

6-11 June 2010 International AOPA World Assembly

Suzie and I attended the above Assembly on behalf of UK AOPA and AOPA Isle of Man. As always it was good to meet affiliates from many of the national AOPAs as well as explore the challenges facing General Aviation world-wide.

As a reminder, International AOPA comprises 68 nation states with over 400,000 members and has connections world-wide at international level including ICAO, EASA, the European Commission and all national CAAs so taps into an organisation that talks from a position of strength as well as knowledge.

In the UK and Isle of Man there are some specific challenges at the moment, one of the most pressing being the retention of the UK IMCR. At present as a result of FCL008 it would appear that there is a recommendation for a European en route instrument rating with reduced requirements in terms of theoretical and practical training to replace the IMCR with a Europe-wide rating. This proposed rating does not incorporate any approach privileges and as such AOPA is strongly committed to retaining the UK IMCR and, if possible, extending this to other states where airspace restrictions allow the same.

As a result of this I tabled the following motion :

Whereas : within EASA there are a number of national ratings for which there will be no equivalent under new EASA harmonisation of member states in 2012 resulting in a loss of valuable established national ratings based on an administrative change; and

Whereas : an example of this is the UK Instrument Meteorological Conditions rating (IMC), with over 20,000 issued which offers the privileges of flights in IMC outside controlled airspace with approach privileges without the requirement of a full instrument rating with its associated training requirements, cost and ongoing currency commitments, the benefit of this rating is improved flight safety; therefore

IAOPA at its 25th World Assembly resolves :

- that it will communicate to EASA the value and the ability of national authorities to retain ratings subject to national laws where there is a demonstrated safety benefit and no such equivalent rating is available through EASA regulations; and*
- to encourage other States to consider the safety benefit of such a rating.*

This was passed unanimously and we are now using this for lobbying purposes within EASA and with the UK CAA.

Another matter of concern is that of grandfather rights in licence privileges with the proposed harmonisation in 2012, which may well now be delayed, when all licences are supposed to come under the auspices of EASA. The IMC rating falls foul of these proposals as addressed earlier but there are a number of other licence holders who will be affected, not least those holding UK basic commercial licences which were introduced to allow PPL instructors to instruct for remuneration under JAR when it became a requirement to hold a CPL.

I tabled a motion on grandfather rights as below and this also was passed unanimously.

Whereas : it is necessary to ensure that pilots do not lose licence privileges as a result of regulation evolution (grandfather rights) particularly with the regulatory changes and harmonisation at present taking place within European region; and

Whereas : certain types of licences issued by national authorities have no equivalent under the 2012 harmonisation proposals which will deprive pilots, in some cases, of an ability to earn a living (a human rights issue as well); and

Whereas : the UK Basic Commercial Pilots Licence (BCPL) which was introduced to allow UK PPL instructors to continue to instruct for remuneration under JAR when it became a requirement to hold a CPL to instruct for remuneration; and

Whereas : there being no equivalent of a BCPL within the present proposals. Whilst it is a basic human right to earn a living it cannot be right that new European rules take away the right to continue earning a living on the same basis; and

Whereas : regarding the proposal for overseas flight training instructors to hold a full EASA Instructor Certificate in order to teach for the issue of a European licence by first having completed an approved EASA flight instructors course with associated costs particularly where there is no credit for existing instructor qualifications; therefore

IAOPA at its 25th World Assembly resolves :

- to pursue through the European Commission/EASA the issue of grandfather rights to ensure a like for like replacement of licences without the requirement for additional training, examination or technical requirements; and*
- to ask the Commission to address the need for instructional flight term credits to apply to overseas flight instructors.*

Further matters for concern were the continued operation of FAA N registered aircraft in Europe, in particular additional requirements that EASA are intending to require in excess of their requirements in the US, with the following motion in this respect and this was also passed unanimously.

Whereas : EASA is proposing to impose requirements that mean an aircraft owned under a Trust agreement must demonstrate that the aircraft meets all aspects of the FAR's equivalence to European regulation in excess of those already applicable to N registered aircraft that are permanently based in Europe; therefore

IAOPA at its 25th World Assembly resolves :

that Europe should recognise that the FAA complies with ICAO, has a fully compliant registry with a safety record comparable to that of Europe offering adequate oversight and should therefore accept properly registered N registered aircraft as compliant to operate without further requirements in Europe where the aircraft is being used for private purposes only.

Martin Robinson, AOPA's CEO, assisted in drafting these motions on behalf of AOPA UK and added a further motion on aircraft certification and airworthiness bilateral agreements listed below, which was also passed unanimously.

Whereas : EASA has taken over the initial certification and continued airworthiness rules for aviation in Europe in order to reduce costs; and

Whereas : the FAA has for many years fulfilled the role of certification of aircraft and equipment has had many bilateral agreements no such agreement exists between the European Commission and its agency EASA or the US Department of Transport and its agency the FAA; and

Whereas : this lack of bilateral agreements affects AOPA members when, for example, STCs are not automatically accepted; and

Whereas : as by way of example this increases costs to members as they need to apply for an STC and pay for the involvement of a design body.

IAOPA at its 25th World Assembly resolves :

To pursue at the highest political level the need for Europe and the USA to engage in agreeing bilateral certification and airworthiness agreements as they may apply to general aviation.