

THE ROYAL AERO CLUB

OF THE UNITED KINGDOM
The Coordinating Body of British Airport Organisations

Patron: Her Majesty The Queen

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



NEWSLETTER

Autumn 2006

LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Dear Members

The Royal Aero Club is represented at the European Aviation Safety Agency by Europe Air Sports, whose President is retired Air Chief Marshall Sir John Allison. Sir John, who once ran RAF Strike Command, is himself a recreational aviator. Here is the speech he gave to open the batting for sports aviation at the recent Eurocontrol conference. It sums up our position eloquently and I would ask you to ensure it reaches a wider audience.

As ever, I am astonished that December is upon us so soon and I wish you all a Happy Christmas.

Keith Negal
Chairman



Sir John Allison, President of Europe Air Sports

S&RA DAY – EUROCONTROL 1 DECEMBER 2006

I would like to start by thanking our colleagues and friends at Eurocontrol for sharing this day with us. They have given generously of their time and facilities to make this joint conference possible. I would like to thank especially, Sam Parkin, Peter Eriksen and Gaelle Evrard for all the help they have given and, from Europe Air Sports, our indefatigable Secretary-General, Harry Schoevers. Also Louis Berger and the Belgian Federations for

their remarkable turnout and equipment displays. And finally, the FAI, who produced the posters.

We felt the need to hold this event to give a focussed voice to the needs of the various branches of purely recreational aviation and all air sports. The idea is to provide an opportunity for the officials of Eurocontrol and other interested parties to hear at first hand the distinct airspace needs and concerns of each of the main air sports. Then for Eurocontrol to respond, and for us all to have a debate on the issues that so fundamentally affect our futures. Because these matters are so important, and because the aspirations, needs and point of view of recreational aviation are different from mainstream commercial aviation that the ATM system has evolved to support, the debate may be tough at times. But I am sure that the good relationship between us and the air traffic control professionals here at Eurocontrol is easily strong enough to withstand the test of robust but courteous and respectful debate.

In that spirit, I will open with the fundamental proposition that the air sports community neither wants nor needs an Air Traffic Management System at all. Indeed, in our perfect world, centred only on our priorities, it would not exist. The artificial classification of airspace, the nuisance of having to talk to, or, worse still, to take instructions from, a third party, the requirement for communication, navigation and recognition equipment not strictly required for our own purposes, are all impositions either on our pocket or, more importantly, on our freedom to take our pleasure in the sky in the way we wish.

That vision of airspace paradise is of course completely unrealistic. But I make the point, not in any way to hurt the feelings of our ATC friends, but to remind everybody that the ATM system was not put in place for our benefit. It exists, quite rightly, for the benefit of Commercial Air Transport, and, as a by-product, for the benefit of some of our colleagues in the more complex operating end of our sector – such as those aeroplane pilots who do fly IFR. I am thinking

here of the members of PPL/IR Europe. We all want CAT to be safe; no doubt some of us used the system to get here today. We are not kicking against that. But it should not be forgotten that the recreational and sporting pilot is no more than an incidental user of air traffic services. We have no choice but to work within, or around, the airspace structure, requirements and rules that exist solely for the benefit of others.

The issue is how to resolve the aspirations of two communities with very different objectives and needs. We are fearful. We see a creeping but inexorable trend towards ever more restrictions on our activities – more controlled airspace, more demands for expensive equipment. Above all, we fear being steadily squeezed into fewer and smaller areas where it is still possible to operate until we become extinct. This concern is particularly acute for the engineless sports that are simply not amenable to a classic air traffic environment, but for their proper pursuit must be able to range over large areas.

We fear the power, influence and money of professional aviation and supporting organisations such as commercial airports and, yes, the providers of Air Traffic Services, all backed by the desire of politicians to support commercial activity and to ensure that the businessman gets to, for example, Brussels or Cologne on time and safely, and the holidaymaker to Majorca. These things may be important. But so, too, are our needs. The importance of the individual is a fundamental concept in European society. We have a right to claim that our individual freedom to pursue leisure and sport in the sky should be considered on a level playing field along with the competing claims of CAT.

