



NEWSLETTER No. 1 - April 1995

EDITORIAL

Welcome to the first edition of the PPL IR Network Newsletter. The first I hope of a long line of interesting informative and perhaps provocative issues which will keep you in touch with others piloting light aircraft around Europe "solely by reference to instruments". The first thing our first full scale issue must do is record the great debt which the rest of us owe to Peter Herold and his partner Anne McGlone for having the wit to recognise the need for a network, the initiative to get it going and the energy to promote it with such conspicuous success to date. Peter and Anne, from all of us: "**Thanks**".

This issue brings you reports of past meetings, news of future ones, articles on the Stormscope and E Mail and a draft constitution for discussion at the next meeting. What this issue lacks is a Letters Page but please feel free to write to me to raise any relevant subject and we shall try to include it. Articles from members or others will of course be very welcome. With your help and support this can become a really worthwhile publication.

Nigel Everett

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BIGGIN HILL MEETING 11 FEBRUARY 1995 by Peter Herold

Our Biggin Hill meeting on 11 February, hosted by Mike Dunkerly's Shipping and Airlines, was an outstanding success, with over 100 attendees: 68 existing and new members and their friends, 9 guests from CAA/NATS/AOPA, 22 guests of Shipping and Airlines and guests from Biggin Hill airport. The TAF

(08-16 210/12 10+ SCT 008 BKN 030 BEC 11-13 190/20-35 6000 RA BKN 010
TEMPO 12-16 3000 BKN 003)

Strong forecast winds in the South West meant that we had only 14 aircraft out of the 30+ we expected, with many people from south-east England driving.

Graeme Wilson of LATCC, assisted by Roger Theaker and Mike Mothershaw, gave an excellent presentation on flying in the London CTA, and Veronica McMahon from the Flow Management Unit was busy answering questions about getting slots. The main points from Graeme's talk was that the airspace of the LTMA isn't designed for low level (ie less than FL 150) overflights, and obviously this affects us. At the same time, pilots of light aircraft can do a lot to facilitate flight through the LTMA: File flight plans well in advance (Barry Jacques of NATS, another guest, pointed out that under IF PS flow-sensitive flights need FPs to be filed 3 hours before EBOT); follow the "one way" systems that are described in the AIP or in Aerad's Yellow Book (there was some surprise on the part of NATS that the CAA's IR training does not cover this); and be prepared to transit at 2400' when eg returning to Blackbushe from DVR. Having said this, the audience wanted a mechanism for being told that, if you waited 10 minutes, you could route BIG-OCK-CPT to join airways for a flight from Biggin to Cardiff, instead of routing right round to the north of London. Overall there was much appreciation of the IR light aircraft and controller viewpoints, and the recognition that we need to continue to make the case explicitly for the accommodation of light aircraft within the busy controlled airspace around London.

After an excellent lunch (thanks to Peter and Pushpa) we varied the agenda. In view of the rapid growth of the Network we had decided to elect a "caretaker" committee to assist Peter Herold with the job of running the Network. Peter was elected as Chair, and the other officers are Mike Dunkerly (Treasurer), Nigel Everett (Newsletter editor), Roger Dunn and Andrew Michell. It was agreed that we should devise a constitution to be ratified at the May meeting and we have done this. The Constitution is

enclosed with this newsletter. We still need to find a secretary - volunteers welcome!

Richard Sharpe and Chris Arnold of Compass then gave a talk on how people can access the Internet and other forms of electronic communication from their PC. Compass very kindly publishes the Network's newsletters on the World Wide Web and several members (including from Italy and Australia) have joined this way.

The Network would also like to thank Tricia of Shipping and Airlines and Anne McGlone, Peter Herold's partner, for their enthusiastic assistance in booking everyone in, collecting money, etc.

NOTES FROM THE CHAIR by Peter Herold

Next Meeting

After the several external speakers we have had at the last two meetings, several people have asked whether we can have a meeting with plenty of time to meet other members and a speaker who will talk about IR flying. The answer is YES. Our member Brian Russell has kindly volunteered Coventry Flying Club's new clubhouse as the venue on Saturday May 20, and Jan Hedegard has offered to talk about safety from his perspective as a former accident investigator in Sweden although the exact details of the talk need to be finalised. As usual, we'll have arrivals from 1100-1200, then the talk, then lunch, followed by discussion until about 1600.

We need advance notification if you want to come to arrange catering and parking.

THERE WILL BE NO OTHER NOTICES AFTER THIS ONE,

please return the form at the end of this Newsletter by 30 April if you want to come.

