for pilots.

Luke Hall, chief instructor and sales manager of Cambridge Aero Club, says quality is the key, and that FTOs must offer a service that is exciting and enticing. "Those companies that offer training at knockdown prices will not survive" he says. "People want a niche, elite product."

Pana Poullos, Cessna's European sales director for propeller aircraft, says that high quality equipment is vital. "Trainee pilots will typically own the latest top-of-the-range electronic gadgets, so they don't expect to fly on 25-year-old aircraft with steam gauges. I recently sold 182 Skylanes to a German flight school. The owner wanted high-end piston singles because they offer more comfort than other typical training and leisure aircraft and that was type of customer he wanted to attract. The gamble has paid off."

Martin Robinson agrees that the Cessna SkyCatcher and other LSAs could help to lower the cost of training, but says the industry must boost the appeal of training and private flying. "Flying does not have the same cachet it used to have," he says, referring to an AOPA US study of why pilots drop out of training. "The industry does not make enough of the exclusivity and sense of achievement people get from becoming a pilot. The 'cool factor' is an under-exploited asset for FTOs, which could make more of the fact that learning to fly sets you apart from common folk." ■

CAA CEO takes the yoke



CAA Chief Executive Andrew Haines got first-hand experience of general aviation when he flew with AOPA Chief Executive Martin Robinson in a Cessna 172, and handled the controls en route. Mr Haines boarded the aircraft at Kidlington – he lives near Oxford – and flew to Bourmemouth, stopping at Popham en route to sample the grass field experience. On the way back they stopped for lunch at White Waltham. Instructor and airline pilot Tony Ryan sat in the right seat to allow Mr Haines to take the controls. Afterwards Mr Haines said it had been a useful experience, as well as a highly enjoyable one.

***See 'Chief Executive's Diary' on page 7**

**This photo: Andrew Haines (left) with Martin Robinson and Cessna 172
Right: I have control – the CAA CEO flies the aircraft**



EASA comes calling

A visit from the regulator ought to be an exchange between professionals; the rules require that compliance be audited, and one might think that the job could be done politely and without rancour. Something has gone badly wrong if it degenerates into an adversarial contest, generating much heat but no light.

The example of a recent audit of a small maintenance company indicates that where EASA is concerned, professionalism is not what it should be. This was not, in fact, an audit of the company – it was an EASA audit of the CAA, with the CAA's oversight of this company the tool by which it was measured. The CAA has asked the company whether it was happy to be used for this purpose, and they readily agreed. The company say that they are not completely averse to EASA – it has made moving aircraft between states very much easier, and might possibly address some long-standing grievances about lack of standardisation among CAA inspectors – but they now advise other companies that if such a request is received, they should decline; apart from the unpleasantness of the experience, they have nothing to gain and everything to lose by it.

The audit team arrived at the company in the early afternoon having audited a much larger company in the morning. The audit team was seven strong – three CAA

people who mostly stood in the background and made occasional notes, and four EASA representatives. The EASA team comprised two Italians, an Irishman and a Dutchman. Two were directly employed by EASA, two were seconded by national authorities.

The company is both Part M and Part 145 approved so the team split into two, one looking at each side. Despite this they focussed on the same things, with the two teams asking for the same books, the same information twice over. In particular they zeroed in on one aircraft, on the Irish register. For three hours they demanded more and more documents, and not always in professional terms. There were language difficulties, of course, but that's no excuse for being extraordinarily arrogant and unpleasant. The company says that

under the pressure of the moment, they took all the unpleasantness and ran around fetching the auditors whatever they demanded to see. A director said: "Everything was too rushed and can't really have achieved anything useful. It was clear that even the CAA was unhappy at the way this was being conducted."

On the day after the audit the company received a call from the CAA to say EASA had raised an 'immediate safety concern' about them. This safety concern centred on their supposed inability to prove that they had an update subscription on one of the manuals. EASA hadn't looked at the subscriptions and within two hours the company was able to provide to the CAA documentary proof that all subscriptions were active and up to date. To be a meaningful process an audit has to be useful to both sides. As the company was not the subject of the audit but simply being held out as an example of a UK CAA controlled company, it seems a grossly inappropriate way of satisfying this process.

