Approach

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SPRING 2021

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Roll rate anomalies

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Approach

***ISSUE**: SPRING 2021*

ISSN 2422-8230 / 2538-1083 *(Online)*

Coming up

- *Classic Fighters Airshow Omaka, 3–5 September*
- *AOPA Darfield Fly-in Charlie Draper's, 17–19 Sept*
- *AOPA AGM weekend 2022 Tauranga, 25–27 February*
- *AOPA Summer Safari, 27 Feb–6 March 2022*
- *Watch your inbox for notifications of One-Day Fly-ins*
- *For more information visit www.aopa.co.nz*

Cover photo: Mike Scotter's rebuilt amphibious Cessna on Lake Sumner

Photo credit: Ross Millichamp

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Deadline for ads, articles and photos for the next (Summer) issue: **20 October 2021**.

President's Comment

Hi folks, it has been a long winter. We seem to have endured more than our fair share of adverse weather. Our thoughts go out to members whose properties and livelihoods have been affected. Flying over flood-ravaged Canterbury brings it home to me not to take life for granted. We are small people in a big world.

On a happy note, the Haast fly-away was a great success. The weather prior to the weekend was poor so we had a lot of cancellations, however, our Saturday fly-around was a spectacular weather day. I thoroughly enjoyed leading a group of well-mannered pilots around farm strips north of Haast, strips I had never even seen let alone landed on; a beautifully rolled feed-out lot, a farm raceway and the top of a stopbank.

Great work by the organisers to get permissions for these, plus congratulations to the attendees who almost universally obeyed procedures and flew safely and with consideration.

I have recently been reading the American AOPA magazine and they have been singing the praises of their 'Basic Med' medical certification process. They have had vast numbers of pilots return to active flying because 'Basic Med' allows them a logical, efficient and simple way back. Most of these pilots are older or have had health issues which have made conventional FAA medical certification expensive and arduous. The great news is that there has been no increase in aviation accidents due to medical incapacitation. We are not surprised. That is the experience New Zealand has had with the RPL. We believe our DL9(P) is an even more pilot-friendly medical and so far we have seen no medical incapacitation causing accidents. Long may it continue.

I have had many contacts from members who are disbelieving that they can get a DL9(P) for under $100 and that it does everything they need. Many members were spending over $1000 to get their Class 2. I had a great email from one of our more senior members who could not believe he could still get two years flying for a $50 GP visit. (GP must have been a friend…)

AOPA NZ has done well in Wellington recently on a number of fronts. However, I am conscious that we are not progressing the 'mechanical' side of aviation as much as we need to.

Our CAA has accepted a raft of regulations which have been born out of American-based manufacturers' fears of litigation, not all of which have been accepted by the FAA. Many of us just send our aircraft off to the LAME and cringe at the thought of the account. However, we are also aware of unworkable regulations which our LAME's just have to work around, rules which defy logic and make aviation less enjoyable.

For example, if my LAME trains me to change a spark plug, I need to have a torque wrench. Okay... but the torque wrench needs to be tested and tagged regularly. What nonsense, given that when I need to change a plug it will be in the back of beyond and will be an unforeseen failure. My torque wrench is fifty years old and has never been checked but I bet it is still accurate. Plus, torquing threads is an inexact science.

I am looking for a member who might take up the challenge of leading a group with the aim of working with CAA to bring more logic to our maintenance rules. The DL9(P) medicals might have taken a long time but we got there in the end. Please let me know if you are interested.

Enough from me now, I hope you enjoy the rest of the magazine. We are really pleased with the way our mag has evolved. Special thanks to Anna Mackenzie, Ross Millichamp and Don Ryder.

Safe flying... *Steve Brown, President*

Tying down for the Haast winter fly-in

Mark it in your calendar now!

The 2022 AOPA AGM will be held 25-26 February in Tauranga, with the Summer Safari launching from Tauranga immediately after, on the 27th. Details in the next issue.

Photo opportunity

Entries are still open for submissions to the AOPA 2022 calendar!

Thanks for all those already submitted. Any further entries should be emailed to murray.paterson@aopa.co.nz for review by the judging panel.

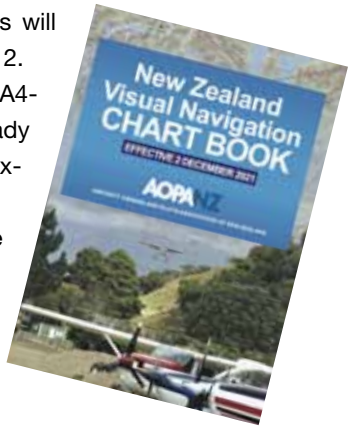
Photos should be current and must be available in high resolution.

New VNC Chart book in production

This year's Airways VNC charts will become effective on December 2.

Production of the new AOPA A4-sized VNC Chart Book is already well advanced with availability expected by early October.

Please remember not to use your new chart book prior to December 2 and it is equally important that you don't use your old one after this date.



A warm welcome to new members:

Mike O'Rourke, Tauranga, Cirrus SR22 CNZ; Ben van der Sande, Orewa; Tom & Norma van Rooyen, Papakura; Don Laming, Christchurch, Lance EIB; Mark & Jo Miller, Ashhurst, Miller Superchamp MMJ; Hamish Hutton, Queenstown; Peter Tollemache, Alexandra, C177 MRL; David Mainwaring & Catherine McLeavy, Christchurch, Pipistrel Sinus RDZ; Peter Washbourn, Timaru, Glastar PCW; Warrick Frogley, Havelock North, Bell 206L IJC; Michael Curtis, Whakatane, C172 DRN; Matthew Poole, Christchurch; Victoria Haining, Auckland; Andrew Miller & Ngaire Hasset, Auckland, DHC1 CPY; Kevin Mills, Warkworth, C182 MGU; Celroy Mascarenenhas, Oamaru; Jake Reed, Wanaka, C180 SLM; Steve Gwilliam, Whangarei, Jodel D11 RSB; Greg Morris, Whangarei, RV8 PDN; Paul Hopper, Auckland, C177B DNX; David & Doreen Ainslie, Arrowtown, Alpi 200 LPI, Tecnam P2004 DDL, Rotorway A600 IAD; Grant South, Peel Forest, Rans S6 KBJ; Evan Pearce, Rangiora, PA28-180 EBK

GOfuel extends Aerostop network

Mercer Airport in Mangatawhiri is the latest unmanned GOfuel Aerostop site to come online.

Mercer Airport takes the GOfuel Aerostop network to five, with further sites coming soon. Their other 24/7 swipe card sites are located at North Shore Airport (Jet A1), Ardmore Airport (Jet A1), Pukekohe East Airfield (Avgas), and Fielding Airport (Avgas).

GOfuel Carnet Fuelcards are required to use the 24/7 unmanned sites, with the card also giving access to the wider Air BP network throughout the country. Cards can be applied for online at www.gofuel.co.nz. **GOfuel offers discounted AeroShell products and fuelcards to AOPA members.**

As well as supplying aviation fuels and aviation lubricants, GOfuel offers fuelcards for vehicles, bulk fuel deliveries, home heating fuel and operates NZ's largest marine fuel network. For information about the Aerostop network, aviation lubricants, Carnet cards or technical advice and sales support, contact Aviation Manager Barry Brown at barryb@gofuel.nz or phone 027 738 0380.

Member benefits

Another of the standard benefits available to AOPA members via our website is AVIS Rental Cars.

