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Hello again,
It seems as though no sooner had I finished writing my last piece than I was being asked to write this one. Of course some weeks did pass between the two but the ongoing roster keeping of a line pilot and then the small matter of a conversion course as well, means that time seems to have passed very quickly for me of late.

As a follow up to my last piece, thank you to those of you who signed the government petition to keep airfields as Greenfields and to review their classification as Brownfield sites. The government responded 10th November with typical political words saying a lot but at the same time saying nothing at all.

Having flagged up the issue hopefully notice will now be taken by planners but there’s no guarantee so with more signatures we can possibly get the issue raised to a debate in Parliament. The petition can be found here if you would like to add your signature.

https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/106779

The last issue of SkyPointer of course appeared in a different format; the change was partly generated by comment made to the IPA Office. I like the A5 format, I hope you do too, and I would like to thank those of you who took the time to send in your feedback. I think I have seen most of it and I am pleased to say the majority has been positive. The only comment I saw that didn’t really like the smaller size did however mention that they liked the content of the last issue so even with that there was something positive.

Just before I wrap up for this edition I would like to share with you something I saw in a US aviation magazine recently. It was in a letter from a reader commenting on a previous article about engine failure scenarios in which the contributor offered:

‘Airspeed is Life. Altitude is Life Insurance’.

Happy Christmas to all of you wherever you may be spending the festive season.

Phill Petitt
Chairman
Let me begin by saying that I saw Angus as a good friend, we had many conversations about many things, sometimes we agreed, sometimes we didn’t but we always remained friends.

Angus was a Director with the IPA for many years after I twisted his arm into standing, as I did with a number of our Directors, he stayed away from the Union side of the duties by choice but he was a great asset to our organisation!

Angus was born on April 30th 1952 in Santa Clara, California.

His father was American, his Mother was Canadian but with a name like Angus Mowbray Crawford it is pretty clear that Angus was in fact Scottish.

He went to School at Menlo Park High School in Atherton where he engaged in some pretty surprising sports. He was a member of the SCUBA club, he played Football (American Football of course, not the beautiful game).

He was into “Track” events, was a member of the Varsity swimming and perhaps not entirely surprisingly, he was also on the Varsity Wrestling team! He had a keen interest in Radio and Electronics and this interest in Electronics and Technology kept surfacing again and again at various point in his life.

He went on to New Mexico State University in the early 70s and it was there that he developed his love of flying and was also heavily involved with the University TV station.

There is a story about his interest in flying and his time at New Mexico State University about which Angus was remarkably quiet. He flew a light aeroplane through the Football stadium during the course of a game and had his Flying Licence suspended! Probably the ONLY time that Angus ever took risks with an aircraft.

After University, in October 1974, Angus went on to join the US Air Force as a pilot and spent a year in training in Georgia.

In 1981, after leaving the US Air Force, Angus moved to the UK. He enrolled on a course at the Oxford Aviation Academy to gain a UK Commercial Pilot’s Licence.

Following completion of this course he applied for a job with...
Orion Airways which was the charter airline side of Horizon Travel. He had an interview with Ray Johnson, a very brief interview since Ray had at one time been involved in an “exchange” to Travis. On the basis of this in-depth assessment, Angus was invited to join Orion based at East Midlands Airport.

Angus and Theresa moved to Nottingham where they bought a house and Angus took to running half-marathons as an antidote to being chair-bound in a tube all day. Angus’ and Theresa’ son David was born in June 1982 and Heather followed four years later, almost to the day, in June 1986.

Next on Angus’ journey through the UK aviation industry was Air Europe which was based at Gatwick so Angus, Theresa and David made the move to Sharpthorne in West
Sussex where they bought a strange “upside-down” house and Heather was soon born.

All went well until in early March 1991, Angus made the mistake of going back to California briefly. On his return, as his flight taxied into Gatwick Airport, he noticed that the Air Europe planes were idling about on the runway with covers over their engines. Air Europe’s parent company ILG had gone into administration with the loss of some 4,000 jobs.

Following the demise of Air Europe, Angus went on to join Excalibur Airways. In the fullness of time, Excalibur Airways went down the tubes as well in 1996.

In 2013, The FAA recognised Angus with inclusion in its FAA Airmen Certification Database. The database names certified pilots who have met or exceeded the high educational, licensing and medical standards established by the FAA.

Angus’s final Command was with Easyjet as a highly respected Training Captain, spending many hours in the simulator encouraging new and old to a greater understanding of the Airbus.

He travelled widely, both with the US Air Force. With Exodus, he and Theresa visited Madeira & Norway (where he did a Glacier walk complete with crampons), Peru, Nepal, Madagascar and Romania. They went on city visits to Lisbon, Madrid, Berlin, Prague, Amsterdam, Paris and doubtless other places that I don’t know about.

Angus was very proud and supportive of his children David and Heather. He saw them both graduate from University. He was fascinated by and envious of Heather’s facility with languages. He followed David’s house building with great interest.

Finally, Angus illness. I can only wonder at his stoicism when he was diagnosed with MND. Despite accepting the inevitable, he never let it stop him making the most of his time.

He was married to Theresa for 39 years and her love and devotion, particularly over the last two years must also inspire us all.

I thank Francis Windle, a great friend for many of the fine words above.

Our old friend and fellow Director Greg Cassar continues the story as I was in Florida shortly after Angus’s untimely passing.

