

THE ROYAL AERO CLUB

OF THE UNITED KINGDOM

The Coordinating Body of British Airsport Organisations

Patron: Her Majesty The Queen

President: His Royal Highness The Duke of York, KG, KCVO, ADC



NEWSLETTER

Christmas 2011

LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN

As I write this on 11th December, the “continent is cut off by fog” as the 1930s newspaper headline stated. Britain on its own. Could this extend to light aviation again - in due course - by leaving the European rules behind? I very much doubt it. So we shall have to continue influencing the inputs and outcomes. Here is a quick round up of the current issues.

Over the years I believe we have become quite effective in representing our interests, not only in Brussels and Cologne, but also at national level. As a community, our relationship with the CAA has developed to the point now where we are not just listened to, but we have moved to a more ‘partnership’ approach in addressing, not only the regulations and rules themselves and how they are implemented, but also addressing the real safety management issues that hopefully will lead to reduced accident rates. Much of this has been achieved through the GA Alliance, made up of the RAeC member associations, and which was formed some six years ago out of, primarily, the RAeC’s then Technical Committee. And also through the GA Strategic Forum (CAA, DfT and GA), chaired by Roger Hopkinson of the LAA. The CAA CEO, Andrew Haines, and others at CAA have also been instrumental in making this new and constructive approach work.

Since 2002 we have been present at the regular informal EASA briefings at the Department for Transport, under the chairmanship of Mike Smethers (ex DfT and more recently at CAA) who is the chairman of the EASA Management Board. His guidance - and that of his colleagues in the CAA and DfT - on what is going on at EASA has been invaluable in enabling us, as much as is possible, to stay ahead of the game. At last week’s briefing we learnt that the European Commission is about to prioritise EASA’s work in six main areas, several of which will have a direct impact on our sector of aviation. But most important perhaps was the signal that a seventh area is likely to be added shortly; that

is to address the serious concerns from several member states that GA is suffering an undue regulatory burden in Europe. The message seems to be that EASA and its rulemaking is only part of the overall safety system and that EASA must move more towards an evidence-based/risk-based approach, as rulemaking is only one weapon in the armoury. Something of course that we have been saying consistently for years!

On the EU regulatory front the final FCL (Flight Crew Licensing) rules have now been published for implementation from 8th April 2012 (1st July in the UK), with transition periods up to 3 years for the new EU licences to be issued. The Operations rules will follow in 2012. One of the relative successes in all this is the new Light Aircraft Pilot Licence (LAPL) - we even got the name changed from the less than appropriate ‘Recreational Pilot Licence’ in the EU Basic Regulation - for all four categories of aircraft: aeroplanes, helicopters, sailplanes and balloons. These are sub-ICAO licences, mainly in respect of the medical standards required, but also a lighter training requirement than the full ICAO licences. The LAPL sprang mainly from the UK NPPL (Aeroplanes and Touring Motor Gliders), which was introduced in 2002 as a response to the over-prescriptive JAR PPL(A). Had we not pushed hard for the LAPL many pilots flying today would be effectively barred from flying in the future, for medical reasons. In this, EASA has been fully supportive of our position, even though some of the detail was sometimes strongly debated.

At a recent Part M (Continuing Airworthiness) workshop in Cologne, along with other speakers from around Europe, we re-visited many of the criticisms that, through Europe Air Sports, we voiced back in November 2005. EASA is to launch a new group to address the most contentious issues, supported I believe by the European Commission. Fingers crossed!

Perhaps one of the most important EASA rulemaking proposals published recently (NPA

2011-16: see the EASA website under “NPAs”) is for a new Instrument Rating (IR) for aeroplane pilots, together with an ‘En Route Rating’ (EIR) and the Sailplane Cloud Flying Rating (SCFR). This has been a long and hard-fought battle in which two UK experts from our community were in the working group. The proposals are not perfect but, in the context of the art of the politically possible in the EU environment, it will be vitally important for the proposals to be adopted. I would ask readers to provide supportive comments on the EASA CRT in order to counter other interested parties out there which may want to kill off the proposals. The comment response deadline is 23rd December.

On a more social note, as RAeC Chairman I was asked to nominate several people from air sports to attend a reception at Buckingham Palace, hosted by HM The Queen on 8th December, who is of course Patron of the RAeC. This was in celebration of exploration and adventure to mark the centenary of Capt. Robert Scott’s expedition to the South Pole. Those attending included easyJet pilot Sarah Kelman (BGA - Women’s World Gliding Champion - in a glider not an A320!), Manuel Queiroz (LAA - first round the world flight in a home built aircraft), Alistair Hodgson (BPA - the parachutist without legs who took the Silver Medal at the 2010 World Championships and was a RAeC silver medallist in 2011), Richard Meredith-Hardy (BMAA - various microlight adventures around the globe), John Williams (BGA - glider pilot extraordinaire in high altitude wave flying in the Andes and Scotland), and Jennifer Murray (Helicopter pilot - round the world via both the South and North Pole).



