

## AOPA Corporate Members' Committee Meeting

6 April 2016

50a Cambridge Street, LONDON

<b>Present</b>	Pauline Vahey	Chairman	PV
	George Done	AOPA	GD
	Tony Rapson	CAA	TR
	John Walker	AOPA	JW
	Mike Rowland	Andrewsfield Aviation	MRow
	Tamsyn Illman	Flight Training London, Elstree	TI
	Ivan Kurbanov	Flight Training London, Elstree	IK
	Colin Dobney	Stapleford Flight Centre	CD
	Sue Girdler	TG Aviation, Lydd	SG
	Graham Nunn	WLAC, White Waltham	GN
	Ian Sheppard	Editor, Aircraft Owner & Pilot	IS
	Mark Green	WLAC, White Waltham	MG
	Martin Smith	Martin Smith, Wycombe Air Park	MS
	Chris Rollings	Gloucester/Staverton	CR
<b>Apologies</b>	Martin Robinson	AOPA	MRob
	Nikki Taplin	Cubair	
	Alan Newton	On-track	

### 1. Introduction of New Attendees

PV welcomed MG, who is an instructor and deputy airfield manager at White Waltham.

### 2. Actions from Last Meeting

The actions arising from the first committee meeting held on 26th January 2016 were reviewed as follows:

1. MRow to provide an example of a local brief (to avoid infringements) to SG.
2. AOPA to invite a CAA representative to CMC. **DONE (Tony Rapson)**
3. CMC members to give MW feedback on latest FCL changes, in particular the LAPL.
4. MRob to invite CATS Aviation Training to attend, re instructor training.
5. NW to approach Instructor Committee re flow chart on becoming an instructor.
6. JW to object to mast at Manston
7. AOPA (MW/ME) to prepare Wings Award/Mentoring pack for Corporate Members

### 3. Regulatory Issues Affecting Aerodromes and Flying Training

SG said relayed that the police at Shoreham had been in touch with anyone who had organised airshows about this. She said that Sussex Police is looking for more information from the CAA as they are taking judicial action. The AAIB is resisting and standing by its confidential reporting system. John Walker said that he knew of three airshows that were now not going to happen, with Shoreham suspended this year too, and a Tiger Moth event cancelled. He suggested that there may be an insurance cost issue as well as the CAA's tighter oversight and associated fees.

The shortage of flight instructors was then discussed and Chris Rollings' letter (circulated with the agenda) was discussed. He suggested creating a basic instructor rating akin to that created by the gliding community some years ago.

On Aerodrome issues, SG said that GAAC should have objected to the proposed 1,000ft masts to the south of the airfield, which are for financial trading. JW said that GAAC has now raised an objection. He said that Dover Council had retained Osprey, consultants, to do a report. He said the matter should be determined by the end of May at the latest.

MRow asked about AOPA having a big plan to get government to support airfields, rather than go to each individual local council. JW said that the GAAC looks after 'the big picture' under an agreement with AOPA, and AOPA looked into individual cases. GAAC input to the Housing Bill for example. JW added that the threat is that planning consent is going to be easier under the new Bill. MRow said that Andrewsfield had done a Safeguarding Plan. It was noted that even smaller airfields should lodge these.

JW said that things were not looking so bad for Wellesbourne Mountford as the local Planning Inspector had effectively rejected the prospective developers (Gladman Developments) proposal for housing on the site. However, Gladman could still challenge the decision during the remaining stages of the development of the Local Plan and ultimately seek a Judicial Review. But JW said there was nothing to stop the owners still putting a stop to aviation as of 24<sup>th</sup> December, as they have announced. JW said developers are going in and offering no-win no-fee deals to owners, and the offer is too good for them to decline. This has happened with Kemble too.

GD noted that GAAC had had a pretty low profile over the past few years but noted that new vice chairman John Gilder is a professional planner. GD is on the GAAC board too and AOPA supports them for example by GAAC using AOPA's London HQ premises. He admitted that they needed to raise their profile. GD said that it would be worth the AOPA CMC seeing the minutes of the GAAC meetings.