Avis is happy to offer AOPA NZ members year-round access to corporate rates for any car rental requirements. We know of one member who tells us that his savings on AVIS each year more than pay for his membership sub.

To check the details and make bookings, just go to Member Benefits on the AOPA NZ website.

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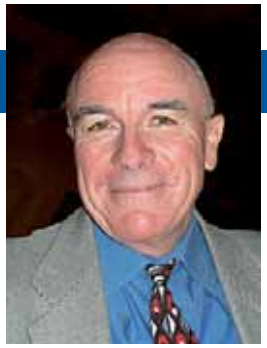


Vice-President's view

Flying activity has leen slightly curtailed for me lately due to winter weather plus an 'upgrade' to my aircraft's avionics.

My Cessna 182 has an Aspen PFD and MFD combination. Aspen offered a very favourable exchange price to upgrade to their latest PFD, with better colour and brightness along with other goodies. Who can resist an upgrade at favourable prices? Once the cost had passed the budget committee (Christine) on safety grounds, I placed my order.

When the installation was scheduled with South Pacific Avionics we realised it wasn't going to be compatible with the current MFD from Aspen. Software issues. A bit like trying to use Win 7 alongside Win 10 I guess.

So, it was back to a conversation with Aspen to explain why they hadn't mentioned this in their excellent 'deal'. In the end they gave me an extremely favourable price on the MFD upgrade as well, so I now have brand new PFD and MFD.

I don't think it was an intentional bait and switch, but a good lesson in ensuring you fully understanding what the upgrades may mean.

A project that is gaining momentum with the AOPA NZ Executive is IFR training. New Zealand has a particularly low percentage of Instrument rated GA pilots. We believe the reasons are twofold: the complexity and relevance of the current syllabus, and the ability to self-study beyond just reading the books.

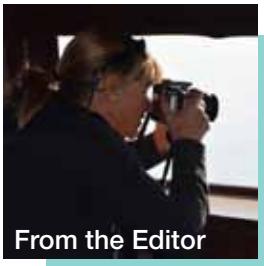
With the advent of online training for all sorts of vocations, the Executive believes that the Instrument syllabus needs to be brought into the online environment. Most of us don't have the time or inclination to sit in a full-time regimented classroom alongside potential career pilots.

CAA are going through a revision of the syllabus which will be out for review before the end of the year. It will be more relevant to today's environment. We have provided input into this.

We are also in discussions with a couple of New Zealand Aviation Colleges to design an online study course that will allow us to study at our own pace. If you are interested in obtaining a very useful rating, watch this space.

Planning is well underway for our AGM at Tauranga on February 25–26 next year. This will be followed by the AOPA Northern Safari starting from Tauranga on 27 February 2022.

Steve Horne, Vice-President



From the Editor

While the rest of the country suffers unprecedented flooding, heavy snow and relentless rain, Hawke's Bay is experiencing a winter drought. It's particularly bad news coming on the back of two summer droughts in our one reliably wet season – the farm dams are as low as they've been in living memory.

One upside is that the bright still days offer excellent weather for flying. Breakfast fly-ins – once called 'Dawn Raids' – at Hastings, Waipukurau, Dannevirke and Feilding Aero Clubs have brought people out on a regular basis. Snow on the hills, blue skies, sun scattered across the (unfortunately not lush) green of the land: it all makes for a fine start to a day.

Weather combined with family circumstances worked against us regarding the mid-winter fly-in, but it looks like those who made it had an excellent weekend. The centre-spread images paint the picture in style – many thanks to the photographers who sent photos in; it's enough to make a gal jealous...

Thanks also to those who contribute articles to the magazine. We couldn't do it without you. This issue we welcome Neville Bailey to the team, and I'm sure you'll all enjoy more of David Berger's world-traversing saga. Great contributions too from editorial team member, Ross Millichamp and behind the scenes effort from Claire Paterson. Please do get in touch if you have a story worth sharing, or know of one we should pursue.

Anna Mackenzie, Editor

Kurow fly-in

Twenty-six aircraft flew into Gary Hawkin's airstrip on a beautiful late autumn day in May, reiterating the value of the one-day fly-in format.

The strip is located amongst rough riverbed terrain on the south side of the Waitaki River, just a short stroll from Kurow township.

The strip had been checked in advance for rabbit holes and was in very good condition, suiting all aircraft types, from Cessna taildraggers to a group of retractable Alpis. Parking was tight but quickly sorted when the gate to an adjoining paddock was opened, allowing the high wing planes to move off the strip.

Highlight of the day was the cream scones provided by AOPA member Dave Blair, who has a holiday house in the town.

The re-birth of ZK-DXC

By Ross Millichamp

Cessna U206F ZK-DXC came to New Zealand from the factory in 1975, spent around 300hrs on wheels then went to work in the Central North Island as a float plane.

These aircraft have a hard life due to the stresses of taking off, landing and being moored on rough water, and from the corrosion that comes from continued exposure to fresh and salt water spray. By 2014 DXC had done 9000hr of toil in this hostile environment and had come to the end of its economic life. The uncertainty around cost and the time out of the air involved in the looming SIDS process were the deal breakers. DXC was disassembled and pushed to the corner of the hangar from where Mike Scotter bought it for little more than the value of the engine core that accompanied it.

Mike is currently an A320 Captain with Air New Zealand, but has the right pedigree to take on a project of this scale. Son of well-known retired airline pilot and aircraft engineer Pat Scotter, Mike also holds a LAME certificate and had a solid background in GA flying before moving to the airlines.

The re-birth of DXC took six years. Looking at the before and after pictures it's hard to believe it's the same aircraft.

In addition to much needed work on the airframe, DXC received new paint, a new interior, a new Continental IO-550N engine, a clever MT prop that can be put into reverse pitch to allow braking, a second front door on the passenger side and a set of Aerocet 'amphibious' floats in place of the straight 'water-only' floats of the past.

Mike acknowledges the contributions from his father Pat, Byron Phillips, Malcolm Price and Arnold Gallagher in particular.

Initially DXC went back onto wheels while the engine was run in and the rigging set up and trimmed. Then it was back to school for Mike as Ivan Krippner and Simon Nicholson taught him the art of flying on floats.

I first met Mike back when DXC was a work in progress, and wondered about the utility of an aircraft primarily set up for water operations, however the addition of wheels that retract in and out of the floats make this a surprisingly useful aircraft on land also. Mike has had DXC into back country strips such as Manuka Point and Gorge River, which are short, bumpy and narrow. The wheels are quite different from those we are familiar with – there are four of them for a start! The rear main wheels are fixed, as is the norm, but the front wheels castor like a very old-fashioned tailwheel plane. Most significantly, there is no steering on the nose wheels. Directional control on the ground is from the rudder and brakes, kind of like a tailwheel in reverse.

DXC always looked big in the Rangiora Aircraft Engineering hangar but looks enormous out in the open. Sitting in the passenger's seat everything on the inside looked familiar to me, with the exception of a depth gauge in the panel. Look outside, though, and we seemed to be terribly high off the ground, and because you can't see the wheels from the front seats, it just seemed wrong to be moving smoothly across the land on floats.

We took off from the grass at Rangiora and were airborne in 200m at most. Admittedly, with two POB and half tanks we were light, but I was reminded that a big engine and prop overcome pretty much everything else in a Cessna when it comes to take-off performance. Once airborne the drag effects of the floats start to come into play. Mike can get 120kts indicated airspeed out of DXC but it comes at the expense of a lot of fuel and a much restricted range, so he chooses to operate well lean of peak at 105kts and around 42 l/hr.

