



SAFETY

Take a good look in the mirror

We need to keep an eye on our own ability, says Safety Officer **Chloe Eriksen**

THE AAIB report published earlier this year into the fatal accident involving G-CBDJ highlighted the question of age in recreational flying and the level of information available to pilots in assessing their own medical fitness to fly.

The report exposes the fact that some pilots who may renew their licence by virtue of experience (holders of a PPL with microlight class rating issued before 1 February 2008), and who also conduct the online Pilot Medical Declaration (PMD), will not

have any interaction with a professional who might offer an insight into their capabilities or fitness to fly.

For that reason, the report goes on to make four safety recommendations, both on the subject of PMDs and that of the licence renewal process. All these have the potential to affect microlight pilots.

The report says: "It is possible that some age-related deterioration in human performance was a factor in this accident.

"The investigation highlighted a lack of medical

guidance for both pilots and medical professionals, as well as a cohort of private pilots who are not subject to an independent professional assessment of age-related deterioration in piloting ability."

It's impossible to ascertain whether age was truly a factor in this accident, but it does raise the question of "what age should we stop flying?"

The effects of ageing do not, and will not, affect us all in the same way. Any age-related deterioration, or indeed the rate of change to our reactions, eyesight or hearing, is impossible to predict.

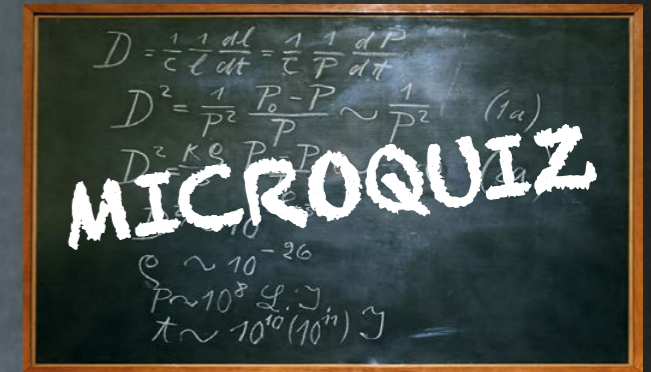
The article overleaf, originally published by the BGA, explores this topic and goes on to offer guidance on the areas which we should all examine when trying to answer this question for ourselves.

I recommend a good read of both the article and the full report into CBDJ, which can be found on the AAIB website.

It can be extremely hard to be objective about any change in our own abilities, and difficult to change the way in which we operate, but it is vital that we understand the requirements for a PMD, continually assess our own fitness to fly, and adjust accordingly.

We can all play a part here to look after ourselves and those around us.

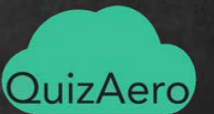
Wishing you all the very best for the festive season, and see you in 2024! □



- Which of the following statements is true regarding stalls when an aircraft's total weight exceeds the permitted Maximum Takeoff Mass (MTOM)?
 - The stall speed decreases.
 - The stall speed increases.
 - The critical angle of attack is decreased.
- Which of the following will increase lift?
 - Increased airspeed
 - Reduced angle of incidence
 - Reduced angle of attack
- What is the term used to describe a straight line that runs from the trailing edge to the leading edge of an aerofoil?
 - Camber
 - Wing coefficient
 - Chord
- What is calibrated airspeed (CAS)?
 - Indicated airspeed corrected for position and instrument error.
 - The airspeed read directly from the airspeed indicator on an aircraft, driven by the pitot static system.
 - The indicated airspeed recalibrated to read speed over the ground.
- What should be a pilot's first action in the event of a complete loss of power after takeoff?
 - Apply back pressure on the stick to maintain altitude until the fault can be diagnosed.
 - Assess the wind for a forced landing.
 - Lower the nose and establish best glide speed.

MF's quizmaster Lawrence Bell is the developer of QuizAero, the online groundschool for microlight student pilots, quizaero.co.uk.

Answers overleaf



GASCo
General Aviation Safety Council

GASCo, the General Aviation Safety Council, is a charity whose members are aviation organisations. Its aim is to make aviation safer through education. It presents the CAA safety evenings, runs seminars and provides safety information through its magazine and website, gasco.org.uk.

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