JW mentioned that with Plymouth the government has commissioned a study on the future of the airport, which has been closed for some time. The report was due in December but still hasn't appeared – but JW said it would be the first real test of policy on protecting UK aviation infrastructure.

JW again warned that under the March 2013 National Planning Policy Framework all councils have to renew their plans (the deadline is now March 2017) – and if they don't then central government can impose plans. This means that developers could automatically get approval – and then just have to agree the details with the council. Aimed at addressing the housing shortage, it looks like hitting airfields hard. There are also Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects, where things can be fast-tracked. JW said Manston is the first example of the use of this process for an airfield.

The second big issue at present, JW said, remained the 30% reduction in the defence estate – airfields and bombing areas represent the largest part of this. The air cadet gliding consolidation is a big issue. He suggested that the industry should try to get a commitment that the sites wouldn't be sold unless they were to be used for aviation.

**ACTION:** PV/GD to look into linking GAAC communications to the AOPA CMC.

JW noted a court case that had been decided relating to Denham Aerodrome where the operator was facing a nuisance damage claim of £538,000 resulting from helicopter operations onto sloping ground which has been avoided by restricting such operations to twice a week but only for 15 minutes each session. JW said that the judge could have opened the floodgates in terms of nuisance claims. TI said that Elstree had already seen someone using that case as a precedent relating to the noise of engine run-ups.

**ACTION:** JW to send out list of airfields giving latest situations.

**ACTION:** Also PV to organise for someone from GAAC to attend the next CMC meeting.

### **Discussion of 'Basic Instructor Rating' proposal**

A letter from CR was circulated – he was extremely pleased that PPLs could do trial flights but suggested something similar to the gliding world where PPLs could get a basic instructor rating. It was noted that (relating the EASA introductory flights and just flights with passengers) that the ANO doesn't prohibit a passenger having a go at flying the aeroplane. It was noted that without this many would never have taken up flying. MRol said safety would be an issue and Andrewsfield uses CRIs anyway.

After some discussion with CR it was agreed that it was a grey area that could do with some clarification, especially given the risk that some would abuse the new EASA Introductory Flight. PV pointed out that at

WLAC a trial flight was quite structured, with a clear outline and briefings before and after the flight. And the advantage is that it can be logged as the student's first hour as it is with a qualified FI. SG said that people were undermining their flight school by having unpaid instructors that are PPLs. CD said that Stapleford does not do Introductory Flights with PPLs and said he'd be very nervous about insurance etc.

The committee agreed that the EASA legislation wording and practical reality had not been well thought out.

MRol noted that CRIs often went on to become full instructors. JW suggested the only way the CAA might agree to a basic FI rating would be to increase the privileges of CRIs.

After Point 4 below, the Basic FI rating idea was discussed again with Tony Rapson of the CAA present. He said that with EASA Introductory Flights if people are abusing the system then it would be a case of proving it, so would need to either catch someone or have the person giving the instruction sign a witness statement.

The committee welcomed the aim of the I/F – to get more people flying – but it was accepted there are grey areas. Rapson said you can't change the regulatory regime without being market impacts – in this case on those that are perhaps losing trial lessons with full FIs as PPLs can now do I/Fs (really a pleasure flight that can't be logged but it has become an issue). Rapson suggested that more I/Fs would mean more people potentially coming back to do proper flight training.

CR said that there was more chance of people coming back if they had been able to take the controls during the flight. Others noted that this has always happened anyway when passengers are taken up by PPLs.

#### **4. The New CAA**

Tony Rapson, who heads the CAA's GA Unit, was introduced to the committee. He said that the GA Unit was still relatively new (it started operation on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014). It reports to the director of safety and regulation, Mark Swan. Rapson said it had 36 staff having added 4 recently due to the extra work on air display safety. Airworthiness has 12 people to look after 18,000 aircraft and 450 approved organisations.

Rapson said EASA's side of the CAA's work is quite difficult with 28 EU states and 4 additional EFTA states. On this front both organizations are busy moving to performance-based regulation. He said this is easier in CAT (than GA) as there is a lot more data available. He said the GA PBR work was slightly behind. Shoreham had moved to the top of the list of priorities in any case.

