



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

Getting the bilateral licensing show on the road

IAOPA is mounting a Transatlantic campaign to bring American and European regulators together to agree a formula for accepting each other's licensing systems. The aviation industry is suffering because of uncertainty over future licensing procedures, and those who make the rules must agree urgently on what the rules are.

EASA has stuck a spoke in the wheel by insisting that all pilots domiciled in Europe must in future have European licenses and ratings, which strikes at the heart of a system under which large numbers of aircraft have operated in Europe on the N-register with their pilots licensed by the FAA. The main reason for this has been the inability of European pilots to obtain instrument ratings - something EASA is addressing - but other imperatives include maintenance schemes, airworthiness directives that apply in some jurisdictions and not in others and so forth. While EASA's attack on the N-register is entirely chauvinistic - it recognises that there are no safety issues involved - it accepts that the cost and difficulty of being required to have duplicate qualifications from two different authorities is as undesirable as it is unnecessary, and has suggested that it may be possible to agree a formula for mutual acceptance of licences, and to add it as an annexe to a Bilateral Agreement on safety signed between Europe and America earlier this year. Unfortunately neither side seems keen to get on with the business, so at last month's AOPA Summit in Hartford, Connecticut, AOPAs in Europe and America agreed to work together to get this thing kick-started.

IAOPA Senior Vice President Martin Robinson met with Craig Fuller, President and CEO of AOPA US, to plan a strategy for forcing the issue. AOPA US has enormous lobbying power and influence that European AOPAs can only envy, and it will be of great benefit to European general aviation, which risks being dragged down by the new regulatory landscape, to have AOPA US impressing upon the FAA the need to address these issues as a matter of urgency. There are many pitfalls, however. Both sides must work to ensure that any demands EASA makes for changes or additional training are solely safety-related. There are hidden dangers in any de facto acceptance by the FAA that its training systems are deficient; the Administration must not be placed in a position where it either has to change its national training system or risk liability action in case of accident. IAOPA will be working with the General Aviation Manufacturers Association to get this issue settled, but it's not going to be easy, or quick.

Separated by the Atlantic...

European members attending the AOPA Summit included Dr Michael Erb of AOPA Germany and Lennart Persson of AOPA Sweden. Both men were looking at technical systems which might be of use in Europe under SESAR, but there are fundamental differences of approach between America and Europe. Driven by industry demand, the iPad is becoming ubiquitous in American cockpits, and the FAA has provided a DME frequency which can be used to upload data. Martin Robinson says: "In the US, the industry identified the requirement and instituted the innovation, and the regulator responded. In Europe, we have regulators who produce a requirement for what we will install, often with

little understanding and the most rudimentary consultation, and they take so long over it that often it's obsolete by the time we get it. There's no need to ask why general aviation is twenty times more valuable in America than it is in Europe."

Poland moves to foster and encourage general aviation

IAOPA Europe held its quarterly Regional Meeting in Krakow, Poland, on October 1st with 35 delegates present from 23 countries. Before the meeting, Martin Robinson and AOPA Poland's Blazej Krupa held a series of useful meetings with senior officials of the Polish CAA, Poland's air navigation service provider PANSa, Polish general aviation magazines and the Polish Aero Club, a quasi-official body with which AOPA Poland enjoys a close co-operative relationship.

Poland is still going through a post-Soviet modernisation which calls for fundamental changes of attitude as well as of regulations, but all sides recognise the problems and the regulators are striving to be as unobstructive as possible while fulfilling their safety remit. Martin Robinson reports that in every case, officials were open and constructive, and they acknowledged that while there were still some Soviet-era hangovers in the system, they were steadily being eliminated.

Martin and Blazej Krupa were able to meet with the Deputy Director of the Polish CAA, Mr Tomasz Kadziolka, a general aviation pilot with a share in a light single. Subjects under discussion included the implementation of EASA-FCL, which will be less painful in Poland because every pilot has a JAR PPL, and will simply be issued with an EASA equivalent when renewal time comes around. Costs will be kept to a minimum, partly because aviation in Poland is not required to pay for the entire cost of its regulation, as in the UK and in some other countries - the Polish Interior Ministry sets the fees, which tend to be proportionate and reasonable. Following this meeting, AOPA Poland is to be integrated into a consultation system, with an inaugural meeting scheduled for next month.

Martin and Blazej went on to a meeting with Mr Marcin Prusaczyk, Vice President of the Polish Aero Club, which is a long-established and highly-respected organisation with which AOPA Poland shares resources, and it issues certificates which confer privileges which are recognised by the Polish CAA. One of these certificates is remarkably similar to the UK's IMC rating, which teaches VFR pilots to maintain control of an aircraft in IMC and return it safely to the ground using whatever instrument approach as available. Under EASA to British fear that the IMC rating, which is partly responsible for the UK's stellar safety record, will be removed. Privileges of the Polish Aero Club's equivalent are restricted to Poland; how will it be accommodated under EASA?

