

Bio-fuels!

The DfT commissioned a report from QinetiQ on the implications of bio-fuels on historic vehicles which has now been published and makes very interesting reading. The report found that the majority of vehicles 10 years old or older will not be compatible with E10 (the technical name for fuel with up to 10% ethanol content) due to fuel system material incompatibility issues.

Carburettor vehicles will suffer problems due to material incompatibility, corrosion and driveability issues.

Vehicles fitted with glass fibre fuel tanks may suffer catastrophic failure.

Based on vehicle age, approximately 8.6 million vehicles will be unable to run on E10. Based on average vehicle life of 13 years very approximately half these vehicles will still be in use when the proposed phase out of E5 takes place in 2013.

The report also has a recommendation section suggesting amongst others that:

E5 should not be phased out in 2013, its widespread availability should continue for the foreseeable future.

Consideration should be given to maintaining a specification for E0 (i.e. No ethanol) fuel for historic and vintage vehicles.

Why am I telling you this if it's to do with motor vehicles? Well, some aircraft are allowed to fly on Mogas as long as it doesn't contain any ethanol. Although the LAA are in discussions with the CAA over allowing Mogas with up to 5% (E5) the real answer would be for the EU to accept that historic vehicles just cannot be run on this supposed "eco-fuel" and allow some E0 to continue! We, that is GA, are working closely with the Federation of British Historic Vehicle Clubs and the international historic vehicle organisation, FIVA, to resolve this with the EU.

Let us hope that some common sense prevails and E0 continues to be available.

Meetings are held on the 2nd Wednesday of each month at the Foxcombe Lodge Hotel, Boars Hill, Oxford, OX1 5DP. Tel: 01865 326326; www.foxcombelodge.com
LAA Oxford Branch website: www.laaoxford.co.uk; LAA www.lightaircraftassociation.co.uk

VAC Snowball Rally - Cambridge

At least some aircraft made it this year!



Welcome to new members

John Humphries joined us at the January meeting; pity it was the AGM. We should all make him welcome ensuring he enjoys the branch events and meetings.

Places to go & things to do

13th February

VAC Valentine Rally, Old Sarum

22nd February CAA GASCo

[9th March - LAA Oxford Branch meeting](#)

12th March

VAC Annual Dinner, Littlebury Hotel, Bicester

25th March - GASCo Ditching & Sea Survival course, Lifeboat College.

27th March - VAC Spring Rally, Turweston

[13th April - LAA Oxford Branch meeting](#)

16th April - VAC Daffodil Rally, Fenland

[11th May - LAA Oxford Branch meeting](#)

30th May - VAC Maypole Fly-in

18th September

Turweston Wings & Wheels day

18th November

VAC AGM & Social, Littlebury Hotel, Bicester

8th or 9th October - VAC Sackville Farm BBQ

Committee

Chairman - Pete Smoothy

Vice Chairman - Rob Stobo

Secretary - Barbara Rose

Barbara.Rose1@hotmail.co.uk

Treasurer - David Brooks

Evening Events - John Bean

Social Events - Colin Hughes

Safety Officer, NC Rep, Newsletter editor

& web moderator - John Broad

john.broad85@talktalk.net



Light Aircraft Association

January 2011 meeting; the AGM!

By not letting on that this was the night of the Branch AGM, more members attended than may otherwise have been the case!

Starting with the chairman's report:

Pete expressed his disappointment that "we", collectively, hadn't done more last year. There are plenty of aerodromes in the vicinity such as Hinton, Finmere, Oxford and Enstone but "we" haven't had the drive to organise things. The events we did have were well done though.

Treasurers report: Dave Brooks - We have £583 banked and £108:87 in cash as of the 1st Jan 2011. Expenses included speakers and donations to Helen House and Motor Neurone Disease. Food for the "Bald Eagle" BBQ and the website maintenance by Amy Glover. The accounts have been checked by Rob Stobo with the balance showing £886:71. Dave was thanked for his endeavours. A brief discussion on the subs for this year resulted in them being retained at £25 for a full year, £15 for a half year, new members are free for the first visit, £5 for the next and then they are expected to pay the annual. Guests brought by a member pay £5 per visit. Proposal for the subs to remain the same made by Barbara Rose was seconded by Peter Smoothy and passed unanimously.

Election of the Chairman and the committee. As Pete has tried to stand down from the job of Chairman for some time he was looking for someone to take over - everyone seemed to be looking at the floor at this point! With no volunteers Pete thankfully agreed to continue for another year. Rob Stobo proposed Pete and added the members vote of thanks for his work. This was seconded by everyone and so Pete was duly re-elected. Dick Tolley proposed that the current committee be re-elected en-masse. Pete asked for any member who

Oxford Branch

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really wished to take on any of the jobs on the committee but there were not any takers. With that the committee were re-elected for another year. Pete did make the point that the branch members do need to be much more active in the coming year to both help and to attend organised events.

Under AOB discussions on the subjects of the July BBQ, to repeat the excellent "Bald Eagles", a plea from John Bean for suggested speakers, suggested flyings with Hinton, Turweston or Enstone as possible venues. The branch has enjoyed the Young Aviator (Carers, under privileged) and should organise one this year. Social events suggested ranged from bowling, meals out, visits to aviation locations and clay pigeon shooting.

All the ideas will be discussed by the committee and a programme of events compiled.

GASCo

The collaboration between the CAA and GASCo to contract GASCo to run the safety evenings is working well. Regional Safety Officers have been taken on to ensure full UK coverage. The nearest events to the Oxford area will be at Wellesbourne Mountford on the 22nd February in the 'Touchdown Inn Cafe' (01789 842007) or Coventry Aero Club on the 23rd February (02476 301428), both with a start time of 19:30 hrs.