John Williams about to launch in his electric-powered self-launched Antares (photo: Diana King)

The only RAeC nominee missing was the 2008 Gordon Bennett race winning balloonist David Hempleman-Adams who appropriately that same night had reached the South Pole on skis with his youngest daughter. The balloonist Brian Jones, who co-piloted the first circumnavigation of the earth was also there. It was an amazing gathering of adventurers from all fields, including young people who had rowed the Atlantic and such luminaries as

Sir Chris Bonnington, Sir Ranulph Fiennes, John Ridgeway, Sir Charles (Chay) Blyth, ‘Bear’ Grylls (Chief Scout at 35), Dame Ellen MacArthur, Helen Sharman (first British Astronaut) and Sir David Attenborough. I have to say I felt quite humbled and out of place, but nevertheless greatly enjoyed the evening.

So, we come to the end of another year and look forward to the RAeC Awards event (provisionally 16th May) to celebrate the achievements of our colleagues who have done extraordinary things in aviation in 2011.

I wish everyone in the RAeC community a Happy Christmas and successful New Year.

David Roberts
Chairman

INTERNATIONAL COMPETITIONS

UK pilots did well in the European Classic Accuracy Grand Prix, with the final leg in Holland proving decisive. Martin Robe won the Bronze medal and in the team contest, Scout Rebels took first place, two points ahead of Birdwings. Congratulations to all involved.

WORLD RECORDS

There has been quite a collection of World Records ratified since the last Newsletter. Congratulations to:

Dean Eldridge, for his microlight record in May, with a speed of 72.96 kph over a straight 15/25 km course.

David Broom, who set two microlight records in February at Sutton Meadows, first for a speed of 165.77 kph over a straight 15/25 km course, and the second over a 50 km closed circuit at 164.53 kph. **John Lawrence** was the crew for both records.

Laura Turner also set a record in October 2010, with 56.93 kph over a straight 15/25 km course at Pulborough.

Geoffrey Boot flew from Sandgate to Bitburg in Germany and back in May, to claim two new records, with a speed of 262.1 kph for the outward trip and 228.8 kph on the return.

Norman Surplus has been flying in Japan in July, to set new rotorcraft records with a speed of 111.2 kph from Okinawa to Goto and slightly faster on the return, at 116.1 kph.

SAFETY

GASIL

The latest edition of GASIL, 2011/11 is available at <http://www.caa.co.uk/gasil>.

CAA-GA Safety Partnership

A new initiative has been launched to address general aviation safety issues. The project, jointly instigated by the CAA and the main general aviation and sports and recreational membership associations, aims to develop a partnership through which safety can be continuously improved. The move follows the publication of the overall CAA Safety Plan for UK aviation earlier this year.

FAI NEWS

David Hempleman-Adams received the FAI Gold Air Medal from John Grubbstrom, FAI President, at the FAI General Conference.



(photo: Ian Strachan)

The Gold Medal is the top FAI award and, in receiving the Gold Medal, David joins such famous names as Sir Alan Cobham, Charles Lindbergh, Sir Frank Whittle, Yuri Gagarin and Steve Fossett.

David Hempleman-Adams has made many record and special flights, far exceeding the performance of any other British pilot. One of his early exploits was in 1998, with the first solo crossing of the Andes by balloon. Numerous record breaking and adventurous flights followed in gas, hot-air and Rozière balloons, as well as air-ships and fixed wing aircraft. In recent years, David has been a medal-winner in the Americas Challenge gas balloon race and also the Coupe Aéronautique Gordon Bennett, which he won in 2008 with his co-pilot Jonathan Mason.

Carr Withall was awarded the Paul Tissandier Diploma for his work over nearly 20 years leading the British Gliding Association's Airspace Team. Carr has taken a lead in ensuring protection of gliding interests in major national and regional airspace change programmes. His approach has become so well respected that he has been invited to participate in numerous strategic working groups as an expert on general aviation.

Breitling UK received a Group Diploma of Honour, in recognition of its sponsorship of the RAeC Annual Awards events and in particular through the production of the Awards Brochure, which is used to promote the awards and the general activities of the RAeC. Breitling has also established "The President's Breitling Trophy", to be awarded annually to a young person or group of young people between the ages of fourteen and twenty one.