Only 10 days ago I got the call from Theresa that Angus was in a coma at home and ‘totally..."
non responsive’, I asked if I could come and say my farewell to him, I went and sat with him for an hour or so, reminiscing as if he were still conscious. With hours of my leaving Theresa again called me with the inevitable news that Angus had passed away. I jumped back in the car and went to console Theresa, David and Heather and of course give my condolences. We talked about Angus and started to discuss funeral arrangements. Angus was a progressive man and very conscious of the environment so he wanted a ‘Rural’ setting for his burial. The actual burial took place on the 22nd October in a new 26 acre site in the countryside just outside Edenbridge, his final resting place just under the flight path to 26L for London Gatwick. The burial was only attended by family members and very close friends, I was privileged to be counted within that group. Theresa read a letter to Angus which was very moving and added to the solemnity of the occasion. I was asked to say a few words and did so again telling of how important Angus had been to me, and told a few stories on how I blagged my way onto his flight deck when he worked with Excalibur and later when I became a pilot with easyjet. Also how he came to Malta with me and we did some diving which he had not done for decades! After the Burial the group went to have an afternoon tea in Lingfield, again a great opportunity to remember a great pilot, father, husband, friend or the way I put it a Legend.

The wake for Angus was held at the family home at Domewood on Saturday 24th October, wisely and very movingly Theresa, David and Heather elected to make this a celebration of Angus life. On entering the house it was alive with many friends and a good number of former easyJet colleagues. The room that Angus had passed away in was transformed into a tribute for Angus on one wall numerous pictures covering the whole of Angus life, on another a dresser was full of models of the aircraft he had flown from his days in the USAF to his final company easyJet. Also there were his USAF Captains bars, military logbook and various commendations. On a table lay his military ‘Bone Dome”, Flight suit and various photo albums. A truly fine tribute.

It was a fine gathering of ex-colleagues, friends and of course family all of whom had great stories to tell, each one better than the last. ❣️
AIRLINE JOBS AND AGENCIES DO THEY WORK?
By Greg Cassar

Over the past year I have been asked by a number of our members about the interview process today and generally how one goes about getting a job in today’s aviation world. I will endeavour to at least ponder the question, based on my experience of over twenty years.

In my case, prior to aviation I had a career in business and in those days, not the dark ages I would take a Telegraph Newspaper on a Thursday and search the job section select a company then write a letter and wait for the response, not email I hasten to add. If I secured an interview it was straightforward you attended the company taking your qualifications with you, answered the questions and leaving. Within days you were notified, simple.

When I changed career to aviation I was 37 years old in order to compete in the job market I thought I would need hours and experience quickly, so I became a single crew transatlantic ferry pilot, risked my neck crossing the pond in light singles and twins, but in no time at all I had 1500 hours and a good understanding of weather etc.

Now armed with my Unfrozen ATPL, I could start applying for jobs, again this was in the early days of the internet so most companies did their own recruitment. The process was almost pleasurable, you sent your cv to the chief pilot or HR department and if they liked what they saw you would be called forward. When I got my 1st Job it was with Manx/Regional later BA Citiexpress, I had no type rating but a lot of enthusiasm. I kept writing until I was finally granted an interview on the Isle of Man. That was with the Chief Pilot of the Jetstream 41 and a member of HR, I was asked a few questions on various aviation related subjects such as describe the Fohn Effect. After the interview I was offered a Simulator assessment, again not silly they just wanted to see if they could work with you. I was offered the job and gained ratings on the J41, ERJ145 and Dash 8-300, yes I was bonded but in a very fair and traditional way. Nothing was taken from my salary but the amount reduced over 3 years, I would only be penalised if I left before the three years was up, very fair and gentlemanly.

This system in my view existed until approximately 2010 then there was a shift.

Agencies appeared to take on a much more significant role in
the recruitment process. With the continuing growth of low cost carriers notably easyJet, Ryanair, Veuling, Tiger and many more coupled with the advent of the pay to fly concept getting a job has become far more difficult and not to mention complicated. Also the internet had now become firmly established as the main means of communication with these agencies. Typically a company will open recruitment on their own website offering positions for First officers and in some instances direct entry commands. It would state their minimum requirement and subject to meeting their demands you could apply. Once through that initial screening you would be guided to the agency they would then get you to complete an agency application form and in many cases these applications can run up to as much as eighteen pages! Along with this application you would be asked to attach copies of your license, medical, logbook (usually last three pages) and perhaps any certificates ie dangerous goods etc. Of course now you would be on their data base. If at this stage the agency selects you then you will be directed to an ‘on line assessment’ these typically take anything up to three hours to complete and would include Verbal reasoning, maths tests, hand eye co-ordination, psychometric questions. Once this is done you wait for a pass/fail verdict could be within a few days or longer. If your passed ie selected a date would be offered for interview with the client company. The agency is typically involved in that interview that then becomes a more routine affair. Depending on the company concerned the interview would run over two days. The first day typically begins with an overview of the company normally run by a member of HR. After that the candidates are split into groups to undergo interviews one group doing HR the other interviewed by recruitment pilots that way the whole exercise keeps moving. Again depending on the company there could also be some computer testing.
If successful at the end of day one, you will be asked to undertake a simulator test. The simulator exercise normally comprises an engine failure on take off, then a raw data ILS or Non Precision approach, some beacon tracking and general handling exercises. With some companies you may have to do some memory drill exercises ie Windshear or TCAS.

Prior to going into the sim the company will supply the SOP’s they want used. The company is not looking for perfection at this point but more your ability to work with good CRM and how much you work as a team but overall exercising good judgement to make sensible and safe decisions.

If you get through that then you will be sent via email and offer.