We cruised through the North Canterbury foothills for twenty minutes before arriving overhead Lake Sumner, Mike's closest water playground. At this point I asked about the legalities of landing on water in New Zealand, where floatplanes, amphibians and seaplanes are a rarity. It turns out that the rules are set by the maritime authorities, in this case Environment Canterbury, and allow Mike plenty of scope to do his thing. I did think it a bit odd that the planners around New Zealand had spent so much time writing rules for such a small activity though. I guess it harks back to the days before helicopters when floatplanes filled a vital role in back country access.

Lake Sumner is the biggest lake in North Canterbury and is aligned beautifully with the prevailing winds. We arrived overhead in perfect conditions – the wind was light and the lake smooth with just a

few ripples. 'Just a few ripples' allows you to see where the lake ends and the sky starts, which is critical to making a safe landing. When climbing into DXC earlier, I'd been puzzled about the purpose of a small bag of pebbles sitting within reach of the pilot's seat. Mike explained that in completely calm conditions you drop a few pebbles out the window onto your chosen landing spot then zoom back around and land on the ripples created.

Mike set us up for landing and explained that it's all about aircraft attitude. It's rare that you need to 'hit the spot', as is the case when landing a wheeled plane on a short strip. There are two schools of thought about the perfect touchdown. One is to touch down in a slightly nose high attitude, so that the heels of the floats touch first, to slow the aircraft as it settles onto the floats. The other is to touch down flat on the floats. Both approaches involve a very gentle rate of descent while carrying a little power. Everyone agrees that you do not want to touch down on the front of the floats, as it is then difficult to retain directional control. To a novice the difference between nose high, nose level and nose low was very subtle and nothing like the attitudes used in a typical wheeled aircraft landing.

Once on the water Mike taxied into the shore and dropped me off to take a few pictures. DXC looks and sounds even more impressive from the shore, with plumes of spray flying out the back and the noise of that magnificent IO-550N reflecting off the water and the surrounding hills.

Mike returned and very generously offered me a turn behind the controls. He pulled a cord on the cockpit floor to stow the water rudders and got me to practice a few water turns as we moved out into the lake. It turns out that both boating and flying skills are part of the floatplane deal. Once in position he talked me through the take off – full power, control column fully aft and a heap of right rubber to keep it straight. "You might run out of rudder at the start but it will come right as the speed builds," he said. "At 23-24kts it will pop onto the step ('onto the plane' in boat speak) and you need to ease forward into a neutral attitude and allow the speed to build."

I found the initial stage of the take-off quite disorientating due to the extreme nose high attitude, and had to check direction by looking out to the side rather than ahead. Once on the step, though, it was just a matter of sitting back and waiting for the speed to build before giving the controls a very gentle pull to pop the aircraft into the air. The landings were like going back to initial flight training where, after getting everything set up, you must look well ahead and wait for the runway to come to you. Except in this aircraft, the touchdown always comes sooner than you think due the height of your seat above the water. Sideways drift on landing is a no-no as when the keels of the floats bite the water, any sideways movement gets interesting. One unusual element of the landing was the electronic voice coming from the gear system telling you that you were about to do a "water landing". Herein lies one of the potential issues with amphibian aircraft: it is actually okay to land on grass with the wheels up, but definitely not okay to land on water with the wheels down.

Now that the hard work has been done, Mike is using DXC for all sorts of adventures. A typical trip to Fiordland or Stewart Island involves heading south as soon as the weather clears after a front, and enjoying two to three nights away before the next front arrives. The ideal situation is to arrive at high tide and tie the aircraft to a tree to be left high and dry as the tide recedes. On occasions Mike lowers the wheels before shutting down and is able to taxi back to the water's edge on departure if the terrain allows. There are plenty of huts scattered around the fjords and on Stewart Island to use as a base to explore with the inflatable dinghy he carries. With the big clam-shell back door, the 206 is a great transporter of gear and equipment. Mike is currently helping Andrew Bowmar to build a hut at Port Pegasus at the south-eastern end of Stewart Island. By removing the back seats he can fit 3.6m lengths of timber into the cabin.

ZK DXC is a unique aircraft in New Zealand. It is pleasing to see it, after six years of hard work and expense, being well used by Mike and his family for amazing adventures in the New Zealand wilderness.

Wrong way to New Zealand: part 6

Splashdown on the Volga

By David Berger

Everything in aviation is a trade-off. If you want to carry more load, you won't be able to fly as far or as fast. If you really want to fly fast you'll need a skinny wing that won't like flying slowly, and puny wheels that fold away and don't like rough surfaces.

If you absolutely must take off and land vertically, you won't go very fast at all, you won't carry very much load, you will use tons of fuel, the maintenance costs will cripple you, your false teeth will get shaken out of your gums and, to boot, you'll get wet when it rains. And if you are so foolish as to want to operate off both land and water, well, the compromises are too many to list here, except... except if you are operating a Seabear.

The Seabear (known as the Chaika in Russian), is a twin-Rotax, composite, four-seat amphibious flying boat. It's a taildragger, it looks good, it flies good, it flies far, it flies reasonably fast, it carries a good load, it's spacious, comfortable and performs well on one engine. You can land it on deep snow with the wheels up and, best of all, right in the middle of the panel sits a huge, 1950s Russian aviation clock. There is nothing not to love.

We looked all round the yellow and blue demonstrator, stylishly bedecked with a Russian eagle on its tail, with Dimitri and Valentine and then climbed in, Tom starting off in the right seat. In less than ten minutes we were speeding down the Volga at 300 feet for some touch and goes on a quiet stretch of the river between an island and the shore.

Dmitri doesn't have much English but, between experienced pilots, the language of piloting doesn't need many words. Tom and I, both of whom have floatplane experience, had no trouble flying a few touch and goes in this delightful aircraft.

"What's it like on one engine?" I asked innocently, as we settled on the downwind 250ft after my second touch and go.

"BOT! (VORT!)" replied Dmitri, reaching over with his enormous hand to grasp the right-hand throttle and bring it to idle and then feather the prop. The answer is: "Pretty good".

We were four up with a reasonable amount of fuel and I could get a 300ft per minute climb going, though a little more rudder trim would have been nice.

After my turn at the controls we did a full stop landing and bobbed about for a bit on the river. We climbed out of the capacious rear hatch to stroll up and down the fuselage, pose between the rakish twin tails, wave to passing boats and generally marvel that we were standing on a flying boat floating on the Volga River in Russia, which isn't something you do every day of the week.

I will not deny that our faith was tested by that trip in the Seabear. By the time we got back to Krasniy Yar airfield, we were high on visions of South Pacific flying boat cruises in the style of C.G. Taylor's 1950s memoir, *Bird of the Islands* (read that book if you haven't already). There we were, two RayBanned aviators on the flight deck (for the Seabear almost has a flight deck), grizzled and

taciturn denizens of the skies over remote oceans, our crows-footed eyes scanning the horizon for an eagerly sought landfall, then swooping over the lagoon to a flawless landing in between the coral heads. We shut down and climb out onto the fuselage, just in time to greet the small flotilla of canoes filled with excited locals and splashing, yelling, smiling children. Tokelau, Palmerston, Ontong Java, Mangareva, the Tuamotus: the magical lagoons of the far-flung Pacific called to us, enticing us with their siren song.