Future Meetings

Guy Charbonnier is working with AOPA France to try to organise a meeting in July, perhaps at Toussus, which is the best GA IFR field near Paris and much cheaper than Le Bourget. Nicholas Dawnay has kindly arranged a meeting at Stapleford for October 14 at which Eric Thurston will be speaking. Stapleford has a hard runway 22L/04R, which is about 600m long with a LDA on 22L of about 450m (please check AIP for the correct figures) and, in case of bad weather, Nicholas is organising transfer by bus from Stansted which is nearby.

FLYER

We have received a lot of support from FLYER, including promotion of the Biggin Hill meeting, and we would like to thank the team down in Bath. Unfortunately the Biggin Hill meeting coincided with the production of the March issue and so the people we had invited couldn't come. Members may be interested in the Fly Out to La Rochelle on 12-14 May as part of the National Flyer month and we have timed our own May meeting to avoid this. For those of you who've not been to La Rochelle, it's an extremely pleasant town on the west coast of France, between Nantes and Bordeaux, and for PPL/IR Network members it has an ILS, so we would expect that members are as successful in attending this meeting as they were at getting to our own Jersey and Biggin meetings.

STORMSCOPES by Martin Wellings

They do not exactly give away Stormscopes I know, but it does surprise me the number of pilots who will lavish a considerable amount of money on avionics without so much as a thought about buying some weather avoidance equipment.

In a recent edition of the Newsletter there was a good article about icing and it being one of the no-go situations in winter but in summer, one of the most significant no-go decisions can be the probability of CBs - particularly the embedded type.

I remember coming to this conclusion after an airway flight some years ago when I was flying in solid IMC about the colour of the Black Hole of Calcutta with all the jets "going around a bit of weather". There was no adverse weather forecast but when you are really in it and don't know how to get out, it is of little consequence - you just feel helpless.

I have had a Stormscope for some years now and I find it a great asset. It is an older one with coloured lights in segments rather than the pin point crosses on the up-to-date ones. The display consists of green segments that light up if there is any TS activity at least 60 miles away, amber if between 30 and 60 and red if under 30 miles. The more intense the flashing, the more severe the activity.

Stormscopes cannot give any indication of precipitation - only electrical activity, but they work on the basis that the rain and hail etc will follow the electrical activity in a CB. I have not a clue how it establishes distance - I think the manufacturers keep that rather dark.

In the time I have had the Stormscope it has enabled me to fly in conditions where I would not have flown otherwise. Even in VMC it is always very comforting to see a blank screen but when a segment does light up, even for an instant, it is remarkable how it concentrates the attention!

I have found that it probably errs on the side of caution which is a good thing and will show a steady light for a short period and then go out which I take to indicate almost negligible amount of activity. There have been two occasions where I expected the Stormscope to show flashing lights but it did not.

The first was on a flight from Chivenor to Shoreham flying via SAM where I had been warned by the helpful RAF met on briefing before take off that I could expect plenty of CB activity further east. Nothing showed up and it was not until I picked up the weather at Southampton that they were reporting some CBs but my Stormscope was showing nothing. At the time of getting this report I was to the west of Bournemouth and the weather to the east looked extremely dark and the weather simply felt bad, so I decided to mistrust the Stormscope and divert to Bournemouth where we stayed the night.

On the second occasion when flying from France to Shoreham, again with CBs forecast, the Stormscope clearly showed a lot of activity around Shoreham which was confirmed by a message to the effect of "don't go near!" and so after getting the weather for Southampton which was OK, a diversion was the order of the day. Within only five minutes of getting the Southampton weather (we were just coming up to the Isle of Wight at the time) the weather had completely changed for the worse as had virtually every other south coast airfield.

The really bad weather was just to the north of the field, and some very good radar vectors from approach led us on a tight turn onto their runway 20. The interesting thing is that whilst they clearly were reporting TS to the north and we saw lightening, the Stormscope did not flash but it did for the first time simultaneously light up every segment of every colour!

My experience may sound as if there is a question mark as to the accuracy but I suppose I am probably too mistrusting and if I get a gut feeling that the weather is not as good as that presented -I will follow my feelings however unscientific this may be. However, I would not like to be without my Stormscope.

E MAIL AND ALL THAT by George Irvin

By now everyone has heard of the Internet, Compuserve and so on. Most of you too, have a computer. But actually joining this brave new world may feel daunting. I was intimidated by it too until several years ago a friend explained the basics - and I have found it enormously useful.