We need the sky, too. The sky is ubiquitous. The sky belongs to everyone. The sky represents personal freedom. It should not be mortgaged to one interest group. The sky has to be shared equitably between competing and mutually incompatible needs. The sea is shared without undue difficulty between all kinds of users. There is less sea than sky and it is only two dimensional. We must find an equitable way to share the sky.

Certain themes run like a river through the sports presentations that you are about to hear:

- *Minimum equipment requirements. Mandatory fitment of new technologies only if essential. Minimum changes and lots of warning time, so that any absolutely necessary and proven*

equipment mandates lead to investment decisions and pay-back that are fair and equitable.

- *No charging [I should think not – we should be compensated for the inconvenience, actually, because we are obliged to use a service that we do not require]*
- *Above all, access to airspace and oceans of free airspace, free airspace, free airspace*

I think that there are some pretty obvious ways that, with a little give and take, a shared system suitable for all can evolve. There are a lot of us and we operate a very considerable fleet of aircraft, making a huge number of flights each year. We do not come as supplicants. We insist that we be treated as equal stakeholders.

*Sir John Allison
President, Europe Air Sports
1 December 2006*

SCHOLARSHIPS AND BURSARIES

There are a number of opportunities currently available. If you know of anyone who may be eligible and could benefit from one of these, please encourage them to apply.

Royal Aero Club Trust Bursaries

The Royal Aero Club Trust, as part of its Flying for Youth programme, administers a Bursary Scheme for young people aged 16-21 years. Every year it awards a number of bursaries, each of up to £500. The scheme is divided into two categories:

- (1) Flying Bursaries for those wishing to advance from one recognised level of air sport to the next higher level and wishing to upgrade their existing qualifications;
- (2) FlightSim Bursaries for Computer Flight Simulation enthusiasts wishing to gain practical experience of flying or an air sport.

The scheme and the bursaries comprise all types of air sports and aviation-related activities including: paragliding, gliding, hang-gliding, parachuting, microlight aircraft, helicopter, fixed wing aircraft and the designing, building and flying of model aeroplanes.

Applications for 2007 bursaries must be made by 31 March 2007. For further details, see <http://www.royalaeroclubtrust.org/bursaries.htm>

BRITISH PILOTS AT INTERNATIONAL COMPETITIONS

British Skydivers – new Female World Champions

Five British skydivers were crowned World Champions in the female 4-way formation skydiving category at the 2006 World Parachuting Championships held in Germany. The four members of 'Team Airkix', plus their cameraman, took the Gold with a lead of six points on the French team.

4-way Formation Skydiving is the most popular and one of the fastest-growing competitive skydiving disciplines. Teams of four aerial athletes exit the aircraft at 10,500 feet and complete, against the clock, a sequence of different predetermined formations in freefall. Each jump is videotaped from above by the camera flyer, and this footage is used to score the team.



Team Airkix, from left to right Andy Wright (camera), Julia Foxwell, Amanda Kemp, Emma Beyer, Claire 'Sparky' Scott, and coach Dan Brodsky-Chenfeld

NEW BRITISH WORLD RECORD

Congratulations to Douglas Cairns, who has set a new World Record at 311.88 km/h, flying from Jacksonville in Florida to San Diego, California, in a Beechcraft Baron 58.

Congratulations to:

The British F4C Aeromodelling team, who have won the Team Silver medal at the Scale World Championships in Sweden. Pete McDermott also took the individual Bronze medal.

Daniel Billam, who has become F1B (Free flight models with extensible motors) World Junior Champion, at the age of 16. His winning flight of 242 seconds beat his nearest rival by 18 seconds.

The British Paramotoring team, winners of the Bronze team award at the Paramotor European Championship, held in Northern Spain in August.