We cast withering looks towards the 185: how much could we get for that ugly, cramped, noisy tin of Spam anyway? How much would a new Seabear cost? How would we fit it out? We even got as far as the paperwork ins and outs of operating an experimental aircraft internationally.

But, the day was coming to a close and our compulsive checking of the weather brought us back to earth with a jolt. Valentine had invited us to his summer house on the Volga the next day, but unless we left soon the weather was going to keep us in Samara until after the weekend and we did not have the time for that, so we regretfully had to decline.

The night was spent in the garishly painted Dom Pilota, the airfield's accommodation for visiting pilots. The next day we were up early, mulling over freezing levels and clearances and liaising with Evgeny, our flying-in-Russia fixer, before finally departing for our next destination, Ekaterinburg in the Ural mountains, mid-morning. The flight was uneventful, IFR, in and out of cloud layers all the way. Tom was flying and was in his own space as usual, in tune with the machine. He doesn't talk much. Even on a long flight he will be silent for hours at a time. He listens to music, caresses the control column and occasionally fiddles with the avionics, thinking, always thinking. The flight passed for me in a pleasant, smooth daze.

Ekaterinburg has a large international airport, its vast expanses of smooth concrete seeming absurd after Krasniy Yar's manicured grass and Beketovka's chaos of rubble, potholes and trees. We were directed by a follow-me car to a very specific patch of apron, which looked like any other patch of apron, and shut down. The driver indicated that our fuel would be coming and then sped off. We

Far left: loyalties are tested when David and Tom meet the Seabear. Above, from top left: with Seabear designer Dmitri; PR interview at Ekaterinburg; trying the Seabear on for size; Valentine.

waited. After about half an hour, another small car approached and stopped. Two young women got out and approached, giggling. They had a little English: they were from the airport's PR department and they wanted to interview us so they could put out a story about our trip on Instagram. Why, we would be delighted!

A series of the usual questions later, we were reminded we were in unreconstructed Russia by their final gambit: "Which country," pause for giggles and knowing looks, "which country on your trip did you think had the most beautiful women?!" Collapse into gales of laughter. Reader, you and I know there is only one answer to such a question, and we gave it, and afterwards all was well.

Not long after the PR girls left, a truck turned up with the usual two pristine blue and white drums of fuel, which we proceeded to hand pump. Warning to all prospective trans-world aviators: you could not do this trip without a hand pump.

We were escorted to the very sparkly terminal, where, miraculously, someone was waiting for us. A smartly dressed man of about thirty, with almost no English, had been sent to look after us. He was a friend of Evgeny's business assistant, but we didn't get much more information than that. Anyway, he was extremely kind, showed us all round the city, which had a level of affluence we had not come across in Russia so far, and a startling line in street art. Dinner was in a bar he co-owned, to the usual background of Russian techno-pop and we were once again struck by the extraordinary kindness of so many people towards these anonymous travellers from overseas.

Our destination the next day was the small airfield of Maryanovka, about 50km west of the mid-Siberian city of Omsk and about 450nm east of where we were. Omsk is now known in the west as the site of the hospitalisation of the Russian opposition leader, Alexei Navalny, following his inflight poisoning, but at the time all we knew about it was that it rhymed amusingly with the nearby city of Tomsk. There, we would be looked after, we were told, by a mysterious character called Malabar. Everyone knew Malabar and everything would be sorted out by Malabar. Oh-kaaay.

The weather was not great, and we were particularly concerned about quite low freezing levels, so we tried to file for a suitably low altitude. Each time Evgeny tried, however, the flight plans were rejected. Eventually, the reason became clear. In Russia, we were limited to so-called international airways on which the

area controllers of course speak English. Unfortunately, our route took us over the city of Kurgan which has quite a large area of low level controlled airspace around its airport and flying through it would mean, therefore, that we had to talk to the Kurgan aerodrome controller, who did not speak English.

"Just file higher and request a lower altitude en route if you need it," said Evgeny. With some trepidation we did, and the plan was finally accepted.

Sure enough, we found ourselves entering icing conditions as we climbed to our assigned altitude and requested lower, which was readily granted by the helpful controllers. We were discussing with each other what would happen as we approached the low level airspace around Kurgan when the controller came on and asked us for a long series of estimates, which we gave him, thanks to the Garmin GTN 750, and these, we surmised, must be for the low level airspace boundaries around Kurgan. We then promptly lost contact with the area controller and so thought we had better call up the Kurgan controller before we entered his airspace unannounced and he scrambled a squadron of MIGs to meet us. After a couple of attempts, contact was made, but he didn't speak any English. Somehow, though, my schoolboy Russian carried us through – you never know when that stuff is going to come in handy. It appeared he was expecting us, and before long we were through without any trouble and on the other side and talking to the next area controller.

Siberia starts at the Ural Mountains, so east of Ekaterinburg we were officially in Siberia proper. Every glimpse of the

ground revealed odd circular lakes, surrounded by marshland. These are kettle lakes, caused by water entering cavities in the ground left by retreating ice, and they are emblematic of the Siberian landscape. Beyond these lakes and forest, there was little to see for mile after mile. Siberia is pretty flat, with huge cities of a million or more separated by vast expanses of wilderness. It has a feeling not dissimilar to Australia: an ocean of land, with sparsely dotted islands of human habitation.

We had been battling a strong headwind the whole way and, since we had done quite a lot of flying in the previous few days, we were keen to get down and have a cuppa and meet the mysterious Malabar. Notwithstanding the charming PR girls of Ekaterinburg, we were also keen to get back to small airstrips. Our destination could not come soon enough.

We could see the large conurbation of Omsk in the distance and were cleared to land on the large grass plain which signified the airfield by the Omsk controller, with instructions to call him on the ground. You are always in touch with a controller in Russia, and always have to have permission to be in the air, unless you are somewhere so extraordinarily remote that the long tentacles of the Russian state have no chance of reaching you, but more on that further east.

The main trans-Siberian highway ran just to the north of the airfield and there was a medium-sized, obviously muddy and poor, village to the south. There were two lines of parked aircraft (including the obligatory pair of AN-2 biplanes) and a couple of hangars, outside which stood a few men looking up at us. A car was racing madly up the strip, evidently doing the Russian equivalent of a 'Roo run' (in this case for horses) and we knew this was a place where we would be more at home than at any 'proper airport'. After an absurdly short landing into the 20knt headwind we taxied back and shut down next to an L29 jet.

The welcoming party treated us like conquering heroes, with huge smiles, big Russian handshakes and much back slapping. The Omsk aircraft spotters club had even come out with their banner to have their picture taken with us. This was the life! Before long, we were ensconced in the cosy night watchman's caravan, having a cup of tea and waiting for the mysterious Malabar to turn up, the Mr Big of Omsk aviation, the maven of all things aeronautical in central Siberia.

Malabar turned out to be a charming, down to earth fellow. He showed us round the workshop where he was supervising a number of aircraft rebuilds of an extraordinary quality: a Cessna 185, of all things, a 210, a 337, a Lake Buccaneer and others. Apart from the high standards of engineering, the workshop was notable for a wonderful selection of Soviet-era aeronautical posters. It was interesting to talk to these men of my age, all in their 50s, for there was a yearning there. They had all grown up in the Soviet Union and, though they made fun of it, there was also a sense that much ineffable had been lost in the transition to greater personal freedoms: certainty, predictability, law and order, camaraderie, even meaning itself. Perhaps the universal prerequisites for a fulfilled human life are not entirely those we have all been indoctrinated to believe?

