

Chapter 736 Newsletter for November 2009

Officers for 2010

The annual election of chapter officers was held at the October meeting. Elected were:

Mike Watson, President
Wilkes Harper, Vice President
Ben Brown, Secretary
Ed Roy, Treasurer
Bob Gembala, Newsletter and Web Master
Al Yarberry, Membership Coordinator

We want to thank Mary and Jack West for hosting last month's session at their home. We also want to extend a special thanks to Mary for the work she put into the chili dinner which was enjoyed by all in attendance.

After dinner we retired to Jack's hangar to view his collection. Photos follow.





Pilots strongly urged not to fly Zodiac CH601XL, CH650

In the wake of a Nov. 6 accident involving a Zodiac CH601XL, the FAA issued a [special airworthiness information bulletin](#) recommending that before further flight the aircraft be brought into compliance with a [safety directive/safety alert](#) from Aircraft Manufacturing & Design, which manufactures the airplanes.

AOPA strongly urges pilots not to fly any of the CH601XL or CH650 aircraft in the special light sport, experimental light sport, and experimental amateur-built categories until they have complied with the directive.

Since 2005, five in-flight structural failures of the CH601XL have occurred in the United States. Other accidents have occurred abroad. The FAA studied the wing structure, structural stability, flutter, airspeed calibration, and stick force characteristics. The agency concluded that the aircraft should not be flown until they comply with the anticipated safety directive.

For more information, see [AMD's Web site](#).

Ice – A No Win Situation

When it comes to ice or frost, a “try it and see” approach never works: Once you see the effect, it’s too late to recover.

In several fatal accidents this loss of lift and controllability was not apparent until the aircraft climbed out of ground effect; at that time the aircraft began un-commanded roll and/or pitch movements from which the pilot could not recover,” explains the FAA’s recently released Information for Operators Bulletin, [“Identifying Small Amounts of Frost, Snow, Ice, or Slush on Aircraft and the Effects on Aircraft Control and Performance”](#).

In order to avoid that tragic scenario, “any amount of contamination, no matter how spotty or thin in feel and site, nor its location, must be removed from all aerodynamic and control surfaces prior to flight,” the bulletin warns. “Even the feel or appearance similar to ultra fine sandpaper on the airfoil is not acceptable.”

The release last week served as a reminder to pilots just before the nor’easter blew through the New England states. But it’s a warning that all should heed.

The bulletin suggests detecting frost, snow, or ice by scraping a fingernail across the aircraft’s surfaces and removing anything that looks or feels different than it does when the aircraft is dry or wet. Furthermore, the bulletin encourages pilots to become familiar with the way the aircraft surfaces feels when it is dry or simply wet and not contaminated with frost, ice, snow, or slush.

Senators Push For FAA Bill ASAP

Thirty-five senators have signed on to a letter calling for the passage of a long-term FAA funding bill before the end of the year. The letter was circulated by Sen. John Kerry, D-Mass., who is a pilot, and received bipartisan support from both Majority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nev., and Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky. "From rural America to our largest cities, the entire country will benefit from what the FAA bill will provide," the letter says, adding that the bill would create a safer and more efficient aviation system, while providing good jobs in construction and technology. The FAA has been operating on short-term funding resolutions since its last authorization bill expired in September 2007. AOPA supports the Senate bill which would fund the FAA through aviation fuel taxes, ticket taxes, and a contribution from the general fund, with no new user fees.

If the Senate bill passes, the next step would be to go to a conference committee to work out differences with the House version. The final bill would then go to the White House for presidential approval.

Next Meeting

Our next meeting will take place on Tuesday, Nov. 17 at the Weathervane Restaurant in Waterville. If you plan on having dinner, please arrive around 6:00 pm so that the regular meeting can begin at our usual 7:30 time.