



The Leader In Recreational Aviation

Chapter 736 Newsletter for May 2007

It's That Time of Year Again

Annual dues in the amount of \$20.00 are now payable. Please send your payment to Ed Roy or bring your payment to this month's meeting.

NEW SENATE FUNDING PROPOSAL WOULD EXEMPT PISTON AIRCRAFT FROM USER FEES

BUT EAA OPPOSES PLAN TO CREATE USER FEE APPARATUS

While a new FAA funding proposal put forth by Senators Jay Rockefeller, (D-WV) and Trent Lott, (R-MS) shows considerable improvement over the Bush administration's plan, EAA has concerns because it still introduces the concept of user fees and shifts considerable expenses from the airlines to general aviation.

The Senate bill would exempt piston-powered general aviation aircraft from user fees and higher fuel taxes but user fees, such as a \$25 "modernization surcharge" for filing an IFR flight plan, would be assessed on turbine GA aircraft. Fuel excise taxes for turbines would also more than double to 49 cents per gallon under the proposal, while the airlines' current 4.3 cent-per-gallon fuel tax would be phased out. That represents an annual \$500 million shift in costs from the airlines to general aviation.

The bill, which is promoted as being an ATC modernization bill, in reality does not raise any additional funds for modernization because any new revenue raised from the "modernization surcharge" on IFR flights is more than offset by the cut in fuel taxes for the airlines. Indeed, a preliminary examination of the bill indicates that there could be a net loss in overall revenue from the current system of excise taxes, making it all the more tempting for Congress or the proposed Oversight Board to increase the level of user fees in the future or add additional user fees for other segments of the GA community.

"We continue to believe the current funding system of excise taxes works very well and is projected to be more than adequate to pay for both the FAA and the next generation air traffic control system," said Doug Macnair, EAA vice president of government relations. "We're pleased this newest proposal would spare piston aircraft operators from user fees and higher fuel taxes, but it still establishes an apparatus for the collection of user fees, which in other parts of the world has led to ever-escalating fees across the board. That's why we object to a user fee system of any kind.

"EAA appreciates the efforts of Sens. Rockefeller and Lott as a true departure from the plan put forth by the Bush administration," Macnair added. "Alternatives to the current revenue system may exist and EAA is willing to explore them. But we consistently oppose any establishment of user fees."

EAA has supported the assertion for the need to modernize the air traffic system but maintains that this can be accomplished under the existing tax structure and at current funding levels (which is supported by the General Accounting Office). EAA also maintains that should a funding shortfall develop in the future to support modernization, it is a very simple matter to fund specific modernization projects by levying a modest, dedicated fuel tax increase EQUALLY on ALL users of the system.

This is a very different matter than granting massive tax breaks to the air carriers to be paid for by operators of turbine-powered general aviation aircraft while raising no new revenue for ATC modernization as the current Senate bill proposes.

EAA continues to work with members of the House and Senate to hammer out workable agreement on this critical matter to general aviation. We urge our members to contact their elected representatives in Congress to let them know the direct impact user fees would have on them, their families, businesses, and communities. For more information, visit www.eaa.org/govt/index.html.

AOPA wants to keep pilots from getting icy receptions

After the outcry from AOPA and the general aviation industry about a June 2006 legal interpretation that changed the definition of [known icing conditions](#), the FAA has issued a new [letter of interpretation](#) that removes a burdensome concept.

The interpretation that had caused outrage in the GA community added "high relative humidity" to the definition of known icing, which would have grounded most GA aircraft for the winter. AOPA had requested that the interpretation be rescinded. However, the association remains concerned that the FAA could pursue enforcement action against any pilot who encounters ice.

In its [formal comments](#), AOPA said the actual encounter of ice should not be the sole factor in determining whether the pilot violated any regulations. AOPA asked that the FAA evaluate all information, including the pilot's preflight and in-flight actions and decisions.

Overheard while flying through Boston Approach's airspace one Sunday evening:

Boston Approach: Piper Four Five Mike, are you a single or twin?

Piper 45M: I am a single with twin envy.

Boston: Say again?

Piper 45M (slightly wistful sounding): Piper Four Five Mike is a single-engine piston.

UPCOMING FAA SAFETY BRIEFINGS

Title	"SPATIAL DISORIENTATION"
Date and Time	Thursday, May 17, 2007, starting at 6:45 pm
Speaker(s)	Michael Lessard
Brief Description	An erroneous sense of one's position and motion with respect to the ground. It is the most lethal General Aviation accident precursor.
Location of Event	Challenger Center 30 Venture Way Bangor, ME 04401
Directions to Venue	I-95 to Hammond St. Follow the signs to Bangor International Airport. Take a right onto Maine Ave, and continue for about a half mile. Take a right onto Venture Way. The Challenger Center is the first building on the right. You can see the sign on the building from Maine Ave.
Seating	70 seats at the facility,
Sponsoring Division	Portland FSDO, FAASTeam
Contact Information	MICHAEL ANTHONY LESSARD Phone: 207-422-3015 flyer007@zwi.net

Full Description Michael will guide pilots in a discussion of the many faces of spatial disorientation and will suggest practical strategies and tactics for coping with this acknowledged killer. In this seminar you'll learn how to identify potentially disorienting situations before it's too late. You may be surprised as what some of them are! You'll also learn the most likely flight environments for spatial disorientation to occur, and how to avoid them.

See a 3-D recreation of the JFK Jr. tragedy. Additionally, the "**Vertigo Chair**" will be used to demonstrate the effects of spatial disorientation.

This is also a great opportunity to visit Challenger Center! A representative from the center will present a brief discussion about their mission and successes.

This event will be co-sponsored by the Portland ME FSDO, North Atlantic Aviation LLC, Challenger Center and the Air National Guard Flying Club. There will be lots of great homemade refreshments, door prizes and socializing! So come out and be part of this fun and interesting evening! 6:45 – Challenger Center Reception – 7:00 Spatial Disorientation.

Controllers Want Criminal Charges In TRACON CO Incident

Air traffic controllers at the New York terminal radar approach control center (TRACON) are asking for criminal charges to be filed against the FAA after they say they were forced to remain at their consoles despite exhibiting what appeared to be symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning. According to [WABC](#), controllers reported being disoriented and sleepy after diesel fumes from a test of the center's backup generator got into the building's ventilation system. They claim the center manager ordered them to keep working traffic, even though some said they could barely keep their eyes open. "I remember just being extremely fatigued ... very tired, very sleepy. It took a lot to stay awake that night," controller Ray Maldonado told the TV station. Several controllers went to a nearby hospital after their shift and carbon monoxide was found in their blood. WABC says the FAA is conducting an internal investigation. The controllers also allege that the manager refused to call the fire department to test the air quality and threatened to bar access to firefighters if someone else called them. National Air Traffic Controllers Association (NATCA) representative Dean Iacopelli told WABC he believes the manager took the action because a staff shortage left him without anyone he could call to replace the sick controllers and he was unwilling to shut down the facility. Sen. Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., is calling for a full investigation, and the Nassau County district attorney's office is considering criminal charges. The New York TRACON has been the scene of high-profile squabbles between the union and FAA management over sick time, working conditions and management/employee relations.

Next Meeting

Our next meeting will be held at OWK on Tuesday, May 15, 2007 at 7:30 p.m.