In my experience I find that the agency element in what I have described is the weakest link in the process. They are not flexible and hide behind the remit given to them by their client company. For example a company may stipulate a max age on joining for FO’s, this could be as low as 40. If the company is European then this is contrary to employment legislation. If the company is centred outside the EU then the law is circumvented. This age limit is unfair because many pilots may be in the right hand seat through restrictions placed on them by their CAA following medical grounding for example OCL (operational co-pilot limitation) some agencies stipulate no restrictions on license, again unfair as for many medical reasons an OML (operational multicrew limitation) could be applied, now as you are operating in a two crew environment this is in my view not a restricting limitation. Then there is the non sensical requirement that you must have flown within a specified period this can vary but typically would be 3 flights within the last 90 days. In my view and that of others this is also unfair as providing your license is valid ie in check then this is an unfair demand regardless of weather you are a low time pilot or one with many thousands of hours of experience.

One could argue that should you be able to communicate the reasons directly with the company as per the ‘old days’ they would probably look at you, however you can explain to an agency till you are blue in the face your application will go no further. I have requested with an agency that they communicate my circumstances to their client company, they refused! I then asked for a contact so that I could discuss my case, they refused! Is this reasonable?

They are not flexible and hide behind the remit given to them by their client company.
As I mentioned earlier the agency has you on their database so they know your age and situation and yet they send you emails telling of ‘a great opportunity’ so you apply and are the told your too old or that because you did not fly last week you cant be considered! Is that professional behaviour on their part?

In my experience (and others) I have found that many agencies do not read all of the attachments that you send and this can cost opportunities. As an example I was recently approached by a large agency for a position at FastJet, I sent all the items requested which in my case included my successful OCC (operators conversion course) report as I was due to start at Fastjet in May of 2014. I happened to call the agency and was surprised to be told my LPC was out of date May 2014, this was nonsense and I pointed out she was reading my OCC report and not my last LPC report from Wizz Air which was completed in March 2015, so very much in date! That error almost cost me an opportunity.

From my experience and that of others I have spoken too that there may be several agencies representing the same company, one would question if they were all indeed appointed by the client company concerned or simply like the PPI nuisance calls we have to endure, just companies having a go ie trawling.

Recently a Barcelona based low cost carrier opened its recruitment, on their company website the application was very simple Min 500 hours required on A320 all they then requested was License number, Name and email. Within 24 hours two approaches from different agencies now stipulating max age of 40 for the SFO position. Both the agencies concerned were EU based. As a director of the IPA I sought advice from the association on the legality of this point. The advice I received was wait for the rejection then to ask the question “on what basis has a maximum age of 40 been set? And how is this justified”. Further advice from the IPA was to then write to a MEP and raise the question with them. It is likely the IPA will do that when the time comes. The odd thing in this example is that because I initially applied directly with the company and no age limit was specified I may not fall foul on this point, again only time will tell.

So do agencies work? I am not convinced but see they are a necessary facet to this modern world of aviation; after all it is the course companies have elected to take. I would guess that be using agencies there is a cost saving element as you reduce the number of staff working in the HR department etc. The costs of an agency being less than those of full time members of staff. With over twenty years of experience some 11000 hours and six carriers under my belt I believe my observations hold some validity. ☺️
Effective 15th November, EU Commission Implementing Regulation 2015/1018 put into effect EU Regulation 376/2014, that defined reporting, analysis and follow-up of occurrences in civil aviation (in other words a European wide MOR system), and put some ‘meat on the bones’.

2015/1018 Annex I specifically lists occurrences which should be reported and this now includes at item 4.2 Any burning, melting, smoke, fumes, arcing, overheating, fire or explosion and at item 4.3 Contaminated air in the cockpit or in the passenger compartment which has or could have endangered the aircraft, its occupants or any other person.

So, fumes and contaminated air are now specifically defined as reportable occurrences.

Some years ago the IPA, working with the GCAQE, made a submission to the EU review process on mandatory occurrence reporting and it is pleasing to see our efforts come to fruition.

The full Implementing Regulation 2015/1018 can be found here: http://bit.ly/1QPC6Ct

On a further positive note, the IPA is aware that ICAO have almost finished drafting a document ‘Guidelines on Education, Training and Reporting of Fume Events’ intended to provide guidance to States to support the development of relevant advisory material for operators to give to flight crew, cabin crew and engineers.

It would seem unfortunately that there is no regulatory weight to this document yet but it does show that at the highest levels in our industry awareness is growing of the concept of contaminated air and fume events.
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As someone who grew up in England and studied science rather than languages before pilot training, I was secretly relieved that the universal language of the air was English. However when flying worldwide I rapidly realised that ‘accented aviation phrase English’ was the more restricted method of communication in airborne r/t and that using a wider vocabulary may well result in a puzzled silence or ‘say again’.

A few examples come to mind where there was a failure in communication between aircraft and ground controllers especially when related to emergency situations, as a result of which I carried a small notebook with some useful words and phrases in various languages.

Operating in Jordan, I was carrying out Jordanian flying instructor training on a single engine piston type aircraft. On the initial area familiarisation sortie the engine failed. Putting out a Mayday call and advising ATC of engine failure, I navigated back to the airfield for a forced landing. On short finals with a stationary propeller I realised that the puzzled ‘roger’ replies to my radio calls indicated a failure to communicate the problem when I was instructed to ‘go around now as there is an F5 fighter on 5 mile finals behind you’. Having been towed back to dispersal I resolved to immediately learn Arabic for engine fire and engine failure. This proved a wise decision as I needed to use them on two subsequent occasions in the following ten days.

