



Dedicated

COUNCIL AIRWAVES

Putting the 't' in simulation

By Frank Thompson

AS I travelled about the country last year to many shows with the BMAA simulator, I found that many members didn't even know we had one.

That's a shame, because we could have done so much better for microlighting.

I've been running the simulator for just over a year, taking it to about 15 shows, from educational to recreational, and I found that many aviation-based shows don't create any donations.

Those come from county shows, educational shows or engineer exhibitions. Now, getting donations isn't the sole aim, but it does help the Build a Plane programme, and we all want that to succeed.

I have already got six events booked up this year and am looking for more, so if you have a mind to get something started or know of a county show in your area and are available to help, let me know at frank.thompson5@btopenworld.com.

The simulator is part of our marketing effort, and we need to get it out on the road to as many locations as possible to do its thing and get as many people interested in microlight flying as possible.

This will drive business for the schools and bring new members to the BMAA. □



Everyone who's been paying attention, which we know is all of you, will notice that *Chairman's Airwaves* – which incidentally appeared in the first-ever edition of BMAA's magazine and has been a regular feature ever since – has been magically transformed into *Council Airwaves*.

The reason? The council's decided that the piece will be written on alternate months by the chairman and council members, in order to give members a better idea of what their elected representatives are up to.

All the better for more variety.

Dawn to dusk: 17 hours of flying fun

Safety Officer **John Teesdale** with a short guide to making the most of the longest day



WHEN you receive this magazine, it will be about three weeks until 21 June, the longest day.

Sunrise is 4.43am and sunset 9.23pm, meaning you can legally fly from 4.13am until 9.53pm.

Wow! That's over 17 hours of fun! Just think how far you could go. Several people, including our own CE, Geoff

Weighell, have flown more than 1000nm in a day.

If you need purpose to your flying, how about flying between the furthest-apart flying clubs in the UK? Or visiting as many microlight fields or ex-RAF airfields as possible?

You could be sponsored and support a charity. There are also dedicated competitions like the Dawn to Dusk. Your flight could qualify for the BMAA Wings Scheme or a Colibri award.

“ Long flights require careful planning, and you will need to be physically and mentally fit enough to cope ”

But hang on a minute. Is it sensible or safe to just jump in the plane and head off on a 1000nm trip? No, I don't think so, and I'm sure you wouldn't seriously consider it. Long flights, just like any other extreme activity, require careful planning, and you, the pilot, will need to be physically and mentally fit enough to cope.

That will mean starting on a training programme of increasing distances to build up your skills, stamina and mental capacity.

On long flights it's much better to share the tasks. If you are flying with another pilot who can fly the same aircraft, you can swap or share the piloting and navigating. If you have a regular flying buddy who is not a pilot, it makes it so much easier for you if they can map-read, but a 200nm trip is not the place to learn!

At my flying club, the experienced pilots will often offer the spare seat to a student pilot so they can get some experience of navigating. It's also a refreshing reminder of what lies at the end of all those hours of circuits.

Weather

Even with adequate skills, stamina and mental capacity, it is, of course, still all down to the weather. As a pilot, you probably drive your other half mad already by constantly watching the



weather. And so it must be. For a long trip, you need to watch the weather for weeks beforehand.

Our own Dave Sykes has been trying to get to the North Pole for three years now, and the runway there is only open for a couple of weeks, so planning round the weather is critical. He spends an hour a day for months beforehand studying the weather, chunters away to himself in front of the screen and uses lots of words beginning with “F” and “B” that I’ve never heard before.

Don’t be tempted or pressured into starting or continuing a long flight if the weather is not suitable. It never ends well. Dave is still alive after flying to Australia because he is cautious. He set off to cross the Channel, but there was fog ahead and he turned back. Previously, another microlight pilot had attempted to carry on into bad weather and was killed.

Dave has not set off for the last legs to the North Pole because the weather has never been suitable. He does not buckle to pressure.

