



Happy New Year! And welcome to the January 2012 enews of IAOPA Europe, which goes to 23,000 aircraft owners and pilots in 27 countries across the continent

Italy takes aim at its foot with new aviation 'luxury' tax

Italy has introduced a new 'luxury tax' on private aircraft which will have a serious impact on the aviation industry and is likely to cost the country more than it brings in in revenue. The new tax will be levied on a sliding scale from €1.5 per kilogram per year for aircraft under 1,000 kgs to €7.55 per kg for aircraft over 10,000 kg, with helicopters paying double. While the tax will further depress aircraft ownership in Italy, it could affect every pilot in Europe because it applies to any private aircraft, of any nationality, which remains on Italian territory for 48 hours or more. Not only does that make visiting Italy expensive, but even passing through the country becomes risky. A weather delay, a mechanical problem, or industrial action by ATC could land the transiting pilot with a tax bill running into thousands of euros.

Massimo Levy of AOPA Italy says: "It looks like they really want to put an end GA in this country. Can you imagine an English tourist with a private plane being obliged to pay €3,500 'luxury tax' at the end of his long weekend in Italy? Or the American businessman arriving with his Citation remaining for more than two days?"

"What will happen now to Italian GA? I have no idea. It looks like we really might have reached the end of the road." AOPA Italy has spoken with a number of politicians making it clear that while aircraft owners should contribute at what is seen to be a time of national emergency, the levels of tax were so excessive that they would cripple the industry and therefore produce less revenue than they would if they were set at more sensible levels. Political promises of alleviation have come to nothing.

The new taxes, imposed under a decree named 'Save Italy' which also raises the pension age by five years, hit almost everything but are particularly heavy on items such as cars over 250 hp, boats more than 10 metres long, and all aircraft. While boats and cars enjoy a discount on the basis of the age - after 20 years a boat pays only 50% of the tax and a car does not pay at all - aircraft pay the full amount indefinitely.

Airlines, charter and aerial work operators are exempt from the tax, as are government, police and military aircraft. Others must pay annually:

Up to 1,000 kg MTOW €1.50 per kg
Up to 2,000 kg MTOW €2.50 per kg
Up to 4,000 kg MTOW €4.25 per kg
Up to 6,000 kg MTOW €5.75 per kg
Up to 8,000 kg MTOW €6.65 per kg
Up to 10,000 kg MTOW €7.10 per kg
Over 10,000 kg MTOW €7.55 per kg

Helicopters must conform to this weight scale but pay double the amounts. Gliders, motorgliders, gyroplanes and balloons will pay a fixed €450 per year.

The application of these tax rates to foreign aircraft will discourage aerial tourism, but Massimo Levy wonders whether anyone will really notice. "Italy already extends poor hospitality to foreign GA airplanes, with all its airspace and airport regulations and charges," he says, "so possibly no-one will notice that the trade has all gone, unless something happens like a foreigner refusing to pay and the authorities impounding an aircraft. Something like this would make a lot of bad publicity to the country.

"Perhaps AOPA members will consider writing to the Italian embassy in their respective countries pointing out that Italy will lose more than it gains by this."

Half a century of IAOPA

International AOPA's 50th anniversary falls in 2012 and our President Craig Fuller has written a short retrospective on a successful half-century and an upbeat prognosis for the next 50 years. The burgeoning of general aviation in emerging nations gives the greatest cause for optimism, and Craig observes that the world's 350,000-strong GA aircraft fleet and 1.5 million pilot population is certain to grow significantly. But IAOPA will continue to fight for GA in its established homes, where it is under great pressure.

Originally formed in February 1962 to give general aviation a voice at ICAO, IAOPA's founding members were the USA, Canada, Australia, South Africa and the Philippines. Germany, Italy, Mexico and Venezuela joined in the first year, and the first IAOPA World Assembly was held in London in 1966. The group grew to embrace 69 member nations. ICAO was primarily concerned with commercial aviation, but IAOPA was deeply involved in the work that led to the publication in 1968 of Annex 6, Part II of the Chicago Convention which set out global recommendations for GA. IAOPA's fingerprints are visible throughout that document, and its less-prescriptive revised form which appeared in 2010. IAOPA maintains a permanent presence at ICAO, educating staff and delegates about GA and heading off some of the wilder ideas that would harm the industry. Over the last 50 years IAOPA has been responsible for significant improvements in licensing, standardisation, rules of the air, equipage, airworthiness requirements, airport access, environmental issues, security and more.