A few years later I am on the parking apron at a major Spanish airport, boarding passengers and listening on the ground control frequency where the controller was issuing instructions in the usual very understandable Spanish accented English. Opposite me on the apron was a row of airliners including an Air Berlin B737 and a Hapag-Lloyd Airbus A300 parked adjacent to each other. The Airbus was then given start clearance. Soon thereafter my attention was caught by a German accented voice.

I resolved to immediately learn Arabic for engine fire and engine failure.
on the frequency advising ‘Hapag-Lloyd on stand xx you have a fire in no.2 engine’ This was followed by ‘roger’ and short silence (eyes on dials looking for confirmation). Further call in the same German accent voice. ‘Hapag-Lloyd from Air Berlin on next stand your no.2 engine fire is burning brighter’. ‘Roger’ pause then ‘Ground, Hapag-Lloyd on stand xx has engine fire request fire vehicles to the aircraft. Puzzled Spanish silence followed by Hapag-Lloyd xx you are clear taxi runway 24 QNH 1020. Reply,(louder) Hapag-Lloyd xx stand xx has engine fire, request fire vehicles to aircraft. Pause then Hapag-Lloyd xx taxi runway 24 QNH 1020. Reply (in exasperated voice) Ground Hapag-Lloyd stand xx has fire, request fire engines to aircraft. Reply, ”Hapag-Lloyd understand you have a fire, firecrews will attend.”. Shortly fire trucks appear from the fire station 200 metres away and quickly extinguish the any fire. Delay due to language communication problems about 4 minutes. As a result I decided to learn/note down the words for fire vehicles in the local language of all the countries I operated into, as I was convinced that adding the local words on the end of the call would probably clarify communication and result in a prompt response.
A few years later I am inbound to Tenerife South flying round the west of the island descending under radar control and some 15 miles from the TFS VOR. With more flights the previous procedural system had been replaced by radar control and had been in use for some years. At this point ATC advised of total radar failure, and I surmise the immediate requirement to change to procedural (unpracticed?) control with numerous aircraft would have been stressful. We were cleared to the TFS VOR at flight level 100 and advised our estimate overhead.

A new aircraft then called up on frequency in Spanish using a inter island flight callsign and was cleared (in Spanish) to the TFS VOR. Although not fluent I have some knowledge of Spanish especially numbers, and was convinced this aircraft had just been cleared to the beacon at the same level and time overhead as ourselves. On querying this with ATC we were immediately advised to stop descent at flight level 120 and proceed at this level to the beacon. Now in cloud I never saw the other aircraft but noted we entered the hold about the same time.

Now retired I sometimes fly a light aircraft into small French airfields where the ATC is in French and it is my turn to learn and use those standard aviation phrases in other than my ‘mother tongue’. No doubt if there is a problem the use of rapid fluent non aviation french would leave me in the puzzled silence and ‘say again’ scenario.

So if your company hasn’t already crewed your flight deck with multilingual pilots, and you don’t have the capacity to learn 10 new languages, it may be worth considering noting down a few words/phrases in the languages you operate through or into. I see my ‘aide memoir’ also includes:

- Buon natale,
- Joyeux noel,
- Frohe Weinachten,
- Feliz natal,
- Krismas mubarak,
- Feliz navidad,
- Kala christouyenna,
- Eid Milad Majid,
- Happy Christmas

To you all... 🙂

Although not fluent I have some knowledge of Spanish and was convinced this aircraft had just been cleared to the beacon at the same level and time overhead as ourselves.
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Well they’re here, not the ghosts of Poltergeist but the flying equivalent, being EASA FTLs.

They are due to be officially implemented on the 18th February 2016 but my company introduced them on the 1st November 2015 and it is going to take a while to appreciate the effect on the flying programme and on us as individuals.

The Basics:
- 13 time bands instead of 5
- Longer FDPs in the early morning
- No FDP difference between 1 and 2 sectors
- No reduction in an FDP for long (haul) sectors, no factorisation.
- Acclimatisation rules tougher. Time zone changes really matter to the rest rules down-route.
- All FDPs, rest rules etc apply equally to pilots and cabin crew.

Depending on your company agreements you probably can work more hours in the week, 60 hours as opposed to 55. Days Off are now Extended Recovery Rest Periods (ERRFs), the minimum being 36 hours as opposed to 34 hours under the UK scheme. Over 2 weeks the hours has increased from 95 to 110 hours and 190 hours over a 4 week period (cabin crew the same). 100 flying hours is still the 28 day limit but (a slight rule change) that cannot be exceeded in-flight as was the case.

The Working Time Directive (WTD) should apply to your company and therefore minimum days off per month are 7. The WTD also states that all standby time counts as duty, EASA says that only 25% applies, so do check whether your company abides by the WTD.

The main change to our working hours is the yearly maximum which allows 1000 flying hours in a 12 month period (an increase of 100 hours), but only 900 hours in a calendar year.

Disruptive Schedule:
- Early Start 0500-0659
- Late Finish 0000-0159
- Night Duty 0200-0459

Any 4 consecutive duties that include the above must have 60 hours off (ERRF). The WOCL (Window of Circadian Low) is 0200-0559.

Extensions replace all variation schemes. In any 7 day period only 2 can be used, they cannot start in the WOCL nor beyond a 1900 report and the rest rules are tougher. They cannot be used with split-duty or in-flight relief. It is likely that some sectors to distant medium haul destinations may well become stopovers rather than return flights. If you examine a typical extended FDP of say 14.00 hours (including 30 mins of post flight duties) then the rest is 14.00 plus 4 hours (or if extra rest was
applied before the FDP then plus 2 hours). The likely result is an effective day off after the extended FDP. Since ERRFs are a minimum of 60 hours, no single days off are allowed as has happened in the past. In the above case I suspect rostering will not count the post flight rest as an ERRF but as a ‘blank’ day. You can see why that on long medium-haul sectors you may stopover rather than complete the return sector that day.

