Safety Regulation Group
Aerodrome Standards

See Distribution List
6 July 2006

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Dear Colleague

CONSULTATION ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE LIGHT AVIATION AIRPORTS STUDY GROUP (LAASG)

The Light Aviation Airports Study Group (LAASG) was formed in February 2005 to provide an opportunity for creative thinking and discussion, potentially leading to the development of new proposals relating to the regulation of "light aviation" aerodromes and operations. In particular, the industry element of the group was invited to review the use of licensed aerodromes as required by Article 126 of the Air Navigation Order (ANO) 2005. The formation of the Group was an initiative arising directly from the CAA-Industry Joint Review Team (JRT) in recognition of views expressed by the General Aviation (GA) sector over a number of years.

In its report published early in 2006, the Group recommended that the CAA:

- Reviews and, if appropriate, revises Article 126, taking into consideration International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) Annex 14 Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs), current European Requirements (JAR-FCL), developing European Requirements (EU-OPS and EASA Essential Requirements for airports) and the Group's findings in relation to public transport and flying training. (Recommendation 1)

- Develops detailed proposals to remove the requirement for flying training to be conducted at a licensed aerodrome and accepts alternative arrangements, e.g. a code of practice or enhancement of Flying Training Organisation (FTO) approval, to maintain safety levels for flying training and meet the requirements in JAR-FCL and emerging European Legislation. (Recommendation 2)

- Conducts a review of the licensing criteria for Rescue & Fire Fighting Services (RFFS) Category Special, 1 and 2 aerodromes. (Recommendation 3)
  (Details of categories Special, 1 and 2 are contained in CAP 168, Chapter 8, which can be viewed on the CAA website at www.caa.co.uk)

The CAA agreed that, as a first step, a wider industry consensus would be sought, undertaken as a review of existing regulation and to take into account the views of other interested bodies. The outcome of this wider review would be considered prior to progression of the recommendations set out in the report.

Civil Aviation Authority
Aviation House 2W Gatwick Airport South West Sussex England RH6 0YR www.caa.co.uk
Telephone 01293 573523 Fax 01293 573971 aerodromes@srg.caa.co.uk

Your views are now invited on the recommendations on page one.

To help you form an opinion, there is a range of background material in the LAASG Report (www.caa.co.uk/laasg). In particular, we would draw your attention to the following Appendices to that report:

Appendix H: Safety Data Analysis

Appendix I: Sample Code of Practice for Airports conducting Flying Training

Appendix J: Questions to be considered in preparing for a Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA):
a) to remove the Requirement for Aircraft used for the purposes of flying instruction to Take-Off or Land at a Licensed Aerodrome (Article 126)
b) require Flight Training Providers to demonstrate alternative arrangements to provide equivalence of safety for flying training operations.

The following points may also be helpful:

- Article 126 of the ANO sets out the requirement for certain public transport and flying training activities to be conducted from or to an aerodrome licensed by the CAA.

- After investigation by the Personnel Licensing Department (PLD), the Group agreed that a Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) should be developed with a view to removing the need for any flying training in the UK to be conducted at a licensed aerodrome. It was considered that a Code of Practice could be used to supplement the requirements specified in JAR-FCL for other landing areas. The industry members of the Group made considerable progress on developing an initial draft for such a Code of Practice (Appendix I of Report).

- Article 126 requires most flights carrying passengers for public transport to use either a licensed or a Government aerodrome. In accordance with Article 42, the operator of an aircraft registered in the UK shall not permit it to fly for the purpose of public transport without first satisfying himself that each aerodrome intended to be used is suitable for the purpose, including Rescue and Fire Fighting Services (RFFS) and other facilities. In particular, the aerodromes should be adequately manned and equipped to ensure, so far as practicable, the safety of the aircraft and its passengers.

- For a number of years, operators of some aerodromes have regarded the cost of complying with the requirements of a licence to be overly burdensome, especially in respect of the provision of a RFFS. The Group studied the costs involved and Aerodrome Standards Department (ASD) agreed to conduct a review of requirements at Category Special, 1 and 2 aerodromes.

On receipt of your comments, the CAA will decide, in consultation with the industry members of LAASG which proposals should be progressed further. This process will lead to formal consultation and a Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) on any such proposal.

Your comments and views should be sent, preferably by e-mail, to:

LAASG Coordinator
Aerodrome Standards Department
Civil Aviation Authority
Aviation House
Gatwick Airport South
West Sussex
RH6 0YR
e-mail: aerodromes@srg.caa.co.uk

to arrive no later than 6 October 2006.

Comments and views, which are received, will be made available for review at the CAA Central Library at Aviation House, Gatwick. Please be aware that all responses will be disidentified prior to release of information, to ensure personal details are not disclosed.

Yours sincerely

Graham Forbes
Chair – Light Aviation Airports Study Group

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British Hang Gliding and Paragliding Association (Chairman)
British Helicopter Advisory Board (Chief Executive)
British Kite Flying Association
British Microlight Aircraft Association (Chief Executive)
British Model Flying Association (Chairman)
British Parachute Association (Chairman)
Defence Aviation Safety Centre (Director) (RAF Bentley Priory)
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Department for Transport (Head Legal - Aviation Division)
Department for Transport (Head Multilateral Division)
DH Moth Club (Secretary)
Europe Airsports (c/o The Royal Aero Club)
Europe Airsports (UK Rep)
Fighter Collection
Flight International (Editor)
Flight Safety Bulletin (Editor)
Flyer Magazine (Editor)
Flying Farmers Association
Flypast Magazine (Editor)
Formula Air Racing Association (Mr A Chadwick)

GASCo Flight Safety (Editor)
General Aviation Awareness Council (Chairman)
General Aviation Magazine (Editor)
General Aviation Safety Council (Chairman)
Guild of Air Pilots and Air Navigators
Helicopter Club of Great Britain (Honorary Secretary)
Historic Aircraft Association (Chairman)
Imperial War Museum (Director)
Independent Pilots Association (Chairman)
JAA HQ
Kite Society
Large Model Association (Chairman)
Lawyers Flying Association (c/o Mr T Scorer)
Met Office (Mr D Underwood, Head of Civil Aviation)
Ministry of Defence, Director of Air Staff
Model Pilots Association (National Administrator)
National Association of Agricultural Contractors (Chairman)
National Farmers' Union
Old Flying Machine Company, The (Managing Director)
Parliamentary Advisory Council for Transport Safety (Mr R Gifford)
Pilot Magazine (Editor)
Police Aviation Adviser (Home Office)
Popular Flying Association (Chairman)
PPL/IR Network (Chairman)
QinetiQ Ltd (formally DERA) (Mr J H Simpson, Project Manager, Airborne Forces Equipment)
Radio Communications Agency
RAF HQ 2 Group (Parachute Department) (RAF High Wycombe)
RAF HQ Strike Command (RAF High Wycombe)
RAF Model Aircraft Association (c/o RAF Innsworth)
RAF Personnel & Training Command (RAF Innsworth)
RAF Sport Parachute Association (c/o Station Commander, RAF Brize Norton)
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