



IAOPA (Europe) e-newsletter



Welcome to the September 2010 enews of IAOPA Europe, which goes out to 23,000 aircraft owners and pilots in 27 countries across the continent

Fight for Fürstenfeldbruck goes global

Pilots all over the world have contacted BMW to express concern at the car company's role in the proposed closure of one of Germany's most important general aviation airfields, Fürstenfeldbruck, which AOPA Germany is fighting to save. The company has been inundated with requests for information from pilots as far away as Canada, South Africa, Australia, Argentina and the United States. Concerned at the potential for lost car sales to pilots, particularly those who control car fleets, BMW has responded with a letter claiming adjacent communities are to blame and BMW has no responsibility for the situation at the airfield, which it wants to turn into a driver training track. This is disingenuous; BMW has taken active steps to pressure influential backers of Fürsti airfield to withdraw support, and senior Bavarian politicians confirm that the car company - which has enormous economic and political clout in the area - has lobbied them to close Fürsti.

Fürsti is the only paved and unrestricted airfield available to general aviation in the Munich area, and as such is a vital link in Europe's aviation network. BMW, a company with a strong aviation tradition, keeps its own corporate jets at Munich International, which is not available to GA. AOPA Germany says that while there are many sites at which driver training can take place, there is no alternative airfield and the loss of Fürsti will be a body blow to GA in Bavaria. It says that BMW could comfortably share the airfield with GA, something BMW refuses to do.

In his response, Dr Kay Segler, BMW director responsible for driver training, says the grievances of private and business aircraft pilots are understandable, but that an anti-airfield group in Maisach is to blame. "The decision as to whether and, if so, how flying operations are to be conducted in future must lie with the community," he writes. He says that the focal point of the driver training programme is the runway, and GA use would make it impossible to drive on it, and adds: "Any joint flying usage has been ruled out at the higher technical planning level." AOPA, however, wishes to preserve for GA only a section of the massive runway, which is almost 3km long.

Dr Michael Erb, managing director of AOPA Germany, says: "The Fürsti Airport Project had the full support of the Bavarian Federal States' authorities and politicians until BMW appeared on the scene to support the Maisach 'antis' and claim the airport for itself. Maximilian Schöberl, BMW's head of politics and communication, wrote to Peter Driessen, CEO of the Munich Chamber of Commerce, that BMW is 'disappointed and annoyed' over the Chamber's continuing support for the Fürsti Airport Project. He quotes BMW's CEO Norbert Reithofer as having requested a neutral position from the Chamber.

"It's hard to under-estimate the political influence that BMW has in Munich. It's difficult for anyone in authority to go against the company. The Bavarian Minister of Economics Martin Zeil has written that plans for the airfield's closure 'are insistently supported by BMW'. It's impossible to claim, as Kay Segler does, that: 'The flying usage of Region 14 is not in any way influenced by BMW.' The fight goes on and court cases are still pending.

"AOPA Germany would like to thank International AOPA and all those around the world who have expressed concern about this issue. It's not a local matter - the loss of such a vital airfield diminishes us all."

*Are you considering buying a new car? Would you buy a car from a manufacturer that is actively engaged in destroying a GA airport? You can voice your opinion to BMW via e-mail to customer.service@bmw.com or kundenbetreuung@bmw.de. Please send a copy to info@aopa.de.

The nearest GA airfield to Fürstenfeldbruck is 60 km away at Ingolstadt - home of Audi.

FAA re-registration programme starts

The Federal Aviation Administration in Washington has published full details of its re-registration requirement for all N-registered civil aircraft worldwide, which is due to begin on November 1st and run until December 2013.

Registrations will henceforth be time-limited and will have to be renewed every three years. Owners must comply - the registration of any aircraft not re-registered at the correct time will be cancelled.

The aim is to gather more accurate data on N-registered aircraft, to weed out those aircraft which have been destroyed or scrapped but are still on the books, and to make life difficult more for those who are fraudulently using US registered-aircraft. For bona fide owners it is no more than an irritation.