What do you need to join? First you need a modem. Don't bother spending a fortune on the fastest, state-of-the-art modem - at least not until you are an experienced user. Instead look through any PC mag and pick out a Hayes-compatible external modem. An external modem is better than a modem card (you don't have to open the back of the computer and, if you change computers, you still have the modem). Also it has lots of nice flashing lights. A typical el-cheapo fax-modem operating at 9600 baud (fax) and 2400 baud (data) - know as a "96-24" - is enough. But even if you don't plan to use the fax part, do get the fax sending capability. This should set you back £50 to £60. (Even cheaper is to get one in the US for US \$50 on your next business trip.) A modem normally comes with all the necessary connectors and will plug into any new-style telephone jack - if it doesn't, one trip to the local Tandy's will solve the problem. Often the modem comes with a voucher offering free Compuserve membership and, in some cases, the right software.

Next you need some software for your computer. What software you purchase (or receive for free) depends on what system you join. What are the options? In the UK, one either joins the Internet via a "provider" or joins one of the commercial services. Although the Internet provides almost unlimited access to the rest of the world, it is not easy to "navigate". If your company is already on the Internet via some local net, you already have an Internet address - or can get one. If not, one "provider" I can recommend is the PC User Group, POB 360, Harrow HA1 4LQ (0181 863 6646). The monthly sub costs around £8-£10 and they provide user-friendly software. You will be able to send E mail and join as many "newsgroups" as you like - but you will need to dial London.

I find Compuserve (often abbreviated to "CIS") a better solution simply because it is the world's largest commercial service and has a dedicated aviation forum called "AVSIG" (in fact it has several aviation-related fora). You can also send/receive E mail from the Internet. For £6.50 a month you get a free "kit" and, because CIS has lots of nodes in the UK, chances are your connection will involve no more than a local phone call. For enquiries, ring CIS on 0800 289378. Compuserve's assistants will talk you through any installation problems. CIS gives you a number (address) and a secret "password" (which avoids others using your number to get on the system). If you are computer literate enough to load a self-installing flight planning program (another amazingly useful tool) you can load and set up the CIS program in about 15 minutes. I myself use an automated offline navigator program called Tapcis - once you are on the system, I can E mail you a demo copy. CIS has fora not only for pilots, but for just about everyone and everything.

What can you do on AVSIG? Although AVSIG is dominated by US pilots, it has valuable sections (and libraries) on instrument flying, weather, maintenance and so forth. The number of EU pilots is growing (Flying magazine has a CIS number so you can send letters to them by E mail). AVSIG has expanded so quickly that a related forum, AVSUP, has recently been started. My guess is that if the whole IR group were to join CIS, we could get a dedicated section in the AVSUP forum - think of the hassle that would save Peter! In short, buy a (cheap) modem and ring the above 0800 number. You won't regret it. By the way, my E mail address is 100022,2334.

MAASTRICHT - CONTINUATION TRAINING, by Nigel Everett

Instructor to Student:

"Call the Tower for taxi clearance."

Student:

"What do I say?"

Instructor:

"You just think to yourself: Who am I, where am I and what do I want to do?"

Student transmits:

"Tower: Who am I, where am I and what do I want to do?"

To enjoy this sort of humour you had to travel to Maastricht this February and join Rod Machado's Flight Safety Seminar. That was of course an awful long way to go, but then what can you suggest that is half as good and anywhere nearer?

While professional pilots undergo six monthly IR renewals, line checks, base checks and so on as a ceaseless round, we private pilots get far too little opportunity for continuation training and no doubt our flying is poorer for that. In the USA things are not so difficult. Organisations like the Air Safety Foundation and the Aviation Speakers Bureau make available a constant programme of lectures and seminars for private pilots seeking to keep current and expand their knowledge. Some manufacturers offer training and retraining for their pilot customers and the compulsory biennial flight review for private pilots is an important part of a culture which is rather more geared to continuation training for private pilots than is the case in the UK or in Europe generally.

A Dutchman, Willem van Rijk, thought that he would appreciate some continuation training and being an unusually resourceful sort of pilot he made contact with one of the leading American speakers on Flight Safety, Rod Machado, arranged for him to give one of his two day seminars in Holland and then set about gathering sufficient European private pilots together to make Rod's long journey across the Atlantic worthwhile. This was something of a leap in the dark with no hard information as to the size of the demand, if any, for this sort of education in Europe. In the event, Willem's and Rod's gamble paid off and the Euro Seminar was a sell out with over forty pilots attending: thus demonstrating conclusively that there are plenty of pilots in Europe, just as there are in the States, who recognise the need for continuation training and appreciate the chance to do something to meet the need. It was through the PPL/IR Network that I came to hear of the two day seminar at Maastricht in February of this year: our Chair, Peter Herold, was going with Anne and was hoping that others would follow his example. Eventually five Brits, four with partners, turned up, with a Mooney, a Saratoga, a C172 (from The Hague) and two Arrows.

