

MFC Flier August -November 2009

Thanks to the stalwart efforts of our two new instructors flying training has continued at Mona, albeit at a reduced rate, despite the CAA's suspension of our CFI David Lloyd in July. Unfortunately this situation will remain extant until February 2010 when the Court hearing is scheduled to take place. Fortunately the two instructors are able to offer a full range of services but only at weekends and not every one of those.

Please can anyone requiring the services of an instructor make a prior booking either directly with Rod or Phil or through the normal club telephone booking procedure.

Sadly the promised local Special Branch officer talk on the requirements for international aircraft movements into or out of Mona has had to be cancelled on two occasions. I hope to be able to make fresh arrangements early in 2010. Also the same applies to the promised demonstration of a Sports-cruiser. This clearly requires better weather than we have been having of late. Since loss of the Diamond the club has been unable to offer a four seat aircraft and the committee have been searching for a suitable aircraft, a particular 1985 160hp Piper Warrior has been identified as being suitable but before committing to its purchase the committee is considering a local hire.

Accommodation - The hope that we might be able to eventually take over the present ATC hut has had to be abandoned. The ATC are now planning to have a new building erected on the present site.

This situation leaves us with little real practical and satisfactory scope for manoeuvre save for the acquisition of another Porta-cabin. This we propose to do as soon as we can obtain the required permission from the MoD.

Fuel – The fuel situation has changed disastrously in the last few weeks. As previously reported our last option seemed to be keeping the bowser continuously on MOD land. However a pre-condition of that was a favourable report from an independent technically competent organisation. Whilst the inspector seemed upbeat at the time of the inspection, subsequently faults have been found in the design that makes it environmentally unacceptable. We now have no other recourse than to go back to Terence Barker Tanks Ltd, the manufacturer, for a refund on the grounds that the tank is not and cannot be made fit for purpose. The independent report should help greatly with that process. Personally I am bitterly disappointed that the culmination of years of work is failure in such a vital area.

Fire training - courses will continue to be offered at quarterly intervals and Duty Pilots should note that:

IT IS A CLUB & RAF REQUIREMENT THAT FIRE TRAINING IS COMPLETED ANNUALLY

Duty Pilot Shortage – Geoff Leeming continues to struggle with the production of the Duty Pilot Roster. Again I repeat my previous request that those of you who do not offer themselves for this duty consider carefully what time you are able to offer to the club and let Geoff or Ron have a response using the pro-forma response that was included with a previous newsletter.

WE STILL NEED MORE DUTY PILOTS!

Finally can I entreat all members to come to the AGM at Tafarn-y-Rhos at 16:30 on Saturday 9th January and tell us how you think the club is being operated and managed in these difficult times. Many rumours have abounded during this summer, mostly negative, I, and the committee would like to hear your views face to face, particularly if they are of a constructive nature.

So come along and tell us your cares and dreams and enjoy a sandwich and drink.

We made a modest profit of £2,000 (£6,500 before depreciation & tax) last year and I'd like to think that, with your help we can repeat that performance again this year. I look forward to seeing you all at the AGM.

David Frankland

30th December 2009

MONA IN BRIEF

Aeroplane utilisation

	LS	LV	Training
August	16	3	14
September	22	0	18
October	27	0	22
November	10	0	6
Totals	75	3	60
Averages	19	1	15

Considering the circumstances at the club with regard to instructor availability aircraft utilisation was good throughout the period. The volume of PPL flying remained at about 20% of the total.

Maintenance

LS – Annual inspection & overhaul completed.

LV – Not available for the whole period.

Training

Over 60 hours of training carried out.

FLIGHT SAFETY JOTTINGS - DECEMBER 2009

Winter Drawers On was the title of a well-known RAF flight safety poster that graced every locker room in the Services. As well as a punning statement on the season, its purpose was to encourage awareness on the correct thermal underclothing to wear during winter flying operations. The popularity of this poster was in no small measure due to the underclothes in question being modelled by the lovely Sue, a secretary in the RAF's Inspectorate of Flight Safety during my time there. The serious message here, of course, was that aircrew should be appropriately dressed to survive the environment and elements in the unfortunate event of having to abandon their aircraft; and dress for the hostile environment, not for the comfort of a warm cockpit.

This message has obvious implications for the way we operate our aircraft during winter. Hopefully, you are all aware of the more obvious aspects of operating in cold weather, the greater attention paid to weather forecasts, the much shorter flying day, the risks of icy runways and taxiways *etc*, but I have frequently observed Club members flying in light clothing during the winter months, presumably relying on the cabin heating to maintain their comfort.

This is all well and good until something goes wrong. Think of a near 'worse case' scenario: you have just had an engine malfunction while flying between Mona and Welshpool one late Saturday afternoon, and have carried out a forced landing. Unfortunately, the aircraft has run into soft ground and has nosed over onto its back, leaving you hanging in your harness. You hear the metallic tinkling of hot metal and you are aware of the sharp smell of leaking fuel. You decide that a rapid egress is essential but, in your haste, you release your harness and fall into the cockpit roof, injuring your arm. You eventually struggle free, and it now dawns on you that it is very cold outside the cockpit, you are in a very remote, unpopulated area, and it will be dark within the hour. To add to your woes, it starts to rain – well how unusual is that?

Fortunately, you are carrying a Personal Locator Beacon, which you activate to alert the emergency services and, eventually, you hear the reassuring beat of a Sea King's rotors as it homes through the darkness to your position. By this time, however, you are well into hypothermia, shivering uncontrollably, becoming confused and disorientated, and wondering if you will ever feel warm again. The Sea King crew have seen it all before: perfectly fit people on the verge of death, having underestimated the dangers of our 'temperate' climate.

In a survival situation, the first priority is protection (food, for all you scoffers, is the lowest priority!), and you should think of what you wear as a vital part of your survival equipment, even more important than your expensive location aids. The latter will certainly help get you found, but they can't guarantee that you will be in a state to claim the T-shirt!

REMEMBER - FLIGHT SAFETY IS NO ACCIDENT