SAFETY

CAA General Aviation Safety Awards

The CAA is inviting nominations for its General Aviation Safety Awards for 2006. The awards are presented in recognition of good airmanship or practical skills and abilities when faced with potentially serious incidents directly related to flying. Only one-off incidents that occurred during 2006 will be considered; awards are not presented for life-long service to aviation. Nominations must be submitted by 15 January 2007. These can be submitted online via the CAA website at

<http://www.caa.co.uk/application.aspx?categoryid=224&pagetype=65&applicationid=14>

CAA Safety Evenings

A reminder that the winter series of CAA safety evenings begins this month. A full list of dates and venues is at

<http://www.caa.co.uk/default.aspx?categoryid=224&pagetype=69>

GASIL

The latest edition of GASIL (the CAA's General Aviation Safety newsletter) has been published and is available for download on the CAA web site at

http://www.caa.co.uk/docs/33/srg_gad_gasil3of2006.pdf

FAI NEWS

The FAI General Conference took place in Santiago, Chile, in October. The UK delegates

were Peter Saundby and Ian Strachan, who was presented with the prestigious Lilienthal Gliding Medal at the opening ceremony.

The FAI is moving ahead with plans for a World Air Games, with bidding now open for an event in 2009. See <http://www.worldairgames.org> for more information.

The Rules and the Interpretation of the Theme "Airfield" for the 2007 FAI Young Artists Contest have been made available on the FAI website at <http://www.fai.org/education/contests/artists/>. The UK stage of the Contest will be launched shortly.

NATIONAL AND EUROPEAN REGULATORY ISSUES

The Sporting and Recreational Aviation Conference, organized by Europe Air Sports and EUROCONTROL on 1 December 2006 in Brussels, was well attended by delegates from the UK. News of the outcomes of the discussions will be in the next Newsletter.

EASA Workgroups

Europe Air Sports has nominated two UK experts to contribute to an EASA workgroup on flight crew licensing, which has been set up to transfer the JAR FCL from JAA to a European legal framework.

New concept for recreational aviation

EASA received more than 4,400 answers to A-NPA 14-2006, which raises the possibility of a number of significant and helpful changes to existing and planned European legislation that affects sporting and recreational aviation. The programme of work to achieve this will run to the end of 2007 and there are again several RAeC and other UK experts on the various working groups.

Transponders

We are now waiting for the outcome of the partial Regulatory Impact Assessment consultation. Few regulatory matters have united recreational aviation as this has and the responses to the consultation

paper were unequivocal. At the recent CAA day and the General Aviation Consultative Council meeting (where RAeC member organisations are represented) there were signs of a softening of the CAA approach, but it remains to be seen if this will be translated into something tangible. The CAA is still analysing more than 4,000 responses and it is possible that there will be a further consultation before the final decision is made.

General Aviation Strategic Forum

This new forum (GASF) has been set up to provide links between the CAA and General Aviation (GA). The GA representatives are yet to be identified and the RAeC will be actively involved in nominating appropriate people.

Aerodromes

NPA 06/2006, regarding future regulation of aerodromes, was launched during the summer. The Royal Aero Club has responded, in coordination with the General Aviation Alliance and the General Aviation Awareness Council, which has specialist knowledge of airfields and their protection.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Some members may be interested in a new website, which has been created for Captain Donald Macintosh, who was a Royal Air Force Lancaster pilot during World War 2. He completed a number of significant missions and was on the squadron that sank the Tirpitz.

There is an interview of Captain Macintosh's experiences and extracts from his book, Bomber Pilot. See <http://www.worldwarbombers.com/>

Nation on Film

The BBC is showing a series of films this winter covering a range of activities, including aviation. The aviation footage has been obtained with the help of many members of the Royal Aero Club and its member associations. The film will be shown on BBC 2 in the New Year

Newsletter edited by Diana King. Please send items for future Newsletters to Royal Aero Club, Radford Barn, Radford Semele, Leamington Spa, Warwickshire, CV31 1UT or to secretary@royalaeroclub.org.

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