In Europe, Craig says, the pace of change has been particularly challenging, with the EC adopting an aggressive posture and Eurocontrol, EASA and SESAR creating a whole new aviation landscape. Craig identifies the global challenges as equitable and affordable access to airspace and airports, and the encroachment of unnecessary fees, charges, regulations, pilot currency and equipment mandates. IAOPA's goals include minimum equipage requirements commensurate with safety, preservation of airfields, elimination of unjustified fees, rationalisation of security requirements at a sensible level which preserves the freedom to fly, reduction of regulation and improvements in safety. Every one of IAOPA's 450,000 members worldwide can make a contribution, by sharing the passion for flight with friends and neighbours, reaching out to the media and other organisations, and telling of the great contribution that GA can make to the lives of individuals and the economy of nations. Here's the the next 50 years!



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IAOPA-Europe responds to EASA's instrument flying proposals

IAOPA has responded to EASA's consultation on its Notice of Proposed Amendment on instrument flying, welcoming moves to create a more attainable Instrument Rating while seeking a change to rename the proposed En Route Instrument Rating the 'En Route IFR Rating' to make it clear that it should not be thought of as an instrument rating, but primarily as 'a rating which extends the privileges of a VFR-only pilot to include en-route flight under circumstances which require mandatory compliance with IFR, whether in VMC or IMC'. IAOPA-Europe also welcomes moves to make conversion of third-country IRs easier, but seeks greater flexibility in allowing national aviation authorities to amend the rules according to local requirements. This is partly in response to the threat to the UK's

national Instrument Meteorological Conditions Rating, which is largely responsible for Britain's excellent GA safety record - some three or four times safer than the European average. IAOPA-Europe has made a total of 23 responses to the NPA and has encouraged individual members everywhere to make their own.

Help AOPA Sweden fight for GA access to Stockholm

AOPA Sweden is asking for your help to keep general aviation viable in the Stockholm area, where it faces being forced out of the last paved runway to which it has access, at Bromma. Two excellent general aviation airports, formerly used by the military, have been closed around the Swedish capital in recent years, while Bromma is now being turned into a mass-travel commercial airport. AOPA Sweden's Chairman Lennart Persson reports that the state-owned operator is using an array of 'brute force' methods to get rid of the remainder of the GA traffic which once kept the airport alive.

Lennart is asking those who wish to help to write to the Mayor of Stockholm asking him to use his influence to prevent the state monopoly from driving GA out with new 'service' fees and charges. Lennart has written a sample letter which you can use as a template. It reads thus:

Mayor of the City of Stockholm
City Hall
S-105 35 Stockholm
Sweden

Sir,

Where can I land my small aircraft in Stockholm?

I have been informed of the plans for the only remaining airport near Stockholm - Bromma. If those plans are carried out, as I understand, it will no longer be practically viable to visit Stockholm by private aircraft. I find it especially bothersome that Bromma is now being operated as a state owned monopoly with many of the manners inherent in old bureaucracies. Developments point towards ever increasing fees and unwanted 'service offerings'. Is this really happening in a country with Sweden's international standing? Where business and private aircraft used to be welcomed with simple procedures and, not least, easy access to the city?

The closing of Barkarby airport was from an international perspective incomprehensible. To close a historically well functioning general aviation airport and then turning Bromma, a city airport, into a regular commercial mass transport hub must be attributed to lack of political management. This motivates me to write and respectfully suggest the involvement by the mayor's office in the unfortunate path towards isolation on which Stockholm is now embarked. The closure of Barkarby airport is, I hope, reversible and may solve part of the problem. If Bromma is to become increasingly blocked by mass transit it will preclude me from visiting your beautiful city. My business is achieving operating efficiencies and competitive advantages by using modern light small airplanes. Current development of Bromma will force me, most definitely, to exclude Stockholm from possible business engagements in the future.

Stockholm seems to be on a path to isolation which I sincerely regret. It is my sincere hope that this letter shall contribute to a more welcoming Stockholm - not an increasing isolation beyond reach by future efficient point to point travel by small aircraft.

Sincerely yours...

