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IAOPA Europe Holds Regional Meeting

Representatives of 13 European AOPAs met in Zurich, Switzerland on 18 October to discuss a variety of topics that will affect general aviation within Europe. The semi-annual meeting was hosted by AOPA-Switzerland president and IAOPA European Senior Vice President Ruedi Gerber.

Much of the meeting focused on proposals being made by the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) that will materially affect general aviation. The first notice of proposed amendment (NPA) is an extensive overhaul of flight crew licensing regulations that promises to make flight training more expensive and restrictive. NPAs on management systems for aviation operating certificate holders and operating regulations for all aviation activities are scheduled for release in the near future.

Other EASA NPA issues discussed included the new leisure pilot licence, flight instructor certificates, simplified instrument ratings for private pilots and certification of a European Light Aircraft.

Strategies were devised for responding to the EASA proposals, with assignments for research and response drafts allocated to meeting attendees. Since a number of the proposals individually and in combination may produce dire consequences for general aviation within Europe, communications with the European Commission's Air Transportation Directorate, EASA's oversight agency, have been initiated to express concern for both the basic and implementing regulations contained in the proposals.

AOPA-US President-elect Craig Fuller attended the meeting as an observer and noted, "I am quite impressed with the European IAOPA organization. The work they do is closely linked to worldwide general activities and helps us all."

For more information about subjects covered in the meeting see http://www.iaopa-eur.org/contentServlet/news_nov08.htm Information regarding EASA NPAs may be found at http://easa.europa.eu/ws_prod/r/r_npa.php

AOPA-US asks Canada to Reconsider new ELT Requirement

The Canadian government has said that it will require all aircraft flying in Canadian airspace to carry an installed 406 MHz ELT beginning Feb. 1, 2009. (The US is not requiring aircraft operators to replace their existing 121.5 MHz ELTs for domestic operations.) A survey of AOPA-US members who currently fly to Canada revealed that 51 percent would stop flying over the border rather than re-equip with 406 MHz ELTs—a change that could represent a significant loss of revenue for some Canadian towns and airports. Thousands of US pilots could stop flying to Canada if Transport Canada officials go ahead with plans to require all foreign-registered aircraft traveling in Canadian airspace to carry a 406 MHz emergency locator transmitter (ELT), AOPA-US warned Canadian aviation officials. In formal comments filed with Transport Canada, AOPA-US proposed an alternative—allowing foreign-registered aircraft to carry a 406 MHz personal locator beacon (PLB) in addition to the 121.5 MHz ELT already installed in most U.S. general aviation aircraft.

"The current cost of a 406 MHz ELT is five times that of the 121.5 MHz ELTs already installed in most general aviation airplanes," said Randy Kenagy, AOPA-US Acting Vice President of Regulatory Affairs. "It makes no sense to force small aircraft owners to purchase expensive new equipment when the benefits are minimal and there are more affordable alternatives."

In addition to asking Canadian officials to reconsider their 2009 mandate and offering an alternative, AOPA-US's comments pointed out that the FAA's planned move to ADS-B technology by 2020 will significantly reduce any benefits provided by a 406 MHz ELT by broadcasting the aircraft's registration number and position every second.

AOPA-France Introduces New Aircraft Insurance

At the recent IAOPA Europe regional meeting, AOPA-France representative Emanuel Davidson introduced a new aircraft insurance program designed to be used by European AOPA affiliates. The program, which has been used by AOPA-France for more than a year, offers preferential premium rates to AOPA members, based on their collective aviation activity profile.

The new insurance is designed to save AOPA members up to 30 percent on their premiums while offering competitive hull and liability coverage for owned aircraft. The program has helped AOPA-France, attract more than 140 new members over the past year. Davidson said, "The program has proved quite successful for both AOPA-France and its members. We have structured it to be available for European AOPAs so that they may also take advantage of this program." For more information email e.davidson@aopa.fr or acuroy@aopa.fr.

First Phase of SESAR Successful for General Aviations

IAOPA Europe Director of Technical and Regulatory Affairs Michael Erb reports that the first phase of SESAR, the master plan for the development of a uniform European air traffic control system, has ended with positive features for general aviation.

Erb said, "Many other large air traffic management projects have failed due to various forms of resistance, but SESAR delivered the definition phase report on-time in July of this year. Notably, the features we ensured were in the plan included continued access to all airspace and air traffic and weather information. However, there were some problems in which collaboration marking the report could not solve: a common technical vision for mandatory avionics equipment and the continuing negative cost/benefit ratio for general aviation to participate in the new system. Nevertheless, we will continue to press for features that will benefit general aviation as we enter the new era of air traffic management"

Details of the SESAR project may be found at <http://www.sesarju.eu>

From the Secretary

At the recent ICAO Conference on the Economics of Airports and Air Navigation Services I made a presentation regarding the need for airports and air navigation service providers (ANSP) to regularly consult with the users of their services, especially general aviation. Following my presentation I was approached by an acquaintance representing a State ANSP with whom I had worked with in several working groups. He noted that he had invited the AOPA within his State to participate in consultations regarding charges and services several times but had not been able to get them to attend the meetings. The point he made was that changes to services and charges affecting general aviation were discussed at those meetings but without participation from the country's AOPA decisions were made that were less than desirable for our type of flying. The lesson? If you don't participate in meetings and negative consequences arise, you may have no one to blame but yourself regarding the outcome. IAOPA Secretary General John Sheehan

IAOPA Officer Election Ballots Mailed

Ballots containing candidates for election to the offices of president and regional vice presidents have been mailed to all current IAOPA board members. Please return the ballots as indicated, not later than 31 December 2008. Election results will be announced in the January IAOPA Bulletin.

Plan to Attend Aero Friedrichshafen 2009

IAOPA Europe will be present and participate in Aero Friedrichshafen 2009, billed as Europe's number one international trade exhibition for general aviation, being held in Friedrichshafen, Germany, 2-5 April 2009. The AOPA-Germany and Switzerland booth will serve as a base of operations for all IAOPA European activities, which will include participation in a series of seminars and presentations designed to bring European pilots and aircraft owners up to date on aviation activities in that region.

For more information see <http://aero-friedrichshafen.de>

The International Council of Aircraft Owner and Pilot Associations represents the interests of more than 470,000 pilots and aircraft owners in 67 countries. Formed in 1962, IAOPA is dedicated to promoting the peaceful uses of general aviation and aerial work worldwide.

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