Cabin crew generally report earlier than pilots. The FDPs are the same, there are no separate tables, but the cabin crew’s report time is ‘adjusted’ to that of the pilot’s so that the last landing time is the same. The FDP can differ, however, if the report time slips into a different (shorter) period.

Discretion is now 2 hours and one must not depart if that is to be exceeded. However, you will not lose your licence if you exceed the 2 hours through weather diversion, flying to an alternate etc.

Long haul details are quite complicated, particularly acclimatisation, so I do not intend to discuss this now, the tables will require some study but what else are you going to do on a 12-14 hour sector? Time zone acclimatisation applies to 2 hours, ie UK and Europe though being separated by one hour will count as being acclimatised to both zones.

Standby is now up to 16 hours but is factored after 6 hours of standby duty. Absolute maximum duty including standby is 18 hours.
As previously mentioned the WTD counts all standby duty as duty.

The IPA opposed several aspects of the new rules but they are here now so we will all have to get used to them. The biggest benefit to UK pilots is that all EASA pilots now work to these rules, from Bulgaria to Ireland, from Finland to Cyprus, so overall there should be less tired pilots flying and the European skies should be safer. The other benefit is that the playing field is now relatively level.

The document can be seen at the link below or just google CAA and FTL. http://bit.ly/1HWMMwY

Part of the new regulations specify that all airlines must operate a Fatigue Management System, that incorporates training of rostering, crewing and its pilots. Some operators will pay lip-service to this but a few fatigue reports may change their attitude.

From the introduction of the EASA rules CAP371 ceases to be our bible. Your company manuals will have to reflect the change and any company agreements will have to be changed and ratified, if not already completed.

Of course UK pilots will be working longer hours. If we do leave the EU in 2017 I do not imagine that we will drop the changes, so don’t get your hopes up.

Have a Good and Safe Christmas.

The Annual General Meetings of the IPA will be held on 2nd March 2016 at Croydon Airport, Purley Way, Croydon, CR0 0XZ, from 1:30pm

Agendas and further details can be found on our website www.ipapilot.com

Please confirm your attendance at office@ipapilot.com
In response to an increasing number of reports as to how misunderstood the rules surrounding the new Single-tier State Pension are and the number of people who have found they will not actually receive a State Pension of around £153 from next April; Pensions Minister Baroness Altmann has unveiled the new communications drive ahead of the introduction of the new State Pension in April next year (2016).

Under the tagline ‘Our state pension is changing’, the campaign aims to broaden the public’s understanding of how the new State Pension will work and crucially, how people can find out how it affects them, based on their own National Insurance record. Like the system it replaces, the new State Pension will be contributory in nature with the weekly payment people receive dependent on the number and type of National Insurance contributions they have made.

Minister for Pensions, Baroness Altmann, said:

‘Huge efforts have been put into reforming the mind-blowingly complicated State Pension system that exists today into something that, over time, will be clearer and fairer for everybody. But the job of explaining to people how the reforms will affect them hasn’t been done well enough. People need to understand, so they can make the right decisions about saving and preparing for later life. One of my first actions on becoming Pensions Minister was to identify this priority, and I’m very pleased to now be launching this major campaign’.

In particular, the new advertisements target people within 10 years of reaching State Pension age, a group which also has access to new freedoms to spend private pension savings flexibly. Many of these people may want to base decisions about whether or not to draw down their private pension savings on their likely State Pension amount. Anyone aged 55 or over can apply for a personalised state pension statement that will give them an estimate of what they will get under the new system. This will be based on their work history and National Insurance contributions to date. The statements have recently been updated to include information on the contracted out deduction that may have been made. The statements also give additional information about how people may be able to improve their State Pension amount.
Pension before they reach State Pension age.

As well as giving everybody a clearer picture of their likely retirement income, and providing a firm basis upon which people can plan their own private or workplace pension saving, the new State Pension is also designed to tackle the inequalities of the old system. In particular, women, carers and some lower earners who haven’t previously received much by way of additional pension will benefit. And self-employed people, who miss out on additional pension under the current arrangements, will be brought fully into the State Pension system, helping millions to enjoy a secure retirement. In the first 10 years after implementation, around 650,000 women are expected to benefit from the starting amount calculation, receiving on average £8 a week more in State Pension.

Clearly, this is one of many aspects that need to be considered when forming a retirement strategy and we would recommend you take independent advice in this respect. Please contact Independent Pilots Financial Services on 01273 208028 for a free initial consultation.

This article above does not constitute advice and advice should be sought on an individual basis. The FCA do not regulate tax advice.
Our condolences and thoughts are with the families and friends of those who lost their lives in the crash of Metrojet 9268 caused by what is now being widely reported as bomb exploding on board.

This tragedy has placed airport security under the spotlight again, and acts as a reminder of the risks of operating in some parts of the world. I say some parts of the world but in truth the risks exist everywhere, it is the steps taken to mitigate those risks that are either robust enough to defeat the terrorists or inadequate. Though no system is infallible, some are better than others.

We have been asked by some members whether they are obliged to operate in and out of airports that they consider not to have adequate security in place and / or over areas they consider to be unsafe i.e. undeclared war zones. This is a complex area as pilots are obliged to deliver on their contracts of employment but if you have concerns the first thing you should do is document and report them. If you do not receive satisfactory replies then consider contacting us so that if necessary we can take the matter up on your behalf.