The FAI Hang Gliding Diploma was awarded to **Rod Fuller** in recognition of his outstanding contribution to the sport of hang gliding. Rod, now 73, was the first person to fly the flexible wing hang glider designed and created by John Dickenson in September 1963.

NATIONAL AND EUROPEAN REGULATORY ISSUES

Instrument Ratings

The website address for the NPA referred to by David in his Chairman's Letter is <http://www.easa.eu.int/rulemaking/docs/npa/2011/NPA%202011-16.pdf>. Please make time to send your responses in support of the proposals.

CAA report on EASA activities

The latest version, covering the period July to October, has been published and can be viewed at <http://www.caa.co.uk/docs/33/HighlightsOfEASAActivity20111028Version4.pdf>.

8.33 KHz

8.33 KHz radios will become mandatory below FL195 in all airspace by the end of 2018. This will be an enormous re-equipping cost for GA. Lobbying continues to try to retain 25 KHz separation dedicated channels for airports, but technical reasons may preclude this.

Olympics airspace

The Olympics airspace chart, showing full details of the special airspace agreed for the Olympics and Paralympics, will be released next March. The Royal Institute of Navigation is planning an Olympics airspace GA briefing on Sat 10 March at the Royal Geographical Society in London. The

event will be free, but will require pre-registration. Further details will be available near the time.

MEMBERSHIP

Light Aircraft Association

The Light Aircraft Association was 65 years old on 26th October but is as active and enthusiastic as ever. In today's constantly changing regulatory environment, the LAA remains vigilant to ensure that the rights and freedoms of recreational GA are justly considered and an increasing amount of resource is spent on this vital aspect for the benefit of members and non members alike.

The LAA was founded in 1946 as the Ultralight Aircraft Association (ULAA) with a remit to enable 'the man in the street' to be able to participate in recreational flying. At that time, there were virtually no affordable ultralight designs that could be built by an amateur constructor or manufacturer. The ULAA was formed to progress those desires and quickly established an amateur build airworthiness regime which enabled aircraft to be designed, approved and built safely without having to comply with the rigours of a full Certificate of Airworthiness, instead receiving a Permit to Fly.

Today the Association has around 8,000 members, looks after the airworthiness of over 2,500 flying aircraft, and has another 1,700 being built or refurbished. The fleet includes amateur built and vintage light aeroplanes with up to four seats, microlights and gyrocopters, the owners of which can operate at far more affordable cost than an equivalent aircraft on a Certificate of Airworthiness.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Queen's Cup 2012

The BMAA have been awarded the opportunity to hold the competition for the Queen's Cup 2012.

de Havilland aircraft

de Havilland Support Ltd (DHSL) has announced its intention to rescind the Type Certificates for all of its de Havilland aircraft types, potentially releasing them into the alternative regime of Permit to Fly operation. This will allow owners of Tiger Moths, Chipmunks, Bulldogs and the Rapide to continue to operate on a C of A (this would be essential for those aircraft being used commercially). However, owners of these types will be able in future to opt for the Permit to Fly route if they so wish.

Owners of less numerous DH heritage types will only be able to elect for a Permit to Fly, as DHSL does not consider that the issue of Cs of A remains viable. Types coming within the LAA's scope include the original DH60 Moth, Moth Major, Puss Moth, Fox Moth, Leopard Moth, Hornet Moth, Moth Minor and the post-war Thruxton Jackaroo.



Fox Moth

SCHOLARSHIPS AND BURSARIES

A reminder that there are a number of bursaries and scholarships available over the next few months:

Royal Aero Club Trust Bursaries

The RAeC Trust bursary scheme for 2012 includes a range of bursaries worth between £500 and £1,000. These are open to young people between 16 and 21 years old, who hold a basic air sport qualification and are looking for financial support to move on to a higher level. The closing date is 31 March 2012 and more information can be found on the RAeC Trust website at <http://www.royalaeroclubtrust.org/bursaries.html>

Air League

Scholarships for power flying, gliding, ballooning and engineering are offered by the Air League. Closing dates 31st January and 24th February 2012. See the website at <http://www.airleague.co.uk/> for details.

GAPAN

GAPAN offers scholarships for 2012 for the PPL (Fixed wing) and Flying Instructor Rating as well as Gliding scholarships and Jet Orientation Courses. The closing date is 21 March 2012 and application forms can be obtained from the website at <http://www.gapan.org/career-matters/scholarships/>

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