GASCo has also organised a 'Ditching and Sea Survival' seminar as a follow up to the

oversubscribed event last year. You will be able to experience just how difficult it might be for you to get into a life-raft as sea conditions can be replicated for you to try. The seminar is scheduled for the 26th March at the RNLi training HQ; get your name down soon as places will be limited.

Airspace Infringements - Good News

A press release from the CAA and NATS provided information on a record overall decline in Airspace Infringements for 2010. The number of infringements decreased by 18 percent in 2010, which is the largest since current reporting standards were introduced in 2005. The proportion infringing airspace controlled by NATS alone has gone down by an impressive 34 per cent! Pilots must not get complacent though as this is still a very high number of infringements. Infringements of ATZs and Danger Areas continue to be a problem and remember that infringing a danger area carries the much more draconian penalty of "Aircraft Endangerment"! The Stansted TMZ has significantly reduced the risk to arrivals and departures whilst maintaining access for non-Mode C equipped GA aircraft. Phil Roberts, CAA Assistant Director of Airspace Policy, said: "This is a great joint achievement by all those involved, especially the GA community, but it's important that collectively we don't ease up on our efforts as airspace infringements are still one of the top safety risks in the UK".

During 2010, NATS sent a questionnaire to pilots who infringed to learn how the situations arose and therefore develop methods to prevent these occurring again. From this information the most consistent problem is due to pilot's loss of situational awareness. Lack of pre-flight planning is another reason, especially for those who just go out for a 'bimble' on a nice day.

Jonathan Smith, NATS Infringements lead, said "This reduction is a very encouraging sign that our joined up efforts to work with pilots and provide good resources to avoid infringements is paying off".



Further reductions in 2011 will require a sustained effort and continued cooperation. Maybe NATS will not have to deploy the "Anti-infringe-o-matic" missiles after all!

"Just Culture & the CAA Policy

For those who still think the CAA is out to prosecute pilots who stray out of line, I recommend all to read the statement made by Andrew Haines, Chief Executive of the CAA at the front of CAP 382. This is the Mandatory Occurrence Reporting Scheme (MOR) operated by the CAA to gather information on incidents. It starts by clarifying that the MORS are confidential and the persons submitting the reports name will not be divulged except by law. Mr Haines goes on to say "The CAA gives an assurance that its primary concern is to secure free and uninhibited reporting and that it will not be its policy to institute proceedings in respect of unpremeditated or inadvertent breaches of the law which come to its attention only because they have been reported under the Scheme, except in cases involving dereliction of duty amounting to gross negligence."

It is clear from the statement that the CAA wishes to learn from the errors of pilots in order to take appropriate action to prevent others from making the same mistakes.

The Coalition Government & GA

A speech given by the Rt Hon Theresa Villiers MP on the 26th January to the Associate parliamentary Aerospace Group (APAG) suggested that the coalition government are very aware of the importance of GA. She emphasised the importance of the aviation sector in Britain's economy which generates about £11 billion a year and employs around 200,000 people. She was asked to focus on the Government's overall approach to the aviation sector and therefore included the General and Business Aviation sector. She stated that "... I also fully recognise that GA's contribution to aviation goes beyond the merely economic. It provides thousands of enthusiasts the chance to enjoy their passion for flying, providing world class training for pilots, technicians and many other roles and inspires many youngsters to take up a career in the aviation business. So I fully appreciate the importance of ensuring our policy and regulatory framework for aviation deals with GA in a proportionate way. While some issues and standards will clearly cut across the whole of the aviation sector, there will be other areas where a one-size-fits-all approach would have an unfair and disproportionate impact on General and Business Aviation. So we engaged with Ofcom when their proposals on spectrum pricing looked set to impose a very heavy burden on GA. While the outcome still involves additional charges, they are far more modest than the initial proposals and reflect the fact that GA concerns have been heard and acted on. After discussions with the PAG, I wrote formally to my DCLG colleagues emphasising the importance of small airfields. My goal was to make sure the transport benefits of these facilities were properly taken on board in the planning system."



She will be writing to the transport commissioner at the EU to reinforce the requirement for a proportionate approach to GA. Excellent news!

Swanwick ATC visit

The Pilot / Controller forum organised between NATS and the Royal Institute for Navigation was attended by Pete Smoothy, Colin Hughes and Rob Stobo. Whilst awaiting a full report from those who went along, I have copied the following from Pete's Facebook page: "Brilliant day last Wednesday! (26th January) Visited the LATCC Swanwick. It was the first of their Infringement Awareness / Avoidance Days. A well put together mix of tour of the Centre and information dissemination designed to reduce the number of controlled airspace infringements by GA aircraft. Not only was it educational and informative but there was absolutely no finger wagging just the message that infringements cause havoc but also the moment that you begin to feel that you are not too sure where you are to talk to someone. The reception will be sympathetic and helpful and not punitive. Hopefully this will be the first of many. Well done NATS!"



CAA Airspace Policy

The CAA has launched a consultation on its proposed long term policy for airspace development, outlining the general principles on which airspace may be developed in the future. The aim is said to be to modernise UK to improve safety and efficiency, including providing greater capacity for all users and reducing environmental impacts. The document can be downloaded from the CAA website at www.caa.co.uk and click on the Airspace Policy section, then on 'Introduction' and 'DAP Consultation Exercises'. The consultation closes in February.