Re-registration is required to a schedule set out by the FAA on its website and begins on November 1st with aircraft whose registration certificate was issued in March of any year and is due to expire in March 2011. For full details see: http://www.faa.gov/news/press_releases/news_story.cfm?newsId=11617&wwparam=1280... 7/26/2010

Current regulations require owners to report the sale of an aircraft, the scrapping or destruction of an aircraft, or a change in mailing address, but many owners have not complied with those requirements and there are estimated to be several tens of thousands of 'phantom' aircraft on the register.

Come to AOPA UK's Bonus Day

All AOPA members everywhere are invited to Duxford airfield, about 50 miles north of London, on Saturday September 18th for an AOPA UK Open Day at which senior EASA and UK CAA figures will answer members' questions and explain some of what their organisations are doing. Keynote speakers will include EASA's Deputy Head of Rulemaking Eric Sivel and the CAA's Head of Safety Ben Alcott. There will also be opportunities to meet AOPA UK personnel and prize competitions such as furthest flown, oldest and youngest pilot, and concours d'elegance. Duxford is home to the Imperial War Museum's Historic Aircraft Collection and is a fascinating place to visit; it's not unusual to see Spitfire, Hurricane or F86 in the circuit. For details see the AOPA UK website www.aopa.co.uk

AOPA Sweden asks Piper for help on regulatory nonsense

AOPA Sweden is working with Piper, and with the help of IAOPA, to try to bring some order to the situation regarding periodic checks on aircraft. The Swedish CAA is interpreting EASA requirements literally and insisting that all recommendations from type certificate holders be treated as mandatory, introducing a whole new level of costly, bureaucratic and pointless work. For the PA-28, for instance, there is now a mandatory check of battery water every 30 days, lubrication of rubber door seals every 30 days, cleaning of fuel bowl every 30 days, change of engine oil every four months and much more, regardless of time flown. This poses horrendous problems for owners; engineers are not willing to undertake pointless jobs that take 15 minutes but require 45 minutes of paperwork, and at many remote Swedish airfields there is no resident mechanic - pilots must fly one or two hours to get to an engineering shop, and if this must be done every month for a nonsensical job the situation becomes intolerable. The problem is severe for Piper owners because of the number of recommendations the company makes; unable to introduce good sense to its regulator's demands, AOPA Sweden is discussing with Piper a new approach to such information. Piper says many of its recommendations are just good practice, but when exacerbated by perverse regulators they can become a game-stopper.

Some of the Piper recommendations AOPA Sweden's Lars Hjelmberg points up are:

*Checks of battery box and cables every 30 days. "Other manufacturers make no such recommendation. Why must this be done on a Piper? What's wrong with the Piper installation?"

*Is battery check of fluids necessary with the new gel type of batteries? How shall density of battery liquid be a problem on gel batteries?

*Why will dirt collect in the fuel filter when the aircraft is parked for 30 days in a hangar and not flying? Is not dirt a function of volume of fuel passing a filter, and should not be based on calendar time? If fuel is filtered before filling the aircraft, as per API standards, why is this necessary in Pipers?

*If a mechanic's shop is allowed to have an open barrel of engine oil for 12 months, why may not the same oil be in the sump of the engine for more than four months?

AOPA Hellas negotiates 80% handling discounts for AOPA members

Discounts of up to 80% on ground handling charges in Greece have been negotiated by AOPA Hellas for AOPA members in every country. AOPA Hellas President Yiouli Kalafati reports that holders of AOPA Air Crew Cards are entitled to the discounts at the 39 Greek commercial airports to which general aviation has access.

A side-effect of the new arrangement has been to increase membership of AOPA in Greece by 16%.

Handling is unfortunately mandatory in Greece, but AOPA's negotiations have minimised the pain. There are two handling agents, Goldair and Swissport Hellas, and separate arrangements have been arrived at with each. The agreements cover only marshalling and transport/escort to and from airport terminal and are available only for valid AOPA Air Crew Card holders engaged on general aviation private flights, including training. Commercial light aircraft flights are excluded.

