

COUNCIL AIRWAVES

Change is a-coming

BMAA ready for 600kg limit, says Chairman **Rob Hughes**

AT business school, one of my courses was change management, or how to introduce new ideas when sometimes they are viewed with suspicion.

Generally, I like change, be it entirely voluntary or else forced upon us from elsewhere, as it shows we are reacting to our environment.

Microlighting has evolved in recent years. We had the boom in the mid-2000s, fuelled by a strong economy and cheap credit, when microlight sales soared. The picture today is different: new microlights are less affordable for individual owners, leading to a growth in syndication, and the BMAA has to react if it is to continue to offer all the services and representation that microlighters enjoy.

“ Generally, I like change, as it shows we are reacting to our environment ”

There may be further and more significant change in the near future. By the time you read this, I will have travelled to Gatwick (along with our CE and CTO) to discuss a range of issues with the CAA.

I recently appointed a new chief executive in Richard Moriarty, replacing Andrew Haines. Andrew was mandated with a task that few enjoy – cost cutting – and this is why we asked for the meeting, to hammer out a number of issues that have been on the table for a while.

For me, the main topic is 600kg. The regulations enabling this class of microlight were enacted on 11 September, and most European countries are adopting the new weight limit.

The BMAA is also well prepared and ready to go; we're just waiting for the green light. Many microlights are getting heavier, and we need updated regulations to accommodate this.

One last change is from within the council. Vice-chairman Andy Aiken has stepped down after setting up a new stoves business with his son – thefireplacechesham.co.uk – and it's on fire, leaving Andy no spare time.

We thank Andy for his contribution and wish him the best of luck. □



Silent but deadly

Stay clear of glider winch sites, says Safety Officer **John Teesdale**



FUNNY how many times I write about a subject for the safety slot, and just after it's published, something comes in to really reinforce the message.

This time it's the danger of overflying gliding sites, especially where winching is taking place. In the August feature on avoiding mid-air collisions and airproxes, I talked about careful planning to avoid such sites and other choke points.

The message has now been reinforced by the BGA, which has issued the following statement with guidelines:

“A significant number of gliding sites winch launch gliders to 2000ft or more using cables.

“Maximum launch altitudes are indicated on the half mil VFR chart with a forward slash and height: for example, Rivar Hill has a maximum winch-launch altitude of 3800ft, as shown on the illustration as /3.8. There is further detail about winch launch sites in the UK AIP.

“Pilots should not rely on seeing the winch launch happening. A glider will go from ground to 1000-1500ft in about 20s, so spotting it in the climb is too late to do anything about the conflict. The hazard continues for at least another 20s as the cable descends under a small parachute. The higher the launch, the longer the descent.

“Many of the moving-map databases and published approach plates commonly used by some private and most commercial pilots do not depict winch launch sites.

“Ed Downham, who as well as being a UK Airprox Board gliding member is a Boeing 777 captain, says: ‘So far, we haven't seen an actual mid-air collision with a winch cable, but it could soon be a matter for the AAIB rather than UKAB. Be under no illusion: such an encounter is highly likely to be fatal for those involved.’

“Chris Fox, another UKAB gliding member and an R44 pilot, adds: ‘A recurring theme in these reports is that the powered aircraft pilot assumed that the gliding site would not be active – perhaps because the weather was less than perfect, or it was late in the day. Gliders can, and do, winch-launch in strong winds and any cloudbase that permits the launch to be completed safely – often in conditions that would deter many other GA pilots.’

“The UKAB advises that pilots should always avoid glider sites. Only overfly them if you have timely, positive confirmation from the site itself that they are inactive.

“When avoiding glider sites, beware of simply skirting the ground location by a narrow margin, because there are likely to be gliders operating close to the site as they soar within gliding range.

“Even if a site has finished winch-launching for the day, it may



Dedicated



Map showing Rivar Hill gliding site

have gliders returning from cross-country flights, or motorgliders self-launching into the local area. See CAA AIC Y083/2011 for details.