Driven as they usually are by their all consuming obsession, pilots are always willing to give full attention to any speaker on aviation, but a programme of two days solid in a lecture hall with only one speaker could easily turn into some sort of aversion therapy for that obsession. With the passing of the hours the concentration may begin to waver and consciousness of the peculiar hardness of Dutch lecture room seats may begin to dominate all other thoughts.

But if at the end of the two day seminar you had asked anyone in the lecture hall at Maastricht Airport whether they would agree to going straight into two more days on the hard seats listening to Rod Machado they would have agreed with enthusiasm.

"How can that be?" you ask,

and I have to tell you that while I am perfectly willing to believe that Rod Machado is a competent pilot and an experienced instructor I can affirm from my own personal experience that he is one of the best educators at whose feet it has ever been my privilege to sit. If I tell you that in addition to the more usual aeronautical qualifications he sports degrees in Aviation Science and Research Psychology you will perhaps picture a rather academic aviator: thoughtful and analytic. But you will have gained only part of the picture here because what he has actually majored in, the real vocation of Rod Machado, is in being a stand up comic. Over eight years he has worked up a routine wherein gags and humorous stories are interspersed with information much of which is simply not available in any aeronautical publication that I have ever seen. You simply don't know when he begins a sentence whether it is going to finish with you hurriedly writing down some important procedure which might save your life one day or with your falling about with laughter.

Like all the best comics he has his trade marks: a stock of recurrent remarks which are all the more amusing for their repetition in varying circumstances. Thus an account of the unfortunate end of some mishandled event may be finished off with:

"But it was OK because the plane was only on rental."

The archetype of the unthinking pilot is seen as the sort of person who joins the twenty or so customers of Coke machines each year who are so enraged by the machine's failure to deliver that regardless of their personal safety, they shake the machine until it topples, falls on top of them and leaves them with the tell tale imprint "Coke" on their forehead.

"So, thirty miles out from the coast, there goes Hank with no gas in his tank, and I think you might just be able to see, a little above his Raybans, embossed in his forehead, the legend "Coke"."

Apart from gags, Rod is equally well supplied with visual aids, both slides and videos, which break up the patter, retain the audience's attention and give Rod's vocal chords some respite.

Day one of the bravura performance deals with "Handling In Flight Emergencies". Rod's theme is:

"In Flight emergencies happen. Knowing what to do before they happen is the key to survival!"

And so you spend a day considering and discussing what you might do if, say, you get in spiral dive with your airspeed increasing beyond Vne. Or how to cope with an electrical fire behind the panel. Did you know that it is advisable to turn off the Master as well as all avionics?

"Why?" you ask.

"Because", answers the omniscient Rod, "the avionics cooling fan is usually on a separate circuit from the avionics themselves and you don't want to leave that fanning the smouldering cables, do you? Even if it is only a rental plane."

What do you do with a runaway alternator which won't turn off? Turn everything you've got to ON so as to soak up that juice or it will be delivered to the unfortunate battery and that may eventually respond by catching fire.

With a retractable gear aircraft when should you force land gear up and when gear down?

How do you cope with the loss of or a jammed pitch control? Or a fire in a wing tip? Or the loss of a propeller tip? Or, in a Mooney, Tiger or Cherokee type, ending up a forced landing inverted with the one door jammed shut?

And so on and on throughout the livelong day with the humour, the slides and the videos constantly coming, while your knowledge and wisdom grow apace.

Day two is devoted to Instrument Flying. There's an hour or so on Rod's "Inverted V" scan for which he makes considerable claims. I tried it on the way home as no doubt did everyone else who came by air, and I think I might adopt it permanently. There's another hour on what you can learn from an inspection of the approach lights as you break cloud on an instrument approach. I had no idea that they had so much to tell you, but you have got to know what you're going to be looking out for before you break cloud as there's no time for sorting that out after the cloud break. So that means that in addition to looking at the approach plate before an instrument approach you have also to look at the airfield plan with regard to the approach lighting system. In particular you must be aware in advance of the distance between the various approach lighting bars and of the general lighting configuration for that particular field. Whatever you do, don't fall into the common and dangerous trap of diving gratefully for the lights when you see them.

