

Member Briefing

January 2008

Valid Licenses



A couple of things have cropped up lately so I thought I'd share them with you. We could perhaps call it an "Amnesty". Not that I'm trying to catch anyone out but we all can drop in to a routine of assuming that our licenses are all up to date. I once went on a course where I was told that to assume makes an ASS of U and ME. Don't know who thought it up but it seems to fit GA quite well.

Your license contains several pages, which, I bet you never really bother to read, but each page forms the overall license. We probably all know that we need a valid medical and that it forms part of your license and without it your license is invalid and you can't fly. So far so good. What about the CofE then?

You must get your license signed off every two years by an examiner or a ground examiner, handily I'm both. When I sign a Certificate of Experience (CofE) I am checking that certain things tie up. Firstly in the 12 months preceding the expiry of the current Cof E I am checking that at least 12 hours of flying has happened and that at least 9 hours are P1. I am also checking that at least 1 of the 12 hours was with an instructor. To make this clear its 1-hour with an instructor not 1 flight so a 55 min details unfortunately isn't going to count. I don't make the rules I just have to make sure we all play by them.

So it doesn't really matter if you fly 10 hours in the first 12 months or 1000 hours it's the second 12 months that counts and you must have done the 12 hours as shown above. Signing flights in logbooks is all nice and friendly but again it doesn't really count for very much.

I have been operating as CFI at Take Flight since June 2006. Lets put it this way - So far I haven't been run over in the stampede to sign people's licenses. This leads me to one or two conclusions.....A filthy rush is just around the corner or else someone might not have a valid license. That's bad news if you carry on exercising the privileges....or flying to you and me! Worse if you have an incident or accident and the insurance refuses to pay up because you didn't have a valid license. Worse still if the CAA catch wind of it, desperate if the AAIB get to know.

That brings me back to the Amnesty thing. If you want to quietly check how your own license looks and may be give me a call - on behalf of a "friend" if you prefer. We'll see if we can resolve things and get you street legal again. Remember its your responsibility and now I've told you there isn't really much excuse.

Question - "Dear John, I have a close friend who may have let his Cof E expire but didn't really know until he read your helpful and instructive briefing note, what can be done to keep him in the air LEGALLY?"

Answer - " We need to do an LST or Licensing Skills Test. Its an abridged skill test which looks mostly at general handling and some circuits. It can normally be done in around an hour and I'm available most Sundays and sometimes in the week with prior notice. Better still there is no fee to the CAA just a form to let them know that you are still in the system."

Nuff said?



Hi There & a Happy New Year to you.

As the CFI at Take Flight I thought it would be helpful this year to pen a few lines on a quarterly basis to update you with some general issues regarding the club and General Aviation in general. As you can see I tend to generalise. Sometimes I'm controversial too.

New Aeroplane



The Wellesbourne rumour machine is already working on this one. For the record here is the full story. As some of you may know I am MD of Favourites Group outside of aviation. This is a company that is an IFA/Pension and Mortgages etc (plug plug) but also has a separate element called Favourites Racing Ltd. Favourites Racing Ltd has bought G BKEK. Some of you may know it as the Cherokee Six with the gaudy paint job that lives at Turweston.

The truth is that it's a 300HP Cherokee Six that can lift six people in comfort and speed them anywhere at 135Kts burning 60Lts per hour. In May its also going to have a paint job to match our company colours of Navy Red and White and be re-registered as G FAVS. This will be available for hire exclusively via Take Flight Aviation. Currently it is hangered at Turweston and will be transferred to Wellesbourne as and when required. It has full airways fit plus mode S. Watch out for further information on this as we plan to run a check out day on the aeroplane shortly. Interested parties contact Mike Roberts. Insurance requires 150 hours P1 plus IMC Rating.

IMC Ground School Workbook



Check Rides

What are the Rules about currency. Are you current? Some clubs/schools insist on a 28 day check flight. One of the great things about Take Flight apart from the availability of aeroplanes and a relaxed atmosphere is that its very much a self policing club. Let common sense prevail. If you need a brush up ask. There are no excuses in flying. Its your neck or your families so make sure you are competent to operate the piece of machinery that we call an aeroplane.

Beyond currency checks I would like either me or Gerry to fly with all new club members and as part of the welcome to the club give a full check flight and introduction to the aeroplane to include weight and balance/performance issues. Its too easy to get spoiled at Wellesbourne with its huge main runway and never bother to consider what we in the trade call field limiting factors. Your PA28 might climb like a home sick angel off 36/18 in to a howling headwind, but on a summers day in an Irish field where the farmer couldn't be bothered to cut the long grass you might have a sphincter slackening experience all because you felt a bit unsure of those horrid little graphs and sums in the back of the Pilots Operating Handbook.



Also note that the ASI's in the PA28's are not necessarily telling you the same thing...CY MPH/ SP Kts. Many people have been caught out by the "knot burglar" make sure you know what unit you are flying in and what the V speeds are for your aeroplane otherwise you might have some heavy landings in CY and some exciting low passes in SP!!

New Rating

Speaking of the rumour machine I have heard a lot of what I can only describe as well intentioned rubbish about the demise of the IMC rating. Mostly propagated by those that don't have one.

According to EASA (Pronounced A Arse A by those in the know!?) its all going to change but to what no one knows. The perceived wisdom is that what ever is decided is likely to take around 4 years before it can be implemented. The UK IMC was only ever a national rating and has been with us for nearly 50 years. Now that we are all happy Europeans we have to be the same. The fact that we have different weather patterns in the UK to say Portugal seems to go unnoticed. When I started flying in 1992 it was all going to change to JAR and we were all doomed so I was daft to consider ever learning to fly I was told. Hey ho that was 2,500 hours ago. Change happens. But if I was a betting man somewhere in all this pan European hogwash I bet that old chestnut about "human rights" rears its head. I bet Europe cant stop us from doing something that we have always been doing as its part of our human rights. Anyway that's for the legal eagles to argue out and I bet that's not going to happen over night at your average Hague barristers hourly rate!

So I guess my position on this is you're better off getting an IMC now while the goings good. Better to be in a position of getting some sort of grandfather rights than having a door slammed in your face and barring you from flying if there are clouds in the British sky. Any way the IMC is a get out of jail card. Its always generally better to climb above cloud (icing conditions excepted) and fly safely to a destination than scud run underneath it. I'd rather argue about the legalities after the event than become a controlled flight in to terrain statistic.

If you would like to take an IMC course call me. We had 4 members successfully complete their courses last year. Ask them for feed back about the usefulness of an IMC and what its done for their general flying and confidence. Stating the obvious but if you need your IMC renewing please ask. Interested parties call myself or Mike Roberts. For the full story in the "demise" of the IMC see www.flyer.co.uk and follow the link from their home page or www.ukimc.org to sign the petition to stop the Eurocrats from spoiling your fun!

Night Qualifications

So far this season we have completed 1 Night Qualification and are on the way to 2 more. Its always a bit difficult as the airfield only opens Thursday, Friday and Saturday night, weather permitting. Having said that it's a great way to keep current during the winter and at only 5 hours it's a fairly straight forward add on qualification. All things being equal we will get a Thursday fly out to Leicester for a curry in before the season ends.

Summary

I've just re read these notes. Blimey I wouldn't want to fly with me. Those of you who don't know me might imagine some sort of hoary old Battle of Britain type hell bent on scaring you all half to death. Not me at all I can assure you.

Lets make sure we are current stay current and let common sense prevail. I have all of your safety at heart I'd just like to see and hear a bit more from you.

Happy New Year and safe flying

Best Regards

John Eburne

CFI Take Flight Aviation