Malabar drove us into town with one of the engineers, a former Soviet air force technician, and we talked of aircraft and personalities. The airport manager

The Omsk aircraft spotters club offer a fine welcome. Top: kettle lakes over Siberia.

A Cessna 210 rebuild underway in Malabar's workshop, where a fine range of Soviet aviation poster art is also on display.

of our next stop, Gorno-Altaisk, about 450nm east and then south round the tip of Kazakhstan, had been seconded from Omsk airport and was well-known and liked locally, so that was reassuring. We put up at a small, cheap hotel and Malabar took us out to his favourite restaurant, where vodka was drunk and Google Translate, for perhaps the first time in its history, translated the phrase "And now we shall crunch the bones of animals, like small dog," from Russian into English.

The next morning we caught a taxi back out to the airfield and got packed up and ready to go, when there was, inevitably, a problem with the clearance. Telephone calls back and forth to Omsk Control and Evgeny in Moscow revealed the cause. Though Barnaul Control, whose sector we would have to pass through en route to Gorno-Altaisk, had scheduled an English-speaking controller for us, there was no one English-speaking available at Gorno-Altaisk for our arrival. Could we please, therefore, revise our flight plan to arrive after the tower had closed at 5pm? Certainly we could, and that meant we also had time to nip off with the airfield watchman in his immaculate 1984 Lada to the small cafe on the trans-Siberian highway about ten minutes drive away. Here, alongside long distance truck drivers and taciturn Russian families, we made our first acquaintance with the ubiquitous Laghman soup, a broth which warms and nourishes Russian bellies from the Urals to Vladivostok and beyond.

By the time we got back to the airfield – narrowly avoiding getting the Lada

Soviet poster: "We shall be pilots one day!"

stuck in the mud in the village – it was about 1pm and our flight plan had been approved. We said goodbye to our kind new friends, climbed into the 185 (which we had by now forgiven for not being a Seabear) and set off for Gorno-Altaisk, the Altai Mountains and further adventures on the Mongolian border.

AOPA mid-winter fly-in

Haast

9-12 July

Photo credits: Aaron Murphy, Craig Irons, Steve Clarke, Rob McGregor, Dave Paterson, David Murray, Neville Bailey et al. For more on a fantastic weekend that took in Haast, Okarito, Dingleburn, Mt Cook, Milford and more, see Neville Bailey's article overleaf.

A different way of flying

Haast mid-winter fly-in

By Neville Bailey

I'd only recently joined AOPA upon returning to live in New Zealand when Jonathan Battson invited me to join him at the Haast fly-in, and I leapt at the opportunity. With my airline career taking me to Hong Kong and Cathay Pacific for two decades, I'd been out of General Aviation for years, and I'd missed it.

Friday afternoon we got airborne and, after a brief fuel stop to fill the tanks on Jon's Bearhawk, we headed straight to Geraldine, intending to fly through Burke's Pass. Winds were strong, the 30kts forecast at altitude manifesting itself in the blown snow visible on distant mountain tops, so we stayed low, avoiding much of the turbulence. My previous flying career was becoming a distant memory, but there were times on this trip that I wouldn't have minded being in the smooth air at FL390, sipping a hot coffee while the autopilot did the lion's share of the work.

One of the reasons I'd been keen to join the trip was to become reacquainted with the GA scene, the people, and the flying itself. I'd recently renewed my BFR and done a few hours in a Piper Cub, but it's one thing doing circuits under the watchful eye of an instructor in perfect weather, and quite another being out in the real world, airspace, weather, mountain passes, in an aircraft with which I was unfamiliar – albeit one nearly identical to the quick-build Bearhawk kit that is slowly taking shape in my garage.

With Burke's Pass looming up ahead I'd inadvertently grabbed hold of one the overhead steel tubes in an effort to stop being thrown around, white knuckles giving away my apprehension. I was unaccustomed to being tossed around like this and having a few thousand feet between me and the ground wouldn't have gone amiss. But we passed through into the Mackenzie Basin and the turbulence eased into much smoother conditions over a few familiar landmarks.

Tim and Adrienne Ward were following behind us and they continued south as Jon and I stopped in briefly at the Ohau airstrip before continuing up the Huxley and into Landsborough Valley. Landsborough was nearly calm and my fears were replaced by a sense of wonder as I took in the scenery. It's a lonely, remote place, and that's the whole point of being there. We flew over several Tahr near a disused and deeply snow-covered airstrip at Marks Flat, and Jon showed me a few other back country airstrips before we headed through to Haast and picketed down for the night.

The hotel fireplace was a welcome spot to enjoy a few ales and meet others who had flown in for the weekend, and conversations were soon in full bloom. It was still dark the next morning as we hiked over to the airfield to check the plane before breakfast. With freezing fingers and wearing two jackets, we removed and stowed pickets and did a preflight, with the shadows of sixty aircraft lined along the fence in the darkness. Then back to join everyone in the dining room for several coffees and a hot fry-up. The usual aviators briefings and discussions about which way we should head and which group to join. More coffee. A group of 'taildragger guys' had a list going that Jon penned our names to and a plan started to take shape. John Evans would lead us on the day's adventure.

We got airborne and headed south, first venturing into the Okuru Valley for a gravel landing, then down towards Arawhata with numerous stops en route.

This type of flying is at the opposite end of the spectrum to what I'd come from and it's easy to take for granted, but simple things like which side of a valley to fly along and how to read wind effects on water or grass when planning an approach can make all the difference to how your day turns out. There's no ATIS and the lack of mobile reception means even getting a METAR is difficult in these parts.

I was a keen student with a lot of questions. I wanted to know about short field technique for takeoff, flap setting, is it better to get up on the mains early or fly off from a three-point attitude?

There are no dispatch officers or Takeoff Performance printouts showing flap settings and V speeds on these airstrips, it's much more a seat of the pants operation. The short strip approaches were all being flown well back on the drag curve, a high nose attitude accompanied by a higher than normal power setting. This was resulting in very short landing rolls; a technique I'm going to have to practise when my own aircraft is ready. I could see that all the taildragger pilots were flying a very similar approach style, and all with a healthy dose of caution – the experience in the group I was flying with became obvious during the day. In the flying I was used to, we'd always aimed for the 1500ft markers with a decent margin over the Vref speeds, a necessity of airline operations. But that was never going to work in these parts and I was enjoying the change, the flexibility, where each individual pilot had their own personal standards and systems.

"...simple things like which side of a valley to fly along and how to read wind effects on water or grass when planning an approach can make all the difference to how your day turns out."

I'd enjoyed the career, of course, and am grateful for all it offered, but long-term fatigue was always a factor, and if I never see another monthly 'On Time Performance' graph again, it'll still be too soon.

I got to see 18 'hot' starts on Saturday, and the routines that go along with it.

The back country isn't a place you'd want to get a flat battery. Each pilot had their own practised procedure for starting, and I was shown a few tips for taxiing and lining up while keeping the strip in view. These strips were reasonably short. I'd expected that, but I hadn't expected that they'd be so narrow. I'm going to have to get my feet working again; the margin for error is small.

