



Welcome to the August 2011 enews of IAOPA Europe, which goes out to 23,000 aircraft owners and pilots in 27 countries across the continent

New EC Aviation Director meets with IAOPA

IAOPA-Europe has had its first full-length meeting with the European Commission's new Director of Air Transport Matthew Baldwin, and it turned out to be a positive experience on which we hope a good relationship can be built. Mr Baldwin and the Deputy Head of Unit, Aviation Safety, Olga Koumartsioti, met with IAOPA Senior Vice President Martin Robinson for ninety minutes on July 28th and discussed a wide variety of general aviation topics. Afterwards Martin Robinson said: "It's been a very positive start, and while it's clear Mr Baldwin does not have a general aviation background, he is open to discussion and is willing to listen."

While there was a written agenda for the meeting it was largely a sounding-out exercise, Martin said, and he was left with a clearer idea of the issues that need to be addressed most urgently. One topic covered was the accident data on which EASA bases some regulation. Martin Robinson says: "I was able to point out that accident statistics provided to EASA often had a preponderance of Annex 2 aircraft in them - aircraft which EASA does not regulate. EASA therefore makes regulations to attack accidents which are happening primarily in the unregulated sector, creating cost and bureaucratic burden for the sectors which are not having the accidents."

"But this was not the time to discuss the shortcomings of EASA. We want to forge a constructive relationship with the EC's Transport Department DGMOV, and the picture will become clear to them as time goes on."

Agenda subjects included the European Parliament's White Paper 'A Sustainable Future for Business and General Aviation' and how this will evolve; the bilateral agreement with the United States and matters arising from it; and EASA's lack of working consultation processes. Martin says: "We discussed the shortcomings of a one-size-fits-all approach, and Matthew Baldwin praised IAOPA for our involvement in SESAR, which is important. I think it was an important first meeting, with plenty to build upon for the future. We're likely to meet again in November."

Britain gives ground on Olympic restrictions

The British Government has made vital concessions to general aviation over its plans for flying restrictions during the Olympic Games in London in 2012, and AOPA UK believes the changes could be the difference between bankruptcy and survival for some flight training organisations.

The original restrictions, announced in March, covered a vast area of Britain's most active GA airspace, 100 miles across, and were scheduled to run for the two busiest months of the flying season. A limited number of flights would be allowed, but only of aircraft with transponders and after VFR flight plans had been filed and accepted. Student solo

cross-countries were banned and VFR aircraft were totally prohibited from parts of the area.

Since March, IAOPA has been working with others to win alleviation from the most onerous aspects of the restrictions. It has had strong support from the UK CAA, the air traffic control company NATS and the Department for Transport, who have been able to convince the security services that important adjustments could be made without compromising security at the Games.

This month the government announced a series of amendments which went a long way towards meeting IAOPA's goals.

Most importantly, the main restrictions will last for only one month, from 14 July to 15 August, while less onerous restrictions will cover the period of the Paralympics from 16 August to 12 September. In addition, the restricted area has been shaved in some areas, and a long list of concessions have been made to cover specific problems around individual airfields.

Those who lie within three miles of the boundary of the restricted area can apply for exemptions to allow them to come and go at will, using agreed routes. The ban on student solo cross-countries has been lifted, and arrangements have been made for airfields in the prohibited zone to stay in business.

A dedicated group of military air traffic controllers will be established, using civilian equipment, to provide a flight-following service for up to 120 aircraft an hour in the restricted zone. On the subject of transponder carriage the security services were immovable, but circuit traffic has been exempted from the requirement to file flight plans and will not count towards the 120 aircraft limit.

IAOPA's Martin Robinson says: "The changes are highly significant and we owe a great debt to everyone who has worked hard to help us, most notably the CAA, NATS and the Department for Transport, and to the security services for responding to our concerns. General aviation is not in robust health, and the original proposals would have tipped some companies over the edge. It's now up to us to ensure that we use the slots available wisely so that none are wasted, and to sharpen our RT and our airmanship to fit the needs of the moment."

Full details of the restrictions can be seen at <http://olympics.airspacesafety.com/>

Channel Islands backtracks on VFR PPR

Air Traffic Control authorities in the Channel Islands have begun progressively withdrawing their requirement for prior permission for VFR flights following an intervention by AOPA. The dismantling of the PPR requirement, which was introduced at the beginning of July, began on July 27th and continues through August - see notams for the hours covered. AOPA's Channel Islands Chairman Charles Strasser says AOPA will continue pushing for easement of PPR until it is totally removed.

The withdrawal comes after an extraordinary campaign in which ill-tempered attacks were made on AOPA and on pilots who questioned the need for new restrictions in a relatively low-traffic area which is covered by Class A airspace, and for which flight plans must already be filed for VFR flights from the UK, as well as a form that satisfies customs and police. The requirement to obtain prior permission, via a 17-step online system - later modified after AOPA protests to allow requests for PPR on a Helpdesk phone line - was condemned as a further disincentive to visit the Channel Islands, and particularly upset pilots who are based there because they could not return home without obtaining an online slot. Traffic in the Channel Islands Control Zone (CICZ) is down by 20 percent in the last two years.