So the Jetstream is in the right place, high pressure dominates, you and the aircraft are ready and it’s game on, but before we get too giddy, let’s do some checks;

Aircraft documentation in order

Permit to fly certificate of validity current, servicing and maintenance up to date. Registration document up to date, insurance valid for the intended flight. All mods signed off – that includes fitting of GPS, camera mounts, radio and transponder. Radio licence current. Weight and balance checked. (You’re only putting 16 litres in that Eurostar, aren’t you?) Current chart in the aircraft. (The ½ mil North and ½ mil South have recently been re-issued) GPS software up to date. Plenty of batteries if required.

Pilot

Rating in licence current. Experience suitable. Currency OK for 90-day rule if passenger carried. Medical current. IMSAFE checked out. Pilot head on. And don’t forget passenger health.

Planning

Route planned. Diversions/alternates planned. Airspace checked. Possible infringements safeguarded. Frequency cards / listening squawks / aerodrome plates current and carried. Notams checked.

You’re off! But remember the en route essentials:

- Maintain a good lookout. Four eyes are better than two.
- Maintain situational awareness. Think ahead, stay in front of the aircraft. Use the map *and* the GPS.
- Share tasks when possible. Don’t be afraid to query anything you believe to be wrong.
- Keep your transponder on if fitted.
- Use listening squawks where possible.
- Altimetry. Set off on QNH. Use regional pressure setting unless near airspace, when use the local QNH to avoid vertical infringements.
- Maintain adequate clearance from controlled airspace, unless crossing under ATC control. (Take 2)
- Take positive action when conditions deteriorate. Use planned alternates. Ask for help if you need it.
- Stay hydrated and eat regularly on long flights.
- Look out for signs of fatigue. Be prepared to land earlier than planned if necessary.

Right, you’ve got three weeks to get fit – so you’d better get cracking! Oh, and by the way, 21 June falls on a Thursday, so you’ll have to throw a sicky or wait until the Saturday.

Have fun flying safely. □

Turning a corner

Norman Burr reports on the 2018 AGM, held at Popham for the first time

IF the 2017 AGM represented a low point in BMAA history, held in a bitterly cold village hall in Deddington with only a handful of members present, not enough candidates to fill the Council vacancies, and a backdrop of falling membership numbers, then the 2018 meeting at Popham represented a fresh start.

First and foremost, attendance was up nearly 300%, with about 70 members signing in. Secondly, the meeting gave the green light to some new blood joining the Council, albeit co-opted rather than voted on, as the five months since the 2017 AGM had not allowed sufficient time to conduct a proper election.

The general principle behind co-options is that the co-opted individual is for practical purposes a full Council member except that the term of office lasts only until the next AGM, though they can regularise their position if at that point they stand for election and are successful.

There have been occasional co-options in the past but never before have four been needed simultaneously, and exactly how to organise them was the subject of two motions prepared in advance by the Council.

The first motion was to change the articles of association to remove the existing limit of two on the number of co-optees.

Several members expressed concern about the lack of democratic accountability which would arise from having half, or perhaps at some future date more than half, of the council non-elected.

By way of mitigation it was pointed out that the choice of co-optees would be made by Council members who were themselves elected, but the meeting felt this was not enough of a safeguard and after considerable discussion, the platform (aka a row of plastic chairs) agreed to amend the motion to permit up to 50% of the Council to be co-opted.

This was passed with no votes against, and attention turned to the second motion, precipitated by the position of Tim Burrow. Having volunteered after the last AGM, he was already a co-opted Council member, but to put himself forward for a second co-option, for 2018-19, required the approval of the membership. This was given, unanimously.

Towards the end of the meeting, members willing to be co-opted were asked to give their names to the Council, and five volunteered: Tim Burrow, Rob Grimwood, Derek Lamb, Gavin Teasdale and John Waite. The unsuccessful candidate was John, but he emphatically did not waste his time, because his offer ensured that the Council had more candidates than places, a luxury it has not enjoyed for a while.

Chief Executive Geoff Weighell then introduced his interim report, summarising what has been going on at Deddington since ▷