“Many gliders fly with a system called Flarm, a long-established electronic conspicuity aid. Flarm is relatively cheap, easy to fit in any aircraft, and provides potentially life-saving audio and visual cues.” □



FLIGHT PLANS

CLUBS! Planning an event? Mail details to mfeditor@bmaa.org for inclusion in Flight Plans.

READERS! Dates and details of events notified to the BMAA are subject to change and we cannot guarantee their accuracy. Please use the contact details to check with organizers before going to an event or making bookings.

first day of the event the **BMAA AGM** will be held, at a time to be confirmed. For latest details check bmaa.org.

19-21 Jul: ENSTONE. **BMAA SSDR Freedom Rally.** The sixth holding of this major annual flying event, a great social occasion attracting microlighters from all over the country intent on enjoying a weekend at a super airfield with like-minded people. Open to all microlights, not just single-seat. For latest details check bmaa.org.

International events

23-26 Jan: USA. **US Sport Aviation Expo.** Dubbed *Flying into the Future*, this will be the fifteenth annual flying celebration at Sebring, Florida. More on sportaviationexpo.com/.

2-7 Apr: USA. **Sun 'n Fun.** International Fly-in and Expo. Details on flynfn.org/sun-n-fun-intl-fly-expo/.

10-13 Apr: GERMANY. **Aero Friedrichshafen.** International trade fair for general aviation, Europe's largest. See www.aero-expo.com.

22-28 Jul: USA. **EAA AirVenture.** The biggest sport aviation show on earth, held annually at Oshkosh airfield, Wisconsin. More on eaa.org/en/ea/eaa-events

No fixed date: Druridge Bay Fly-in.

A Northern Aviators event in aid of the Forces Childrens' Trust. See druridgebayflyin.weebly.com. No landing fee, just a donation of your choice to our charity. Barbecue, beach and free camping at a beautiful location. For details contact Chester Potts on 07590 012108.

No fixed date: Isle Of Mull Fly-out.

A Northern Aviators event. See mullflyout.weebly.com. Visit one of Scotland's most beautiful islands. Hotel on site and accommodation nearby, free camping and Tobermory nightlife! All aviators welcome for a social and a few beers. Contact Chester Potts on 07590 012108.

4-5 May: POPHAM AIRFIELD. **Micro-light Trade Fair & Fly-in.** During the

New or re-registered microlights

G-reg

BZPN
CKXM
CKYS
CKYL
CKYZ
CKZB
CKZG
CKZM
CLAI
CLAM
CLAT
CLBB
CLCD
HATH
MAMZ
MMDO
MVOA
MYPR
RPRP

Aircraft type

Mainair Blade 912S
EuroFox 3K
Quik GT450
Ikarus C42 FB80
Eurofly Minifox
SD-1 Minisport
Apco Cruiser 550/Parajet
Hummerchute
Ikarus C42 FB100 Bravo
Dar Solo 120
QuikR
Team Minimax 91
Iota-Mk 4
Merlin 100UL
Ikarus C42 FB80
Sprint/Invader (modified)
Chaser S 447
Cyclone AX3/503
QuikR

Owner

Jonathan Kilpatrick
James Alexander Walker
P&M Aviation
Speedy Conservatories
Frank Kratky
Christopher John Lines
Giles Benedict Nunez Cardozo
Glyn John Pemberton
Raphael Stewart O'Carroll
Peter John Kelsey
Lawrence Maynard Caldwell
John Owen
Shakeel Siddiqui
Neil Robert Hathaway
Mid Anglia Microlights
Malcolm Roberts
William Alexander Emmerson
William James Ian Robb
Robert McIntyre Brown

Town

Lifford
Lancaster
Marlborough
Worthing
Chalfont St Giles
Scunthorpe
Gillingham
Lincoln
Craigavon
Edinburgh
Berwick-Upon-Tweed
Colchester
Mullingar
Banbury
Norwich
Pwllheli
Hexham
Crumlin
Perth