Airbox Aware winner

AOPA is giving away an Airbox Aware anti-infringement tool to one new member in a lottery each month. Last month's winner was Paul Sherry (right), from Cheshire, who flies a Cessna 340 from Liverpool. The Aware is a useful box of tricks, backed by NATS, which gives advance warning of potential infringements of controlled airspace and is small enough to be carried in any aircraft, even a microlight.



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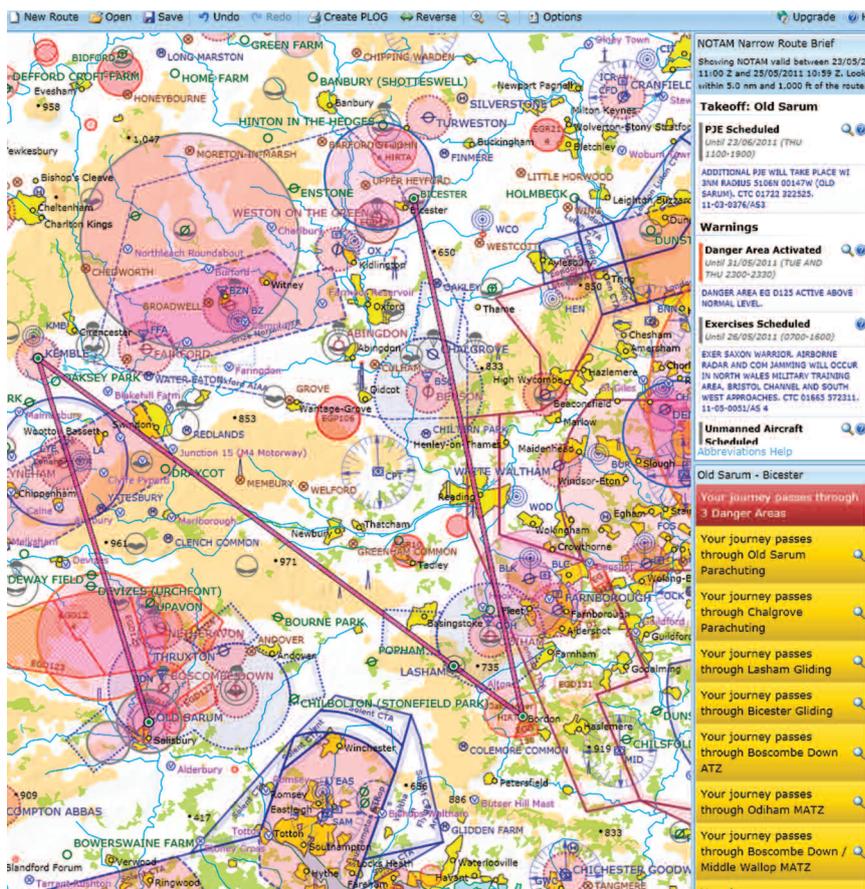
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CAA offers maintenance seminars

The CAA is holding a series of seminars to inform aircraft maintainers of changes in regulations and is inviting any interested party to attend. The first seminar is for general aviation and light aircraft, and it's on Wednesday 27th July at Northampton. A seminar on August 3rd will focus on large aircraft maintainers and air operators, while another at Gatwick on August 10th will look

at business aircraft. A helicopter seminar will be held in Scotland on August 29th. Agenda topics to be covered include Part 145 and Part M updates, CAA audit findings, CAA engagement with Europe, continued airworthiness, controlled environments and maintenance programmes, the ARC, extensions, renewals, recommendations, transferring aircraft between European states, ex-military aircraft and permits to fly. There will also be an open forum for questions from the floor.

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Calling all lady pilots...

On August 29th 2011 – Bank Holiday Monday – the British Women Pilots Association is celebrating the 100th anniversary of the first woman in Britain getting a pilot's licence by promoting a national 'Women in the Air' day. Over 260 flying schools and clubs nationwide have been invited to join us by encouraging more women to get involved in aviation in whatever capacity, and also to get as many women airborne on the day itself as possible. Hilda Hewlett owned and ran a flying school at Brooklands motor racing circuit in Surrey and on August 29th 1911 she became the first British woman to be issued with a pilot's licence. The 47 year-old mother of two taught her Naval officer son to fly later the same year. To participate or for more information on the event contact us at info@bwpa.co.uk