Swissport Hellas now charges AOPA Air Crew Card holders €24 plus VAT for aircraft up to 3,000 kg MTOW. There are further discounts for members of AOPA Hellas. For more information see

http://www.aopa.gr/docs/web_swissport_handling_agreement.pdf.

Goldair Handling SA will charge AOPA members with Air Crew Cards €20 for aircraft up to 3,500 kg MTOW. See www.aopa.gr/docs/web_goldair_handling_agreement.pdf.

Positive news on UK's IMC rating

An extra meeting of the EASA Working Group FCL008, which has been looking at instrument flight rules, has unexpectedly been called for October 5th in order to discuss the UK's IMC rating, and a representative of AOPA UK has been invited to attend. The meeting is a positive development in a long campaign by AOPA to save the IMC rating, which is threatened by European harmonisation. FCL008 had finished its work and a Notice of Proposed Amendment was expected based on its report. AOPA believes that through FCL008, Europe has been given an inaccurate picture of the IMG rating, which has been wrongly characterised as "an IR with 20% of the training", and its safety benefits have been dismissed. A reprieve for the IMC rating is supported by the UK CAA and every pilots' group in Britain, and it enjoys widespread support in continental Europe where some organisations are looking at how it could be adopted in their own countries.

AOPA Ireland swings into action

AOPA Ireland has held its first AGM, with Jim Breslin, who is working hard to reinvigorate the Association, elected President. The meeting also elected Eddie Nolan as Vice-President, Sean O'Brien as Technical Officer, Andy Canavan as Sub-Officer and Kitty Cronin as General Secretary. Many of the officers of the Association later met with IAOPA Senior Vice President Martin Robinson at the Foynes Flying Boat Museum. Martin says: "We had a very constructive discussion about the need for strong representation in Ireland and how IAOPA can help develop a dialogue with the Irish Aviation Authority. It was almost a year since I last met Jim Breslin and in that time he has done a great deal to develop AOPA in Ireland. He now has a database of about 500 email addresses of pilots who have registered an interest. Those who pay a subscription also get the UK AOPA magazine *General Aviation* which is greatly appreciated. It seems that AOPA Ireland is well on the way to establishing again an active voice for GA. I'm extremely grateful to Brian Cullen, curator of the fabulous Foynes Flying Boat Museum, who facilitated the meeting. If you're in Ireland, this museum is not to be missed."

See www.flyingboatmuseum.com

Fly-out from Israel to Georgia

AOPA Israel has undertaken a fly-out to the former Soviet Republic of Georgia, which took a great deal of organising but lived up to the highest expectations. There is little aviation in Georgia and avgas had to be specially provided in some places, but the Israeli pilots were given a great welcome and left with the warmest memories of the country. When the fly-out was first mooted, 70 people in 27 aircraft signed up, but those aircraft which could not reach Ankara directly from Israel were unable to participate. In addition, permits to overfly Turkey were not forthcoming until 12 hours before departure, so many would-be participants went elsewhere. Finally four aircraft, two Cirrus SR22s, a Cessna 414 and a Cessna 172, made the trip. With the help of the National Aero Club of Georgia and a Georgian tour operator, Vanilla Sky, the group flew 2,500 miles in seven days and enjoyed some amazing and unique experiences. A fuller account of their adventures will be published in the AOPA UK magazine *General Aviation* soon. The National Aero Club of Georgia, which operates a C172, a C182, some microlights and Agusta 109 and Mi-8 helicopters, is involved in charter and heli-ski operations in the Caucasus. They say it's the first time a group of foreign aircraft have

flown into Georgia, but they are expecting more tours next year by pilots from Poland, Lithuania and Ukraine. For Israeli GA pilots, who operate under the most stringent constraints at home and who find it difficult to fly abroad, the experience of flying without restrictions up to 11,000 feet in the mountains was rare and welcome. See www.nac.ge