



Engineering News

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MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR FROM ALL AT THE BGA OFFICE AND TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

2013 Review

2013 has been a reasonably quiet year compared to previous years. In the summer we had a change of staff at the office: Jenny moved on to a new challenge and Sheila joined us and is now completely up to speed processing ARCs and Cs of A. We have run 12 continuation training seminars and just about everyone has found the Human Factors talk very interesting - thank you to Ian Gallacher for writing and presenting many of these and to the rest of the team of presenters for their hard work. Look out for the 2014 programme in the New Year.

We have been discussing a recent change to the regulations that will ease some of the issues in obtaining parts for our aircraft. The change to the regulations allows certain parts to be used that have not been released with a Form 1 or C of C; more details in the New Year.

The proposed EASA check flight requirements have, after constructive pressure from the BGA and others, been dropped for ELA aircraft. This means that we can still use our discretion on when maintenance check flight is needed to verify some maintenance activity. This is welcome especially as the CAA announced that Annex II tug check flights were no longer required at C of A renewal.

The on-going Part 66 "L" licence discussions with the CAA regarding the transition of BGA inspectors are still progressing. Progress is a little slow because we are still waiting for a final decision from EASA and only background work can be done. The expected "L" licence implementation date is still September 2015 so it is very important that inspectors who are thinking of upgrading do so soon and that new inspectors apply as soon as they can - provided they have sufficient experience.

The results of the Government's "Red Tape Challenge" offer potential opportunities for some deregulation or self-regulation. The BGA is engaging with the CAA on this and Pete Stratten has been appointed to the 6 person Challenge Panel, reporting directly to ministers, which will, among other tasks, test and critique the CAA programme for GA reform and consider opportunities for reducing the regulatory burden on GA.

Following the CAA decision to de-regulate self launching micro-light aircraft under certain weight categories, the BGA is reviewing the introduction of the new breed of micro/ultra-light sailplanes. There may be some exciting opportunities as well as potential risks to be considered.

BGA Conference 2014

A date for your diary; the 2014 BGA Sporting Conference and Awards Ceremony will be held on **1st March 2014 at the Nottingham Belfry**.

This year's theme is "Vintage Gliding", celebrating the 85th anniversary of the BGA. There will be very interesting talks from the Vintage Glider Club and the Glider Heritage Centre plus some surprise exhibits.

Eurofox, Jonker Sailplanes and HpH Sailplanes will also be exhibiting and we are hoping to get one of the new breed of micro/ultra-light sailplanes. You will be able to whet your appetite with some of the latest kit, including jet gliders. As usual, there will be a host of suppliers to tempt you, supported by stands from service providers and maintainers.

Of course, your Chief and Regional Technical Officers will be there should you have anything you need to discuss. For more information and booking details please see the BGA web site - <http://www.glidering.co.uk/bgainfo/notices/conference.htm>

Fabric Covering

Did you know that Polyester-type fabrics (Ceconite and Poly-Fiber to name just two) can lose as much as 75% to 85% of their strength in just one year due to Ultra-Violet radiation if not properly protected? These types of fabric have a potential life of up to 25 to 30 years.

The long term prognosis is not good for inadequately protected fabrics so it is imperative that, when recovering any aircraft, from a vintage glider to a Pawnee, you follow the fabric process manual. In fact the manual is (in EASA terms) "approved maintenance data". If you don't follow the manual the job certification is invalid. The same is true for Annex II gliders.

To check if you have adequate UV protection look for light penetration by putting your head inside the fuselage with a 60w lead light on the outside. If you can see the light or bright areas you do not have enough UV protection. Carry out similar checks for wings & controls but probably in a darkened room with the light inside.

CAA Engineering Licence Renewals

Those who hold a CAA-issued aircraft engineers licence need to be aware that the CAA will no longer be issuing renewal reminders and the renewal process will now be an on-line procedure. Details are at <http://us4.campaign-archive2.com/?u=9a13f6185a0a697970bd3de1d&id=6c61232693&e=303ccf35a2>. Please remember that, if your BGA Inspector Authorisation requires a licence (tug inspectors) and if your licence expires, so does that part of your BGA Authorisation. We recommend that you make a diary note to remind you of the renewal. To help BGA tug inspectors, our database is set up to send you a reminder 2 months before your licence expires. Please remember to send us a copy for our records and so we can update our system, thank you.

BGA Christmas and New Year Closure

The BGA office will close at lunchtime on 23rd December 2013 and re-open at 08.00 on 2nd January 2014. Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.