Later Blazej and Martin met with Mr Krzysztof Banaszek, President of the air navigation service provider PANSa, and received the good news that on January 10th next year Poland is to abandon the practice of passing altitudes in metres and will thereafter use feet. The meeting discussed AOPA Poland's concerns over the excessive size of some CTRs, and Mr Banaszek confirmed that PANSa is addressing the issue by moving some VORs to create different approaches. Also discussed were problems with military airspace - the Polish air force blocks out hundreds of square kilometres of airspace from which GA is excluded, despite the fact that there is little or no military flying activity in it; attitudes seem slower to change in the military than in the civilian world.

Martin Robinson said afterwards: "I was impressed by the fact that PANSa and the Polish CAA are thinking the way modern regulators think, and that they are very candid about the problems they must overcome. We all share the same goals - to maintain the highest levels of safety while promoting growth - and in some ways Poland is a good regulatory example for some other countries to follow."



New delegates welcomed at quarterly Regional Meeting

An encouraging facet of the Regional Meeting was the presence for the first time of representatives of AOPA in Iceland, Norway and Ukraine. Iceland sent Valur Stefansson, Norway sent Jorn Vidar Lillestrand, and Gennadi Khazan

came from Ukraine. Several delegates gave reports of particular problems, and of some successes, in their own countries.

AOPA Lebanon reported that following a series of meetings with senior figures in the Lebanese government and CAA in which Martin Robinson was involved as IAOPA Senior Vice President, it had been agreed that AOPA Lebanon would be involved in regular meetings with officials on subjects that affect GA. This is something of a breakthrough in relations between GA and the regulators and comes at an important time, as Lebanon has decided not to adopt EASA regulation but to formulate its own rules. AOPA Lebanon will be an integral part of the process when those regulations are discussed.

One of the main problems for AOPA Norway is lack of access to airports. Jorn Vidar Lillestrand reported that while the government had promised to allocate resources to improving airport infrastructure, there was as yet no sign of the money.

For AOPA Ukraine, Gennadi Khazan spoke of the huge strides that had been made in recent times, and of the long road they still had to travel. There are only 181 general aviation aircraft in the whole of Ukraine, but three years ago there were none. Avgas cannot be found - in fact, it is illegal - and all aircraft run on mogas. For general aviation there is no IFR, and no flight at night. Foreign aircraft can fly only on airways.

Gennadi's words were translated by AOPA Russia's Vladimir Turin. Martin Robinson says: "Having a Russian translating the words of a Ukrainian into English for an audience of 35 delegates from different countries who have nothing in common but a passion for aviation illustrates what IAOPA is all about."

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IAOPA to make presentation on Part M to EASA

IAOPA has been invited to give a presentation to an EASA conference in Cologne on the workings of the Part M maintenance requirements, which have been roundly criticised for increasing cost and complexity to no apparent purpose. George Done, Chairman of AOPA UK, will give the presentation, aided by Dan Akerman of AOPA Sweden. Part of the problem with Part M is the fact that it is being interpreted with varying degrees of perversity by different national authorities. Sweden has suffered particularly badly from pedantic implementation, and the UK has failed an EASA audit on Part M. While the UK CAA is looking at ways in which it can comply more closely on Part M, AOPA is urging that no major changes be made before EASA finishes its review of Part M which is now in train and which may materially change the maintenance landscape.

AOPA, a worldwide brand

AOPA US is considering building into its marketing programme a feature whereby foreign nationals who land on its website and choose the option of subscribing to the digital edition of its magazine AOPA Pilot will be offered a first year's membership of their national AOPA at a discounted rate. Some non-Americans who join AOPA US do so in the belief that it can assist them with problems they encounter in their own countries, and are disappointed to be told by their local AOPA that it cannot act for them unless they are national members. Such a marketing move, supported by all European AOPA representatives at the Regional Meeting in Poland, would help address this problem. Martin Robinson says: "Most of the issues AOPA takes up on behalf of individual members concern local regulators or authorities, which is why we can never have a fully-integrated international AOPA - a pilot's problem in Norway, Ukraine or the Philippines cannot be addressed from London or Washington. It does not enhance the worldwide AOPA brand when these misunderstandings arise, and it is something that needs to be addressed."

World Assembly in South Africa next April

The 26th IAOPA World Assembly takes place Cape Town, South Africa between April 10th and 15th 2012, and early-booking discounts are still available to delegates. The World Assembly, held every two years, is an opportunity for the 69 AOPAs around the world to get together to discuss a common approach to the problems facing general aviation.

Airport and airspace access, security, user fees and the environment are the major issues scheduled for debate at this important forum, and experts on each topic will address the Assembly. At the end of the conference, which takes place at the Spier Hotel in Stellenbosch, there will be an opportunity to visit Stellenbosch Flying Club, where flights over the Cape area can be arranged in fixed-wing aircraft and gyrocopters. AOPA South Africa has also arranged with local travel experts to create bespoke tours for delegates who wish to spend longer in South Africa. For full details and registration information see www.iaopa2012.co.za