It is our view that there needs to be better policing of security standards at airports around the world, and perhaps a new International inspection and licensing system that operates to ensure high standards are maintained and safety ensured as far as is possible. It would not guarantee safety but it would be a step I the right direction and lead to the better sharing of best practice and intelligence.

I don’t know if there was intelligence of an increased risk of attack before the downing of flight 9268 but if there was, why was it apparently not shared? It doesn’t matter which way the intelligence is too flow there is a moral duty on all to do something if a threat is known of. Perhaps the trouble is that countries are naturally very protective of their intelligence and sources but what use is intelligence if it cannot be used to protect human life. Being partisan with potentially lifesaving information is wrong. It cannot be beyond the wit of man to set in place systems that respect and protect intelligence and enable it to be used quickly to protect human life.

On that sober note I wish you all a safe and happy Christmas and a Successful New Year.

Phil Flower
General Secretary.
WHILE I APPRECIATE MANY AIRLINES HAVE BEEN UNWILLLING TO INVEST IN TYPE RATING TRAINING DURING THE PAST FEW YEARS OF HIGH FUEL PRICES AND A WORLDWIDE RECESSION, IT IS ENCOURAGING TO SEE THAT WHILE SOME CONTINUE TO INVEST IN AIRCRAFT (FULL SPONSORSHIP FOR NEW PILOTS: LUFTHANSA) OTHERS ARE RETURNING TO USING A TRADITIONAL TRAINING BOND FOR NEW EMPLOYEES (JET2, EASTERN, CITYJET TO NAME A FEW).

That said the entry requirements for most advertised pilot jobs outside of the USA/Canada and Australia remain unattainable for many professional aviators.

REAL PILOT SHORTAGE?

WHilst the big flight schools (and even manufacturers) cry “pilot shortage” - the truth is there is only a shortage of candidates with 1000s of hours on Heavy jets (Glass cockpit FAR/JAR 25 machinery) or 500 or so hours on exact airliner type (eg: B737-700NG not B737-300) and currency on that specific aircraft within 6 months.

There are 1000s of unemployed or “seat locked” pilots worldwide. Included in those 1000s are some very good aviators with excellent airmanship and significant hands on flying experience in a multitude of aircraft types and in a wide variety of environments. Some from the Military, some from General Aviation, some Instructor backgrounds, some Turbo-prop operators. But these pilots cannot get a job or move on in their careers because of some crazy requirements.

Indeed a Space Shuttle pilot would not get past the first hurdle of some of today’s airline selection criteria (Such as 500h B737NG, current on type....). Can you imagine a very good Volvo HGV truck driver with 1,000,000 km on HGVs being turned down for a Ford Truck driving position because he/she did not have 10,000km on the exact Ford truck model within 12 months?

LOSS OF CONTROL?

Sadly the lessons of some very tragic accidents do not appear to have been applied by many regulators let alone recruiters and by those that specify the aircrew entry requirements:

Boeing have stated that the largest killer of jet airline passengers...
over the past 10 years is Loss of Control in flight by pilots who might have 1000s of hours watching the computer fly but when that computer gives up they have very little to fall back on in their hands on flying experience to prevent disaster:


Let’s look at a tragic but well known example:
South Atlantic 2009 Air France 447: 228 killed.
Download a copy of the full report by the BEA here:

The FO and SO had minimal flying experience outside of the 1000s of hours they flew in automated A320 and A330 aircraft. They did not seem to understand the fundamentals of flying in a loss of autopilot, airspeed & pitot information scenario despite having practiced for such an event in a 1G simulator some months before. These pilots with 1000s of hours on Airbus jets stalled the aircraft and kept it in the stall all the way into the ocean. They did not intend to do this but despite undergoing reputedly some of the very best training in the world (a short, so called “integrated”, JAR/EASA commercial pilot course). They had little real world aeronautical
background in to fall back on and the one person that did was not in the cockpit until it was too late and the stall warning had turned itself off.

This was not a isolated problem. There were some 14 other similar cases of A330/340 aircraft suffering from temporarily frozen pitot tubes that gave erroneous speed indications to the flight computers. The automation was designed to leave the aircraft in a stable state on the understanding that the pilots knew how to fly manually until the issue was resolved. Although in a few of those cases, the junior pilots over reacted to such automation disconnects with aft control column inputs (which initially increase the angle the air impacts the wing - which leads to speed loss and potentially a stall). Thankfully, in all those cases, experienced Captains (with traditional flying backgrounds) regained control by re-setting an appropriate aircraft attitude and power setting.

Much has been written about the startle factor of automation disconnection and questions remain about the training back grounds of the pilots at the controls of AF447. Why did the second officer want to pitch the nose up? Why did the first officer not monitor the flight path effectively and intervene earlier? Yes there are other factors like the flight deck design with side stick controls that are hard to see across cockpit and non moving power levers and a Captain that should have been there. But it is nonsense to blame fatigue or light turbulence or even the ITCZ for this accident. If there is blame then it is partly down to:

1. The lack of supervision (no cruise Captain - to save weight and costs)

2. Minimal manual flying training (to save on airline fuel costs). Even airbus says long haul Captains get 3 hours of hands on flying per year.

