

Technical Report 2019 by Colin Alexander

I am of the opinion that this year has been the most challenging for myself and your executive committee for some time. I suspect that most of you will have absolutely no idea of the magnitude of the tasks that the executive carry out on a daily, weekly and monthly basis while you are quite happy to continue flying around in blissful ignorance and totally unaware.

There is a huge reluctance and resistance from the membership to become involved and they would rather leave it up to a few willing horses to carry the load. Many just hop into their aircraft and fly without ever giving a thought to those that have facilitated this opportunity and enabled them to fly with the minimum of fuss and in the most cost effective way.

An example of this is the recent exemption to the rule 103.207 and 103.217 to enable us to fly our aircraft safely with components running on condition. The rule as interpreted by the regulator, stated that microlight aircraft irrespective, could not run on condition. If this was enforced, many of us would have had to purchase new engines, propellers etc. at a very high price to replace perfectly operational components.

Your committee fought long and hard at great expense to get this changed.

What surprised me most, was the shocking response we received from some of our membership. It was aggressive, insulting, abusive and totally uncalled for or deserved. Yes, it was a most frustrating process. Yes, the CAA were totally at fault. But your executive was not responsible for the effect on the resale value of your aircraft and all the indecision that followed. That lies squarely at the door of the regulator.

Fortunately, there are still a few staff left at the CAA that are passionate about aviation and have put in a great effort to try and encourage the others in the building to see logic, fairness and reason.

However, we are still up against some very narrow minded people within the regulator who challenge us to the extreme.

On the positive side, it is wonderful and heartening to report that some of the CAA staff are joining and have joined our sector of aviation and I am sure that this will have a really positive effect and auger well for the future.

My message to you all is that your executive contribute a huge amount of effort at their total inconvenience so that you may enjoy your sport in a sensible and safe environment. So if you feel that you have the skills, time and enthusiasm to contribute to our sector, please put your hand up.

The “on condition” programme is nothing more than a sensible process to ensure your safety. There is no additional maintenance to be carried out over and above that which should have been carried out anyway. This is not a punishment. I have had a number of reports of disgruntled members. Quite frankly, these people were simply not doing the maintenance that they should have been doing and they need to either fall in line or spend the money replacing time expired components.

The IAs out there are certainly trying their best and doing a great job in general and we should all be grateful for their input and assistance.

We are still finding pilots flying around with invalid flight permits. It is such a simple process. Surely we can get that right!!

If you wish to modify your aircraft in any way, you must ensure that it does not affect the airworthiness. If it does, you must submit a modification form for approval. Please ensure that you supply all the relative information required as it makes it very difficult for us to try and guess what you are trying to achieve. At the end of the day, it is in your best interest.

We are looking forward to a favourable outcome with ADSB. We are still expecting that the CAA will continue to work with us on testing GPS modules that may be suitable. The CAA has yet to announce how the rebate scheme is going to be administered. I am hopeful that the transition is going to be smooth. The other advantage is that I believe that there is a solution for ADSB in. I think this is most exciting and will prove to be a useful tool.

To those small minded pilots that turn their transponders off in class "G" airspace.....if it were not for transponders, we would not have been able to locate our colleagues who had most unfortunate events occur and be able to reach them as soon as possible afterwards. So please leave your transponders active and ensure your crew understand how to operate your ELT or PLB.

Once again, I would like to acknowledge the incredible work that is carried out by the executive committee. I would like to single out Stuart who has been an incredible conduit as always. You guys are great. Thank you for tolerating me for another year.

I wish you all well for the festive season and hope that most of you will have a well-deserved break. Fly safe and take care.

Remember: A little fear and anxiety can be a good thing.

Thank you.