A good landing wasn't a smooth one, quite the opposite, with airspeed kept to a minimum and when the throttle was closed the large shock struts soaked up any remaining energy and kept us firmly on the ground. Finesse was observed in the ability to shorten the landing roll, not smoothen the touchdown. Takeoffs had the tail in the air quickly, tailwheel and tailplane clear of the rocks and out of harm's way. And the sound of those Lycomings and Continentals with their long bladed props reverberating around the hills and advertising our presence!

A tramping hut at one of the landing strips provided a convenient place for lunch and a friendly banter discussing the pros and cons of various aircraft types and bush flying techniques. I chatted with John, Brian, Craig Thompson, Dave and James Murray and Richard Coop. They each had their favourite spots, and they explained the concessions that allowed us to access these parts as well as the peculiarities of the different airstrips.

Flying home on Sunday afternoon, the group began to thin out as people left to head in the direction of their home airfields. Jon and I crossed high up into the Alps, getting spectacular views of the ice-fields, before descending along the Rakaia towards Lake Coleridge and home. Writing now, it seems like another world, but I hear it's an annual event and, with renewed inspiration, I'm putting in the hours out in the shed each day and slowly the home-build is taking shape. I hope to have it ready to fly to next year's AOPA gathering, so that I can again enjoy a drink with new friends and follow the taildragger guys on another epic adventure into the back country.

By Ivor Yockney

Doing it right ... every time

I was holding off writing this column until after the Haast Winter Fly-in to see what I might add from that but, by all accounts, the bulk of the weekend worked perfectly and the level of airmanship shown by participants was fantastic.

So, on that note, this issue's safety column leads on from the last topic of following the Civil Aviation Rules, knowing them and complying with them. But many aspects of flying behaviour are not Rules-based, not requiring compliance but rather relying on good safe practices, every time. What I am alluding to is perhaps better encompassed by the word 'airmanship' – if I may be forgiven that somewhat dated term.

Good airmanship is not just a measure of skill or technique, but also a measure of a pilot's awareness of the aircraft and the environment in which it operates, and includes a realistic assessment of your own capabilities.

The three fundamental principles of airmanship are skill, proficiency and the discipline to apply both in a safe and efficient manner. Discipline is the foundation of airmanship and the focus of this column. Discipline, to me, is about doing things right and doing it right every time, no matter how small that process appears to be. That means not cutting corners or becoming slack in your daily flying routines and pre-flight planning. By creating a thorough process as a habit or routine, it becomes second nature to always do it right. This may eventually pay dividends on a day where something else goes wrong, you are tired or distracted, but you have already, by habit, plugged many of the possible holes in the 'Swiss cheese'.

We learn while moving through the stages of aviation experience: the more we experience, the more we learn (and realise we didn't previously know!). Everyone makes mistakes, that's a given. Some of us learn through others' mistakes; some of us make mistakes, learn and never repeat those mistakes; others continually make mistakes and don't seem to learn from them.

We (as predominantly private GA pilots) will no doubt depart from the initial training scene and start developing our own habits. It is where those habits start to deviate from what is considered good airmanship that we start to see issues.

Sometimes it takes longer to do things right. An example in my group on the Saturday of the mid-winter fly-in was one pilot making sure he did a low level overfly of a strip on his side to have a good look at it, rather than just following in with the others. While everyone seemed comfortable just joining into the strip, which in itself was fine, it struck me that this pilot had his own habit and discipline for joining a new strip and maintained that discipline despite all the other aircraft largely joining straight in – which was great to see.

A few examples of airmanship qualities I have recently noticed not being observed include failing to get an aviation weather forecast – a proper aviation forecast (MetFlight) will give you a much clearer picture of your route and intended destination than just a look outside and looking at a few webcams. Likewise for NOTAMS: they're there for everyone's safety and it only takes a couple of extra minutes to check the NOTAMS; in fact those using EFBs have all the information available under a single pre-flight tab

if you are logged into IFIS and MetFlight.

Another example is chatter on 119.1 – the unattended aerodrome frequency. There is scope for another article on this, as CFZs are not a thing for the most part of Class G airspace. Suffice to say, it's not the frequency to discuss where you're all going for dinner… it's amazing what you hear up at 10,000ft monitoring 119.1!

Some poor airmanship examples are simply due to naivety and lack of experience, and more experienced pilots need to take this into account before berating a newbie. As a newly minted pilot I once fired up a plane in front of the engineers' hangar and blew prop wash all through the maintenance facility; very much a sign of poor airmanship. The pleasant engineer (a recent recipient of the AOPA maintenance facility award) quickly reprimanded me. While at the time it was embarrassing, I was glad he pulled me aside as it is something I have since always been conscious of in every start up and taxi situation.

Although hard on the ego, learning through mistakes, and especially being 'pulled up' about something, should be taken as an opportunity to learn rather than seen as someone just 'having a go' at you. It is likely equally as hard for a bystander or pilot to approach and comment on your airmanship as it is to accept the constructive reprimand. This is something the Safety Group at AOPA is aware of and we have taken members comments on board to be more proactive in this space.

To continually improve airmanship you need to think of the bigger picture and remain disciplined, accept we all make mistakes, try not to repeat mistakes, learn from experiences, and make your own habits (that do not cut corners). While we were only made aware of a couple of examples of poor airmanship at Haast (not doing things correctly on more than one occasion) there were many examples of great airmanship. Pilots were patient, had the information required, observed the arrival procedure and, from all accounts, flew in a way that allowed everyone sharing the airspace to enjoy their weekend as well.

Avionics upgrades and roll rate

By Ian Andrews

From top: standard 'six pack'; AH and DI replaced with an Aspen; AH replaced with a Garmin G5 or Dynon 10; all Garmin gear replacement.

Many of us are currently going through the process of upgrading our avionics as the old analogue stuff wears out, or we want a flasher looking instrument panel.

The logical approach is to go for solid state equipment that replaces either all or some of the old six pack round dial instruments. Only a handful of you will be IFR but we all rely sometime on what is in front of us in the way of our Artificial Horizon (AH) and Direction Indicator (DI) – put simply, the two instruments in the middle of the six pack (image, top right).

To upgrade your cockpit you can replace these two with an Aspen, as shown in image 2; or just the AH with a Garmin G5 or Dynon D10 (image 3); or you can go for the deluxe version using all Garmin gear (image 4).

I chose to refit with the full monty of a Garmin G500 replacing the six pack, but keeping old standby Speed, Alt and an AH driven by vacuum, as required by law. It is a good set-up and provides a great multi-functional display in the right screen while showing the entire six pack on the left.

From the very first flight I struggled with the indication I was getting, and had to adjust my thinking to comply with what was for me an unusual depiction of my roll rate. However, I could not really put my finger on what was upsetting me and put it down to getting old and being a tad uncurrent.

For those not familiar with the terms, at the centre top are two triangles. One points down and is called the 'Earth Pointer' while the other points up and is either called the 'Sky Pointer' or the 'Roll Pointer'. This is the term I was trained on 25 years ago, when I was also trained to check my roll rate (= angle of bank) as part of my scan.

The roll pointer always showed my rate of turn which, in image 4, is about 2 degrees (yes, I am out of balance). I would have said 2 degrees roll to the right and would have rolled left to align the two pointers, but look at the wings on the horizon. I need to roll right to level them, which to my mind was confusing. I learned to live with it. Simple: just put the earth pointer over the roll pointer. However, it did not feel right in my brain.