The imposition of PPR followed the commissioning of a new multi-million-euro ATC computer and operating system. IFR traffic was unaffected, as were VFR transit flights. Authorities in the Islands received many complaints from pilots who said the addition of yet another layer of permissions merely replicated much of the information already provided on flight plan forms. The debate eventually reached the Islands' legislative assembly, where questions were asked about the new ATC system's apparent inability to cope with levels of traffic routinely handled by the old system.

Although a two year study has been commissioned into changing the structure of the Class A airspace of the CICZ, AOPA's Channel Islands Region continues to press for an urgent change to the Class A airspace, by raising its base from ground level to a suggested 2,500 feet, which will give easier access for VFR flights and at the same time ease the workload of ATC controllers who will not have to give a Zone entry clearance and Special VFR permission, but provide a deconfliction service only in the existing class D airspace immediately surrounding the airports. This system works

well at much busier airports with long haul commercial traffic. Additionally, AOPA CI is suggesting a VFR corridor between the Cherbourg Peninsula and the island of Alderney to be height- and width-limited and under the control of Alderney Tower, which would also ease the workload of the Jersey Zone controllers.



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AOPA Bonus Day at Duxford

AOPA UK is staging a special fly-in at Duxford Airfield, north of London, to which all AOPA members in Europe are invited. The event takes place on Saturday September 10th and includes a series of important presentations on the key issues facing general aviation. A talk by the Civil Aviation Authority's Head of Flight Crew Licensing, Cliff Whittaker, is entitled "a guide through the flight crew licensing minefield" while a senior CAA official will talk about the Olympic airspace restrictions. IAOPA Senior Vice President Martin Robinson will give an overview of the state of the GA industry. AOPA members will have a chance to ask questions and join in discussions - and non-members are welcome, too.

The event, called an AOPA Bonus Day, is the second annual gathering at Duxford - last year more than 50 aircraft and 160 visitors came. Duxford is one of the most welcoming GA airfields in Britain and is home to the Imperial War Museum's aircraft collection, one of the finest such museums in the world, containing such iconic British aircraft as the Hurricane, Spitfire, Lancaster and Vulcan as well as international aircraft like the B-17, SR-71, B-52 and F-4. See <http://duxford.iwm.org.uk>. There's nothing like Duxford anywhere else in the world, and the landing fee for the AOPA Bonus Day, reduced to £7, includes a discounted entry to the museum.

For more details see the AOPA UK website www.aopa.co.uk

Airspace classification changes at Eindhoven



Some changes are in train to airspace in the Eindhoven area of Holland, Ary Stigter of AOPA Netherlands reports. With an increase in IFR flights into Eindhoven, there have been a number of potential conflicts between gliders and commercial air transport flights in Class E airspace in the area, where in good weather gliders can go up to FL95. Air traffic controllers are concerned that 'see and avoid' Class E airspace is not providing enough protection for airliners

approaching Eindhoven. After a period of consultation with general aviation, AOPA Netherlands has reluctantly agreed, Ary says, to a change in the classification of airspace above Eindhoven (EHEH) to Class D or C. "The international flying community is requested to ask for crossing clearance which will normally be approved," Ary says. "This is a restriction of our freedom to fly but no restriction to cross this area after clearance is received."

The change will come into effect the coming weeks and be promulgated by NOTAM.

AOPA Israel spreads its wings

The Balkans Aviation Summit 2011 went ahead successfully on 8 July in Bulgaria, with GA pilots flying in from many countries in eastern Europe and beyond to take part. The summit, supported by AOPA Bulgaria, coincided with the official opening of Lesnovo airport, and among those attending were a group of ten aircraft from Israel, where the flight formed part of the annual summer rally of AOPA Israel.

A second group of ten AOPA Israel aircraft flew to Sardinia, Corsica and Malta. Yigal Merav of AOPA Israel reports that both ten-day rallies were successful and exciting. AOPA Israel is supporting the World Microlight Championship, which will be held less than 70 days from now. Organised by the Israeli LSA Association, the event will take place at Ein Yahav (LLEY), in the Israeli Negev, an unusual and fascinating place to fly. It starts on 9 October, and some 80 participants from around the world are expected. For more details see the WMC website at <http://www.wmc2011.co.il/>

Got a Malibu? Like Malibus?

Calling all European Malibu owners - AOPA UK member (and Malibu owner) Steven Day wants you to know that the 21st Annual Malibu and Mirage Owners and Pilots Association Fly-In Convention runs from September 14th to 18th at The Homestead resort in Hot Springs, Virginia. The convention is open to non-members - if you're a Malibu enthusiast, you're welcome. The Convention provides operators of Piper Malibu, Mirage, Matrix, Meridian, and JetProp PT6 conversions with outstanding academic programmes presented by industry experts on safety, operations and maintenance. The Piper factory is heavily involved and will be providing details about the new PiperJet Altaire It's a good networking opportunity, and of course it has a major social side. www.mmopa.com has details.