

# SKYPOINTER E-BULLETIN

December 2021



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*Merry  
Christmas!*

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# FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Luke Morgan

Welcome to the Christmas edition of Skypointer. For those of you that attended the AGMs at Duxford I am sure you would agree it was a great day. The venue was superb (with balcony views of the airfield watching Spitfires flyby) as was the hospitality, we have thanked Duxford for providing such a great facility. Although the attendance was modest, I very much enjoyed meeting and chatting with those of you that did attend.

Our industry continues to face considerable discombobulation and has numerous challenges ahead. The IPA will continue to support you in whatever way we can. Both the Association and Union are in a strong position financially as we continue to manage our funds carefully. I must mention our staff too; their endeavours and flexibility have meant the various transitions at work over the past two years have been seamless.

Our outstanding General Secretary, Phil Flower has indicated to me that he wishes to retire towards the end of next year. I received this news with much sadness as Phil's input, wisdom, knowledge, qualifications and general passion for the job will be difficult to replace.



We will commence a General Secretary recruitment process in the New Year.

I hope you are all able to enjoy some quality time with your family and friends this Christmas. Our support networks both at work and home are vitally important for our health and well-being, whatever is happening we all need to look after ourselves and each other.

I wish you all a very happy Christmas and the very best for a prosperous new year

*Luke Morgan*

Chairman

# ARE YOU A **WISE** PILOT?

By Phil Flower

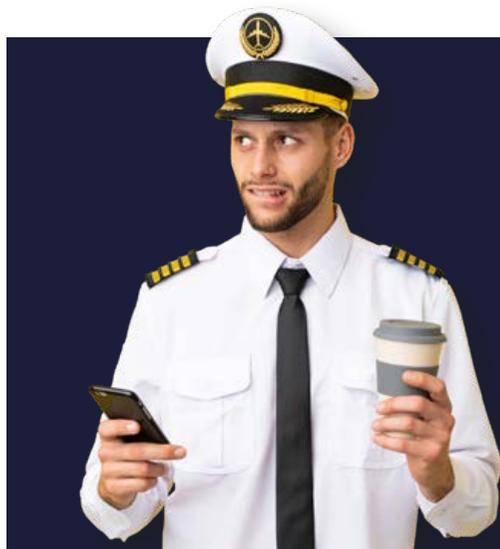
**T**hroughout the past year themes have become apparent in many discipline and capability matters that we deal with. They even play across into redundancy situations. Whilst we don't want to be kill joys, particularly at this time of year, we want to urge all our members to be WISE Pilots –

**"Whatsapp"** – posting material on "Whatsapp" that can or may cause offence frequently leads to discipline, even when it's posted to a close group of work friends.

**"Informal meetings"** do not exist, there is no such thing. Anything you say in an informal or off the record meeting can be, and often is used later as evidence in discipline, capability, and redundancy matters. Remember least said soonest mended!

**"Social Media"** of whatever genre or brand is a dangerous place to air personal views on any subject. Be very careful, companies do not like damaging information relating to them or their staff being placed in the public domain, and they have the right to act against anyone who does.

**"Emails"**. The content of emails often returns to haunt people later. Never be tempted to unnecessarily press



**'Reply all'** or respond in haste or anger to any message you receive. It may be used as evidence against you later. Once sent it cannot be recovered.

**"Professional conduct"**. Always stick within the boundaries of professionalism when at work and be careful not to blur the lines between working relationships and personal friendships.

Please fly safe, have a wonderful Christmas and New year, and always contact us before you respond to any official communication asking you to explain something, to attend an unexpected meeting or accept a new contract. ✈️

# 2021 REVIEW

By Claire Pickford



**A**t the time of writing, we find ourselves back to working from home where possible, and a national drive to offer booster vaccinations to all over 18's by the end of the year.

2021 has continued to be turbulent for our members. There have been inevitable redundancies, and some operators have taken drastic measures in attempts to retain the valuable skill set of their established pilot workforce. Sadly, some operators have treated their pilots abhorrently. We have seen the pandemic used as an 'opportunity' to erode pilot terms and conditions. For those who have continued to operate, we have had reports and complaints of unacceptable quarantine conditions down route,

and in some cases, failures to provide basic PPE to protect flight crew.

We have been amazed by the resilience of many of our members, whatever their circumstances. As a pilot union, we are also proud of the service that we have continued to provide to our members over the last 12 months. Working from home for prolonged periods in line with government guidance has not been a barrier to our members being able to access support, advice, guidance and representation they have needed during these difficult times.

Whilst case studies will follow in future articles, we have represented members in a number of complex areas of law including redundancy, TUPE, unfair dismissal, Equality Act 2010 claims, licensing issues and

breach of contract claims.

A number of redundancy cases have proven challenging. In one case, where an operator had identified an individual who they stated was redundant, the IPA intervened. A detailed analysis of the facts highlighted that the operator could not demonstrate that this was a genuine redundancy situation. On appeal by the IPA on behalf of our member, all grounds of appeal were upheld, and the employer withdraw the redundancy. The employer then sought to reinstate our member, having already made a payment in lieu of notice (and redundancy payment) before the process had concluded.

This is one of many cases we have acted in recently which shows the importance of union membership, and obtaining clear legal advice when things go wrong. Sometimes, employees act in the genuine, but mistaken belief that their employer must be doing everything right, only to discover the employer's wrongdoing when it is too late to do anything about it.

If the challenges of the last 12 months have shown anything, it is that aviation will face difficulties long term, and many pilot roles will continue to face uncertainty. If you are an IPA member, remember to contact us as soon as you think there may be an issue with your

employment. If you have colleagues who are not IPA members, please stress to them the importance of having union support before an issue arises. We will not be able to support any member who joins with a pre-existing employment issue.

We were recently contacted by members who were at risk of redundancy. They received a response and substantive advice on the same day, and correspondence with the employer commenced. A colleague was a member of another union, who, after over a week of

waiting resorted to taking legal advice via his home insurance policy. We have always taken pride in the fact that if you are a Full IPA member, you will get the help and

support that you need. It is important to stress that we cannot always tell members what they want to hear, but realistic and pragmatic advice will be given, whatever the circumstances.

Finally, it has undoubtedly been a tough year for our members, and for IPA staff who have worked diligently and relentlessly to ensure that everything we do has been 'covid safe', and that members have received the expected level of service. We would like to take the opportunity to wish everyone a happy and safe Christmas and New Year, and hope for a gradual return to normal in 2022. 🚀

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