About a year after doing the upgrade I fitted a new Garmin GFC 500 Autopilot (AP) which needed a Garmin G5 to drive

it (don't ask the cost). Now I could get rid of the vacuum AH and remove the vacuum system because I now had an electronic backup with four hours of standby battery.

The AP is a fantastic piece of kit that has taken IFR flying to a new level of ease. A glide path at every airport based on the GNC650 GPS receiver. It can fly the enroute, STAR with a hold, approach with advisory glidepath, absolutely hands off down to the missed approach (MA). Then I just hit a go around button and all I have to do is add power because it pitches up, unsuspends the GPS and climbs away on the MA track. All I do is monitor the process and be ready to step in if it is not correct.

I was out flying for fun a few weeks ago and was doing some steep turns just to check everything was working when I noticed a discrepancy between the G500 and the G5. Look at image at the right and compare the two roll pointers.

The G500 has the roll pointer to the left and the G5 has the roll pointer to the right. I know I have to roll my wings level by turning left because the horizon tells me that, but my brain is saying turn right on the G500 and turn left on the G5. It is the G5 indication that I am used to seeing on the old instruments and that I am comfortable with. How did this happen?

I researched it and a study done in Sweden gave me the answer. Three settings are used in the avionics world. General Aviation (GA) uses the roll pointer to show the angle of bank, as per my G5, with the roll scale slaved to the horizon. Commercial Jets do the opposite and slave the roll scale to the wings, as is shown on the G500. The other way is a military style where the roll pointer is at the bottom, but that's not relevant here.

This article was commissioned as there have been a few accidents caused by turning the wrong way in IMC and losing control of the aircraft. The problem has been recognised for many years, so why did my aircraft have the two different settings on the one panel? I guess they were installed at different times, but someone should have checked.

It appears that the G500 comes out with the 'commercial' default setting while the G5 comes with the 'GA' default setting. No-one looked at it and I was not pushy enough in the first place when I felt uncomfortable with the G500 display.

Wings are level, but the G500 has the roll pointer to the left while the G5 has it to the right.

It has now been fixed, and what a difference in my brain! The set-up is now logical and reflects the way I was trained. Of course, the wonderful autopilot never overbanks past a rate one turn, so it's easy to overlook that, but when you were trained on hand flying without an autopilot, you use every indication you can get in the scan.

Let's be honest here. This is a known killer. The Swedish study has shown that experienced pilots failed five times more often with the commercial set up than with the GA one.

I have raised this with CAA and several Avionics shops, who will be taking a closer look at what they do in future. It is up to you to speak up if you find it uncomfortable in the transition from analogue to a digital, technically enhanced cockpit. I am glad I was not in IMC when I started the transition, and I am also glad I have been able to do lots of practice since.

By the way, I do not fly IFR these days as it is not permitted on the new DL9(P) medical. I do go with an instructor to keep my skills up, and I look forward to getting IFR on the DL9(P) soon, IFR being so much safer than scud running when you're flying from A to B – and it's a lot more relaxing too.

Keith Manch, Director of CAA

By Ross Millichamp

The relationship between aircraft owners and the CAA is often perceived to be one dimensional – they set the rules and we do our best to comply with them. I recently sat down with Keith Manch, the newly appointed Director and Chief Executive of the Civil Aviation Authority of New Zealand, to learn a little about him and his organisation.

Keith came to the CAA in February 2021 after a nine year term as Chief Executive of Maritime New Zealand (MNZ). Like many aircraft owners, I wondered about the link between the two agencies and how Keith's time at MNZ might have prepared him for the role at CAA.

Keith explains that MNZ, CAA and Whaka Kotahi (the NZ Transport Agency) all came out of a restructuring of the Ministry of Transport in the 1990s, and notes that they have similar statutory frameworks. First and foremost they are regulatory authorities focussed on the safe and secure operation of their respective modes of transport. MNZ and CAA also share international responsibilities in relation to how New Zealand vessels and aircraft operate outside New Zealand, and conversely how international vessels and aircraft operate here. So while Keith acknowledges that the aviation sphere is new to him, it is clear that he fully understands the regulatory environment that the CAA works within.

Funding basis for public and private good

The CAA is funded through a mix of user charges and Crown funding. While all regulatory activity is undertaken in the public interest overall, within that, functions that are deemed to be of 'private good' or 'club good' are paid for by users on a full cost

Keith Manch, Director of CAA NZ, recently enjoyed a flight in New Zealand's first electric aircraft and is confident this area will be increasingly important in the future.

recovery basis. Private good functions are those which provide benefit to individuals or organisations, such as pilot licensing, aircraft certification and operator certification. Club good functions are those with wider benefits to the community, such as the operation of the safety system.

Private good activities are funded by fees and charges, and club good activities through the more generalised CAA levy system. Public good functions are those that benefit all of New Zealand, such as policy development, and these are funded by central Government with no costs levied on users. The ADS-B transponder subsidy programme is an example of a public good function with benefits that extend beyond individual aircraft operators.

The cost recovery principles for private good and club good functions differ markedly from the way Airways NZ charge for their services. As a State Owned Enterprise, Airways NZ is required to produce a surplus to the Crown, so their charges are above and beyond what is needed to provide the service.

Covid impact

The majority of the authority's staff work in the Aviation Security Service (Avsec), which has been heavily affected by the COVID pandemic. Although domestic airline activity has recovered to around eighty percent of pre-COVID levels, international airline activity is currently below ten percent of pre-COVID levels. This has severely reduced the CAA's income, with the Authority currently being kept afloat by the government's liquidity fund.

Earlier this year industry experts were predicting that airline activity would return to pre-COVID levels by around 2025-2026, and then along came the DELTA variant… Many industry representatives are now wondering whether activity will ever return to 2019 levels.

CAA has been able to divert some of its Avsec people into roles such as assisting with security at MIQ facilities, but it has been a difficult and uncertain time. Turning the industry 'back on' at the end of the pandemic will not be easy either. Keith explains that the airlines talk about 'rusty planes-rusty pilots', and notes that the same will apply to many elements of industry – with one of the key challenges being to remain ready to go when recovery occurs.

In addition to Avsec scanning passengers and luggage onto and off flights, the Authority oversees security relating to activities that facilitate the movement of freight through the border, which has implications for foreign trade. New Zealand systems have to be of an acceptable standard to our trading partners in order for goods to flow. In respect to passenger security, Avsec is constantly working to evolve scanning systems to stay one step ahead of security threats.

GA sector

The GA sector is a smaller component of the CAA's operations, but still has implications for foreign trade and tourism. Rotary wing operations has been a particular focus in recent years due to this sector having a historically higher accident rate than other GA operations. The rotary sector also influences the reputation New Zealand holds in the rest of the world because visitors are frequent users of helicopters.

Keith believes that getting the industry to take ownership of its safety management systems, rather than having them delivered by third parties, is key to making real improvements in the accident statistics. Having operators constantly reviewing their safety systems is more likely to be effective than relying on occasional visits from a CAA auditor, he says.

"An intelligence-led, risk-based approach to GA operations is the way of the future."

In order to facilitate this change in approach, CAA will consider approaches such as differential auditing systems that reward safe operators by requiring less frequent audits and re-certification. This is similar to the way that Farm Environment Plans work in the rural sector, where high performing farms are visited less often than those which are still a work in progress.

More engagement between CAA and the operators between certification and re-certification is a key element. CAA wants to create an environment where it is "easy to comply", Keith says, rather than an environment where "compliance is easy" based on lower standards.