3. The zero to hero, short course, minimal regulatory flight experience, European civilian flight training system where pilots might perform a full stall recovery for real just once in their flying careers on a light aircraft before jumping straight into an automated jet airliner for the next 25 years. This appears to be the preferred route for many LoCo airlines. At least Air France paid for their cadet pilot training unlike the aforementioned self funded/ pay to fly passenger airliner schemes that have a history of disastrous consequences:

   e.g: Colgan 3407 crash captain had paid to fly passengers in previous role and failed sim tests as a paying customer: [http://www.operationorange.org/colganQ&A.pdf](http://www.operationorange.org/colganQ&A.pdf).

4. Today’s simulators have superb graphics and are good for teaching procedures but they can’t replicate
Simulators can’t replicate a real stall or “g” factor nor do they provide a genuine fear factor.

A better way forward?
Contrast AF447 and Colgan 3407 with the Qantas QF32 A380 crew or Capt. Sullenberger’s team landing that A320 (US 1549) in the Hudson.

In the latter cases the pilots had been taught well (by humans), built up huge experience in different roles and did not overly rely on the computers some of which actually fought against their logical actions under the worst of circumstances. You can’t “Google a solution at 35,000 feet” when an engine has exploded.

Who pays?
Part of the longer term solution involves a broader brush HR mandate to recruit both broad flight experienced and junior pilots - not expecting self funded interns. But what of the costs? It may mean the public need to pay more for an airfare than the the price of airport parking!

This may also require a change in perspective for a few airline managers - to see piloting as a pure business cost not a potential revenue stream. At it’s worst we now see “pay to fly airline passengers”/ P2FP schemes across Europe and Asia. Here a cadet pilot graduates from flight school without a job and some 150,000USD in debt. The schemes promise 500h on exact airliner type for 50,000 to 100,000 USD - not working for free but paying to work! So after a few months the pilot has even more debt and no job - replaced by another P2FP candidate:
See:

Diversity and prosperity
Industry apprenticeship schemes between turbo prop and jet airlines and General Aviation would put an end to P2FP. Cross fertilization of ideas can benefit flight safety in commercial, private and military flying.

Current “exclusive” recruitment schemes between operators and a few “approved” schools can produce what farmers call a “monoculture”. Whilst the produce can be very good (e.g: with FMS programming or following strict airline SOPs), monocultures (agricultural references in brackets) have several down-sides:

A reduction in (bio) diversity reduces resistance to threats (disease), degrades foundations - total cockpit experience levels reduced (soil quality) and exisiting skills lost through lack of practice since initial training (soil water retention/erosion)......

For the farmer’s amongst you:

Improvements can be made to EASA / ICAO flight training, not just a 70 - 100hr real flying course with the rest in a simulator until carrying out 12 landings on airliner - aka the current EASA / ICAO MPL model. Give trainee and line pilots opportunities to practice manual flying skills on a regular basis in general aviation, volunteer reserves or gliding clubs:

“Hours Schmouwers!”
Some would say our American cousins (FAA and Congress) have gone too far with demanding 1500h before flying passengers on regional airliners. “Just burning holes in the sky instructing!” the naysayers say.

But how different is that to “burning 10000s of tonnes of JetA1 on automation”? Others point back to the UK CAA rules which until the late 1990s required 700h to gain a CPL (commercial licence).

Safe Landings
One hopes both Airline and Private Jet recruiters (at least on this side of the Atlantic pond) wake up to the valuable pilot resource that is, for the most part currently being ignored:
That of proven aviators - not necessarily type rated but dedicated, capable and willing to be bonded for training to excel in the right job. ☞
Harvard Health Study

The IPA has been made aware of a Pilot Health Study being conducted by researchers at Harvard University, USA.

Researchers at Harvard University, are conducting the largest anonymous airline pilot health study to date. This study is open to current, retired, and airline and corporate pilots. It will be used to research the environmental effects of the unique cockpit environment. Including fatigue, air quality, radiation, noise, and additional areas. To date, the study has pilots from over 23 countries participating. We would like you to participate and pass it on to your fellow pilots. Safety is enhanced through knowledge!

Please use the link below if you wish to participate in the study:

www.pilothealthstudy.org

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FOR RENT

This beautiful four-bedroom, three-bathroom home with private pool & jacuzzi in a conservation area near Disney World, Orlando.

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Where to start? Getting involved with the CAA Medical Department can be, as I have discovered, quite a saga. Trying to keep this long story short will be a challenge as, to make sense of it all, I will have to begin at the beginning!

The year is 2006. My “routine” annual Class One CAA medical had been going as smoothly as ever right up until the last minute when my friendly AME said, “Oh, I must just finish by listening to your chest”. The stethoscope was applied, there was the normal pause but it then lasted longer than usual, much longer. A medical book was referred to, followed by the news that I now had a heart murmur which had not been there 6 months before. Initially, it seemed that the problem was probably minor but I ended up having surgery to correct a leaking heart valve. Subsequent to that operation I was fitted with a pacemaker yet was still able to return to flying 18 months later. Result!

Throughout the time this all took I cannot fault my AME nor the professionalism and availability of the then CAA Medical Department. Whenever I needed advice from the CAA Medics it was easily available by phone and I always found myself speaking to a medically qualified person who was not only able to help me navigate the beauracracy, but also able to provide sound and reassuring medical advice on my circumstances.