On airshow safety he said the CAA's view was that the system had done very well for a long time but it relied very much on individual integrity and professionalism rather than a system approach.

Reducing the flying medical standards is also ongoing. He said the CAA board had not stopped that work and there was no lack of appetite for getting changes through.

He said there were approximately 1,100,000 hours flown by GA registered aircraft in 2015. There are 13 fatal accidents a year based on a 10-year average (and 20 fatalities). So this has been fairly static he said.

There was a further long discussion about air displays and what new rules might apply depending on scale, with members of the committee bringing up individual displays they are involved in organising. Rapson said that at the moment the CAA had only looked at displays that were open to the public but said he was aware aircraft don't know if it's a public display or not!

Rapson also noted that the CAA had tried to avoid in its wording forcing pilots to fly fixed sequences, even though the AAIB had recommended that pilots pre-notify sequences and the ground area to be covered. He made it one OR the other of these things.

He then added that the DAE system had worked well but needed to be codified and recorded, and that possible conflicts of interest should be highlighted.

He said there would be a post-season review and the usual DA seminars would continue.

There was then a more general discussion and CD suggested that the CAA now lacks the experience it once had. Rapson said that the CAA couldn't lock people in and that there had been a lot of changes in the shared services team. He said the situation was far from ideal but it was challenging to find people to do the job for the money on offer. He the norm was for people to go to the regulator as a second career.

Later there was a discussion on infringements. TR said they were still a matter of serious concern although the number of incidents that had presented a serious safety risk had gone down. MRow said he sat on an Airspace Infringement WG for airfields in the Stansted/Luton area and there had been only one meeting.

TR said that Farnborough Airspace was still under discussion and Southend was now under review.

MRow said that everyone was scratching their heads why infringements had not gone down more given the widespread use of SkyDemon and other devices/software. But he noted that more use of transponders meant that more aircraft could be seen.

## **5. VAT on Training**

VAT on training was discussed briefly. MS said that he sits on General and Business Aviation Strategic Forum (GBASF) along with MRob and Marc Bailey, CEO of BBGA and others.

TR said that the government (DfT) response was that the case needs to be made to the Treasury, which is notoriously hard to convince. He said nobody is holding out for it.

MS said perhaps pilots could get the VAT back once they get their licence issued.

CD said not being able to claim VAT back disadvantaged the UK compared to the rest of Europe.

Separately, JW mentioned that Business Rates reform was coming in the next couple of years and may cause issues for aerodromes although the Government had deferred for now a decision on changing the rating assessment method.

## **6. Shortage of Flying Instructors**

Held over to next meeting.

## **7. AOPA Wings Award and Pilot Mentoring Schemes**

Held over to next meeting. PV said she would forward a paper on the Wings Scheme to CR.

## **8. Any Other Business**

PV noted that she had circulated a paper on Corporate Membership produced by Mick Elborn. It looks at categories of membership, prices etc.

**ACTION:** PV to circulate this again and put on the Agenda for the next CMC meeting.

JW said that he was aware of four Corporate Members whose futures were in doubt with Edinburgh Flying Club ceasing operations at the end of March, two others under notice to quit their leased aerodrome properties and the fourth whose aerodrome base is earmarked for a housing development.

IK said that there were still problems with a particular FISO at Elstree. Students are feeling intimidated and the FISO has been acting like a controller, telling people when they can and cannot fly (e.g. due to weather). There is no way to book out if the FISO refuses. He noted the problem had lasted more than three years now.

JW noted that all A-G frequencies used to be periodically monitored by an independent agency. This no longer happens so there is no formal monitoring of standards, which fall under CAP 413. GD said it was a serious safety issue.

IK said they were documenting all the issues that arose in a diary.

TR confirmed that FISOs are regulated by Gatwick.

MRow asked how MRob got on with the application for 8.33Khz radios equipment funding from EASA. TR said an application had been put in for 20% funding and it was still with EASA.

## **9. Next Meeting Date and Venue**

The next meeting will be held at White Waltham on Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> June. [The day before the EU Referendum!].