The CAA has moved from a structure based on types of aviation activity to one based on the kind of regulatory activity being undertaken, where staff move in and out of operational areas based on need. So rather than have a rotary division and a fixed

wing division, the Authority has product and operator certification teams, monitoring and inspection teams, a personnel licensing team, and investigation teams.

Keith thinks that the CAA will emerge from COVID as an organisation which will need to be more adaptable and efficient. "We can't predict what will happen to the aviation sector in terms of future activity, but we need to be able to adapt in terms of the kind of regulatory activity that will be required and the resources available to undertake it," he says.

Despite the move to a more generalised structure, CAA still has four Aviation Safety Advisors responsible for the GA sector. During his early fact-finding travels, Keith was impressed by how well connected his GA Safety Advisors were to people in the sector.

"Flying is not what the GA community do, but who they are," Keith says.

Part of the internal change that CAA is currently going through aims to address the organisational culture that has received much publicity in recent years. Keith describes this transition as an ongoing process, with a focus on a values-based approach that will support good internal and external engagement.

Accident investigation

One aspect of aviation management that I have always found confusing is accident investigation and prosecution. Keith explained that there are multiple agencies with responsibilities here.

The Transport Accident Investigation Commission (TAIC) is a key player. Its status is as a Standing Committee of Inquiry charged with investigating accidents on a "no blame" basis, as a way to learn lessons from events that it investigates, to avoid repeats in the future.

In most situations the CAA will be the first to learn of an accident and will immediately inform the TAIC, who decide whether or not to be involved. The evidence gathered by the TAIC cannot be used in a prosecution, which means that CAA has to gather their own evidence to properly undertake their regulatory and health and safety responsibilities.

The CAA's responsibilities in the event of an accident relate to Civil Aviation rules and regulations, as well as its responsibilities as a designated health and safety regulator in relation to "work to prepare an aircraft for imminent flight, work on board an aircraft for the purpose of imminent flight or while in operation; and aircraft as workplaces while in operation."

Depending on the circumstances of an accident CAA will investigate for the purposes of identifying safety lessons and/or taking regulatory action.

And to the future...

Emerging technologies are a priority for CAA in the future, Keith says. Development of the regulatory system is underway in areas such as remotely piloted aircraft systems (drones, for example), electric aircraft, and New Zealand-based space activities. Keith recently had the opportunity to be taken for a flight in New Zealand's first electric aircraft which is operated by ElectricAir. Although still in the early stages of development, he is confident that this is an area which will be increasingly important in the future of New Zealand aviation.

‘Mint’ flying in Marlborough

On a beautiful sunny morning in late May 2021, Marlborough AOPA members hosted the region’s inaugural ‘Take A Kid Flying’ event.

Fourteen young people were selected by Marlborough Blue Light, and all were ‘buzzing’ after their twenty minute scenic tour of the region. A couple left with newly confirmed enthusiasm for becoming pilots.

Ecstatic reactions were plentiful and included delight at seeing a bird’s eye view of the region, the surreal image of clouds reflected in the mirrored expanse of the saltworks, dolphins in the bay and the chance to capture it all in photos.

Parents and youngsters alike expressed gratitude to the six pilots who donated their time, skills and use of their planes.

“It was exhilarating,” was one comment; “It’s one of the best things I’ve ever done,” another. But for an apt and perfectly succinct summing up, you can’t go far past: “It was pretty mint.”

2021 Annual AOPA Awards

One of the nicest aspects of AOPA NZ's annual awards is that they celebrate quiet achievement and quality service – the kind of service that isn't about self-promotion or big budgets, but is about word of mouth recommendation.

For that reason we ask our members to let us know when an individual or business goes above and beyond the call, with our Life Members getting the challenging job of wrangling all the recommendations that come in. They see the repeat commendations over time, they weigh different recommendations in the balance until (hopefully!) consensus is reached, and they are delighted to be able to bring those stand-out businesses and people who make all our lives easier to our attention.

This year's awards were announced at the AOPA NZ AGM held in Cromwell in March, with presentations made to recipients over the following months.

Wellington Terminal Radar Control prove most helpful

Team Leader for Wellington Radar sector, Dallas Bean, recieves the award.

Multiple member nominations proposed Wellington Terminal Radar Control as a worthy recipient of the 2021 Most Helpful Control Tower Award.

Although not strictly a "tower", the Life Members agreed that, on the basis of the significantly improved level of service our members have reported being provided to VFR and IFR pilots over recent times, they were the stand-outs in the field. Wellington Terminal Radar Control's refreshed focus on safety for GA as well as commercial aviation was noted.

A group of 25 pilots and Airways staff gathered at the Merrin Street Brewery Bar in Christchurch (where Wellington Terminal Radar Control is based) to celebrate the award, with Life member Russell Taylor doing the honours.

Engineering legend wins Maintenance Shop of the Year

This year's recipient of the Maintenance Shop of the Year Award, Pat Scotter of Rangiora Aircraft Engineering, has provided excellent service to many AOPA members over a long period of time.

His remarkable problem solving ability and his willingness to help out in a crisis, irrespective of the day of the week, make him a stand-out engineer and well-deserving recipient.

Thirty folk from across the industry gathered at Mike's hangar in Rangiora to mark the occasion, with AOPA President Steve Brown presenting the award.

GA Champion Award – John Penno

Aviation stalwart John Penno has given long service – over forty years – to first the Kittyhawk Club then to AOPA members, especially rural folk in the southern half of the South Island.

Through those decades he not only taught many to fly from scratch, but continues to renew and update the passion of pilots and renews BFRs.

Around thirty pilots gathered for lunch at the Mosgiel RSA to present the GA Champion Award and to acknowledge John's long and very much appreciated service to aviation.

Aviation Watering Hole of the Year

If you haven't yet stopped in for coffee or a meal at Classic Flyers Avgas Café & Bar at Tauranga Airport, it's certainly time that you did!

And you could hardly get a stronger commendation than their success in winning the 2021 AOPA Aviation Watering Hole of the Year Award.

Our Life Members were enthusiastic in their support for members' nominations of the Café Bar, noting that the service, surrounds and hospitality, as well as the food and beverages, were thoroughly deserving of the award.

When you're out and about in the mid North Island, why not gather a group and make it a fly-in destination?

It's family friendly, and while you're there you might include a visit to the highly enjoyable Classic Flyers Aviation Museum – and so many more attractions you'll find in the Mount Maunganui vicinity.

Steve Horne flew in back in May to present the award on behalf of AOPA NZ to a very happy team!

Going Above & Beyond – Charlie Draper

As instigator of the very successful and popular spring-time 'Darfield Fly-In', Charlie Draper was a unanimously popular recipient of this year's Going Above and Beyond AOPA Award, presented to an AOPA member who has done exactly what it says on the tin.

There's no doubt that Charlie fits the brief. From an initial small gathering of around twenty aircraft, Charlie's annual September fly-in has grown to become an enormously popular event on the AOPA calendar, with more than seventy planes and over a hundred aviators gathering each spring to explore the local Darfield and wider Canterbury region and enjoy the very best of aviation bonhomie.

Ever humble, Charlie notes that the award reflects the input of an extended group in Darfield who work together to ensure the event is a success.

A gathering of around thirty AOPA members, many flying in, arrived at Charlie's hangar back in April for the surprise presentation. For more on Charlie, see our *Aviation Personalities* column in the Winter 2021 issue of *Approach*.

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