Lennart Persson adds: The effect is of course greatly improved if you personalise the letter by adding or replacing text to make it personal - from you. The letter may be sent by normal post as addressed in the dummy or sent via email to: [kommunstyrelsen\(at\)stockholm.se](mailto:kommunstyrelsen(at)stockholm.se). The effect on recipients is of course enhanced by signing in the name of a corporation or similar, but all private contributions will of course be very important input into the decision process in the Mayor's office now under way. To help us monitor this campaign please forward a copy to [info\(at\)aopa.se](mailto:info(at)aopa.se). The 'copy to' us is preferably left out of the original message sent to the Mayor. Please also advise us if you send by post and/or mail or only by mail.

'Sincere and many thanks from AOPA - Sweden. We hope to be able to help you whenever needed in the future.'



Finland comes in from the cold

Finland has applied to join the 69 countries which make up International AOPA, and has been granted provisional membership as a step towards full participation status. The secretary of the new AOPA Finland is Esa Harju, and the official email address is [hallitus\(at\)sml.fi](mailto:hallitus(at)sml.fi). AOPA Finland also has a website address, www.sml.fi - Finnish language only. IAOPA Senior Vice President Martin Robinson said Finland had been brought on board largely through the good work of AOPA Sweden Chairman Lennart Persson. "We thank Lennart very much for the work he has done, which helps Finland and helps IAOPA," Martin said.

AOPA Finland is staging an event called 'Polar Nights' in Oulu, a town in central Finland famous for making its own entertainment on long Arctic nights, on February 4th and 5th to mark the start of the 2012 flying season. Unlike some of Oulu's attractions - it hosts the World Air Guitar Championships, the World Wife-Carrying Olympics and the World Welly Boot Throwing Competition, as well as international mud-football and ice-swimming events - this is a serious look at safety in general aviation. Last year speakers included representatives of all major aviation organisations and authorities and covered such topics as maintenance and Part M, ultralight flying, diesel fuel, accident investigation and rescue services. They will also be involved in the annual 'Sunny Nights Fly-in' later in 2012.

Ukraine plans big fly-in for summer

AOPA Ukraine invites you to a summer fly-in in Uzhhorod, at the western extremity of the country close to the Slovakian border, for a programme of events which run from July 12th to 16th. The fly-in is a joint event involving AOPA, Uzhhorod Airport (UKLU), the Padonki International Motorcycle Club and the Ukraine Development Institute of Flight Technologies and promises a long weekend of excursions and entertainments in a fascinating part of the world.

The event incorporates flying displays and motorcycle stunt riding, visits to extraordinary local castles and much indulgence in traditional Carpathian delicacies and drinks. Landing fee at Uzhhorod for the event will be €1, parking is €1 a day, and all customs and immigration requirements will be catered for. This has all the makings of a unique and memorable flying experience. Gennadij Khazan of AOPA Ukraine -[aopa.ua\(at\)gmail.com](mailto:aopa.ua(at)gmail.com)- can send you English-language details.

Greece plans to repeat Kavala success in 2012

The Mayor of Kavala, a small town in northern Greece, has officially announced that Kavala Air Show is to take place again from June 22nd to 24th. The first event, staged with the co-operation of AOPA Greece, took place in June 2011 and was an outright success. Anton Koutsoudakis of AOPA Greece reports that more than 20,000 spectators gathered in the town - population just 60,000 - for the event. The economic impact on the local market was substantial, and it was decided to make it an annual event.

AOPA Greece, together with Egnatia Aviation, provided the required technical assistance in 2011 and will do so again this summer. Egnatia Aviation is a major European aviation training establishment based at Kavala Airport.

The air show is now seen to be a win-win for everyone involved; the local authority and Kavala's businesses make a profit, and GA benefits from the publicity. AOPA Greece is working hard to make Kavala the biggest general aviation event for the South East Europe.

AOPA Greece now has its own aviation magazine

An agreement has been announced between AOPA Greece and the owners of the only general aviation magazine in Greece "RBF" (Remove Before Flight). Under this agreement, a member of the board of AOPA Greece will work together with the editor of the magazine, who happens to be a private pilot himself and a member of AOPA Greece.

Together they will be responsible for the long-term planning of the magazine, and they will co-operate in the production of each edition. Anton Koutsoudakis says: "It is hoped that the addition of a news-stand magazine will make AOPA Greece much more visible in the country, and will make the voice of AOPA Greece much louder."

World Assembly in South Africa

South Africa was a founder member of IAOPA 50 years ago, and that is where the IAOPA World Assembly is being held this year. The 26th such gathering takes place Cape Town between April 10th and 15th 2012. 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.