Jump forward 8 years and I’m lying quietly on a hospital bed having my 6 monthly pacemaker check, a requirement of my Class One OML medical, when the technician conducting the check said to me, “do you know you are fibrillating”? The answer was no but, as a result, I, once again, found myself in the grip of the CAA Medical Department.
This time things did not go quite so smoothly. There was quite a bit of to’ing and fro’ing before the CAA were content with the information required, all of which took time. If you find yourself in a similar position work on a turn round time of at least 3 months per request. In the early stages, as this was happening over the winter months and my company was a very seasonal operation, the delay was not a huge issue. However, as the summer season approached obviously the company wanted to know if I would be fit in time to be retrained for the season. My enquiries to the CAA Medical Department were less than satisfactory, the people now on the end of the phone were clearly not medically trained, in a number
of cases they could not even pronounce my condition let alone provide advice, nor were they particularly knowledgeable when it can to navigating the beauracracy. They were of extremely little help. Eventually it took a call by my AME to contact someone in a position to provide actual help even if the answer was not the one I was looking for. Class One medical refused.

The letter confirming this decision arrived only a few days later, it was quite clear on the decision and the reasons why that decision had been reached. What it was not so clear on, however, was how you could appeal if you and your consultant thought there were sufficient ground to do so. So another round of enquiries was required to establish that, hidden away on the CAA website, is the required information. More delay.

The CAA rules say that the appeals process should take 3 months for the Appeals Board to be set up, sit and respond with a final decision within 10 days of the board. The 10 day criterion was met, no problem, same answer as before, but the setting up process actually took 7 months from the application to appeal and a total of 8 months from the initial decision.

Having said that, I cannot complain that the board was not a fair process. Although held under the auspices of the CAA Medical Department, and chaired by a senior medical member of the department, two eminent cardiologists were co-opted on to the board to provide an entirely independent input. I was given a fair hearing and my cardiologist was able to give a robust and detailed case for the reinstatement of my Class One Medical. Unfortunately, he was not able to convince the board so I am now officially an ex commercial pilot!

Lessons learned: for me this was not a disaster, coming as it did at the very tail end of my flying career, I have only lost the few years to age 65 when I would have had to stop anyway. And, after open heart surgery, I had always looked on any further flying as a real bonus!

Secondly, the loss of my flying career was not the end of the world financially as I have been fortunate enough,
over the years, to make sufficient provision for such an eventuality. However, I did not have to include loss of license insurance which, if you are not in my position, might well be worth serious consideration.

Thirdly, the 14 months it took to resolve this issue was also not a problem; a. because my company provided 3 months sick pay and b. because, when that stopped, I had a secondary source of income on a part time consultancy basis which provided income and the flexibility to be available to the medics and CAA as required.

Fourthly, I could not have gone through this whole process without the fantastic support of the staff at the IPA. Not only have they been able to advise on dealing with the CAA and to assist with the preparation of the appeal, they also attended the board on the day to provide much needed support. Additionally, in circumstances such as these there are the inevitable negotiations with the company to end your contract of employment, something I knew nothing about. In contrast with the CAA Medical Department the IPA were on the end of the phone at any time and always knew the score, if not, then the expert would be in touch shortly thereafter. Finally, it would be remiss of me not to mention the IPA Union Reps back at the company who, despite my long layoff, never stopped fighting my corner with the company and keeping my morale up on a regular basis over a beer or two.

The moral of the story, the IPA and company Union Reps are, in my opinion, worth every penny of the monthly subs. If you are an IPA member and you have colleagues who you know are not in a union please show them this article, perhaps it will help them to see just how useful and cost effective the IPA can be. I hope they never need the support I have enjoyed but if the time comes I know they will be very grateful for the support available when all seems at its very darkest.

Happy flying you lucky so and so’s! ✿
Dear Sirs,

The Independent Pilots association response to consultation on the future structure of the Medical Department.

The IPA, on behalf of its members, makes the following observations / comments

1. The whole exercise presents more as a cost saving exercise rather than a genuine attempt to improve service and / or passenger safety, cloaked under the (frequently repeated mantra) that it is an EASA requirement to separate the powers. This in effect denies the fact that this has been a principle of UK law for hundreds of years!

2. Outsourcing may be desirable but we are not convinced that the current number of AME’s is sufficient and although comment is made that numbers have increased we are not persuaded. In particular we believe there to be too few AME’s specialists in Psychiatric, Cardiac and Neurological medicine available. Members report real difficulties obtaining services of one of these experts in a timely fashion.

3. We are concerned that there is too little detail of what charges are likely to be made in the future, how these will be regulated, if at all, and what process / system of challenge will be established for any excessive charges.

4. We are very concerned that the practical training provided to the AME’s must be suitable and sufficient. We cannot find details of this training, and whether there is a pass or fail test before Drs are permitted to practice as AME’s. We also believe that update training or Continuous Professional Development (CPD) needs to be an absolute requirement for the AME’s and those that fail to do so should not be allowed to act as such.

5. Our main concern however, is in relation to appeals and policies. We believe that many of the medical department policies and procedures are either out of
date or not fit for purpose. We are also of the view that too often entrenched positions are taken with a lack of flexibility or willingness to accept contrary medical evidence. This in turn feeds into the current, and most likely future, appeals process which does not have sufficient rigour or independence in it. We feel that appeals need to be dealt with by a dedicated expert who looks and the evidence and takes advice from experts in the same way as an employment tribunal would. The decision of the appeal authority should then be communicated and published, anonymised where necessary, to ensure consistency of standards.

We look forward to seeing the final proposals.

Yours faithfully

Phil Flower
General Secretary.

Merry Christmas
and a
Happy New Year
from all at the IPA
SUPPLEMENTARY LEGAL EXPENSES SCHEME

Optional insurance cover which provides protection beyond our Shared Costs Legal Scheme, at concessionary rates to full members.

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For further details, call IPFS on 01273 208028
or fax 01273 202645
alternatively, call the IPA office on 01444 441149
or email office@ipapilot.com