

# **General Aviation** **A** June 2012

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Published by: Fairweather Media Ltd,  
The Studio, Kettys Close, Withiel, Bodmin,  
Cornwall PL30 5NR. Tel: 01208 832975.  
Fax: 01208 832995

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Design: David Tarbutt  
Printing: Holbrooks Printers Ltd

Articles, photographs and news items from  
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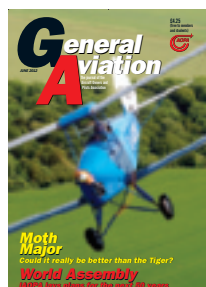
Material for consideration for the August issue of  
*General Aviation* should be received by  
1st July, 2012

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Published by AOPA, which is a member of the  
International Council of Aircraft Owner and Pilot  
Associations.

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**Front cover:**  
**de Havilland DH60 GIII**  
**Moth Major**  
Photo: Keith Wilson

## Chairman's message

### Persistence pays off

The aviation industry produces flying machines that can be technologically sophisticated and capable of rapid transportation but the pace of change in regulation and other supporting infrastructure is not so speedy, in fact it can be extremely ponderous. No doubt this is down to the fact that regulatory changes must be introduced with great care and consideration in order not to inadvertently affect safety adversely - the consequences of getting it wrong are so great that all reasonable element of risk must be eliminated. The question of whose safety is at risk is mentioned further on below. I had a look through the past ten years of Chairman's Messages in *General Aviation* and found a couple of examples that illustrate the point.

Regulation of GA aircraft on a Europe-wide basis, for example: the first mention of EASA in this column was in June 2002, but by October 2003 there was generally an optimistic view in the industry of its future impact with economies of scale in prospect such that "...the overall cost of regulation to the regulated end-user...should come down..." Just how wrong can you be! By February 2005, the administrative requirements of Part M (maintenance), EASA's first shot at pan-European regulation, as far as GA was concerned were being viewed as likely to cull some of the smaller GA maintenance providers. The conclusions of a better-late-than-never consultation exercise carried out by Eurosafe, an expert group acting on behalf of EASA, eventually fell on stony ground. It is only recently that the adverse impact of Part M on the GA industry has been properly recognised by EASA, with the establishment of a task force dedicated to revising the requirements such that they are more proportionate to GA and associated risks. But such a desirable and appropriate outcome will have been a long time coming.

Something else that has had a long gestation period is the establishment of approved instrument approaches using GPS. It was in 2003 that NATS invited a select band of AOPA pilots and others to fly trial GPS approaches at Cranfield airport. Although there are now a few GPS approaches available at UK aerodromes (in addition to existing approach aids) it is only very recently that a survey being undertaken by Helios has been commissioned to identify need covering all aerodromes, not simply the larger ones. Incidentally, 2003 was the year that saw the last flight of Concorde (24th October) and the centenary of powered flight (17th December), the latter marked by a hugely successful AOPA-led national fly-out that was blessed with amazingly benign weather across almost the whole of the country.

The above are only two examples, but hopefully sufficient to provide recognition that a long timescale is often a fact of life so that relentless persistence is necessary to introduce changes that are beneficial to the viability of future GA. This issue of *General Aviation* devotes many pages to the IAOPA World Assembly that took place in Stellenbosch, South Africa, in April. The great benefit of such meetings is the ability for delegates to network and identify common problems, leading to discussion, formulation, agreement and publication of a series of resolutions. These are centred on specific but common areas of concern affecting GA and carry the full weight of the IAOPA 69 worldwide affiliate countries. They are worded in such a way as to be readily useable in lobbying ICAO (at which IAOPA has its own representative), state government and national authorities, and can be used, with appropriate rewording, to apply continuing pressure to long term problems. The resolutions can be downloaded from the AOPA website, [www.aopa.co.uk](http://www.aopa.co.uk). An important resolution is one concerning the duty of care provisions embodied in ICAO Annex 6 Part II (to do with general aviation) that a state owes to GA, which are different from and less stringent than those owed to passengers using commercial air transport services. Thus, the standards and recommended practices need not be so prescriptive in GA as those in CAT. It was in large part due to recognition of this internationally agreed principle that the EASA Management Board decided to appoint at its meeting in March a French-led team to plan a clean sheet approach to GA regulation, more proportionate to the risks and needs of the industry. It made a welcome change to be able to report such good news in April's *General Aviation*. AOPA members will be pleased we played such an important role in achieving this key decision, and I hope that they will not hold back on reminding non-members that they too could be contributing!



**George Done**