Then some time on how to get advance notice of CBs up ahead without benefit of Stormscope; and some time on the perils of runaway electric trim (much worse than a runaway autopilot); and some time on the particular perils of IFR approaches at night.

And so we continued the rest of Day Two leaving us thoroughly stimulated and provoked.

Meanwhile, Jean, who had come as much to see what Maastricht had to offer the passing private pilot, as to improve her skills as Pilot's Assistant, had made friends with three other partners of Rod's devotees. On pleasure bent they passed the best part of two days in Maastricht which now comes highly recommended as a flying destination. The town is an inexpensive bus ride from the airport. It is largely medieval, picturesque, small enough to walk around, English speaking, well supplied with bars and restaurants and offering an interesting amalgam of Dutch, German and French cuisines, the other two countries being just over the borders on either side of Maastricht.

So Sunday evening say Jean and I grinding our way homeward against a 45 knot headwind, both well pleased with a very stimulating and worthwhile weekend. As I flew the ILS into Bournemouth that dirty night with the surface wind gusting to 29 knots and slightly crosswind, I was very conscious of one of Rod's little nuggets of information:

"Did you know that in the USA 79% of all IFR accidents are single pilot IFR?"

And did you know that 70% of all single pilot IFR accidents are in the landing phase?"

And that 90% of all single pilot IFR accidents are at night?"

Thanks to Rod's warnings I made quite sure that I did not add another single pilot IFR accident to the statistics that night.

We all need much more of this sort of training.

PPL/IR NETWORK - DRAFT CONSTITUTION

Aims/objectives

The PPL/IR Network's objective is to enable Instrument Rated pilots of light aircraft make the most of the rating, by:-

1. Promoting and facilitating the exchange of information between PPL/IRs to enable them to make the most effective and safe use of the rating in the UK and Europe;
2. Promoting the benefits of the IR;

3. Lobbying, directly and through AOPA, for IR pilot friendly policies and practices;
4. Facilitating the extension of the Network to other European countries.

Membership

Membership is open to active light aircraft IR pilots, (holding UK, FAA or other European States' IRs) and those actively working towards the IR. The majority of members are private pilots flying for business or pleasure. In addition, CPL/IRs or ATPLs who fly light aircraft (eg working for air taxi operators, or ferry companies) would be welcome since their flying has many similarities with that of the PPL. On the other hand, membership would be less appropriate for those who fly for scheduled airlines. The Committee will decide if membership in a particular case is inappropriate. To become a member, you give you personal and flying details to the Membership Secretary. Members' useful details and interests will be circulated annually to all members. There is an annual subscription payable each year in July. Membership can be terminated

- (a) at the request of the member,
- (b) if subs remain unpaid for two consecutive Julys,
- (c) if in the opinion of the Committee the continued membership of an individual is inappropriate,
- (d) at the request of a majority of the members at a quorate meeting.

Meetings/Newsletters

The Network will seek to organise regular meetings, with speakers from the membership or guests, and prior to each of these will distribute a Newsletter. Articles by members are welcome for publication. There will be an Annual General meeting held each year, at which the Chair will give a report, the financial statements presented, Committee and Chair elected for the following year and, if necessary, this constitution amended.

Officers/Committee

The Network is run by a Committee of 6 elected members who will be nominated and elected at the AGM. Half of the Committee will retire at the AGM and be eligible for re-election. The Committee will be able to co-opt a further 4 members, for instance people with special experience or skills. The Committee can also co-opt additional members to fill vacancies which may arise through the resignation of Committee members through the year.

The officers of the Network will be appointed by the Committee, except for the Chair who will be elected at the AGM. The roles are as follows:-

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| Chair | Chairs meetings |
| Secretary | Takes notes of meeting contents and formal AGM for next Newsletter. In due course would deal with correspondence to and from Network. |
| Treasurer | Administers Network's bank account. |
| Membership Secretary | Maintains and updates membership database (in MS Access), prints labels for each mailing and annual listings of members. |
| Newsletter Editor | Assembles Newsletter with assistance of rest of Committee, and produces it. (Other members will help with distribution on a rota basis.) The Committee has editorial control of the Newsletter. |

The Committee will confer, by letter, phone or face-to-face, prior to the production of each Newsletter and on an as-needed basis between meetings. The Committee must approve any articles or letters written in the name of the PPL/IR Network and, if it feels it is necessary, submit them to the full consultation process.

Network consultation

Votes are needed to elect the Chair and the Committee, and to make Network policy. Policy issues will be discussed in advance of a meeting in the Newsletter, and views solicited in writing from those who are not able to attend in person. These views would be made known by the Chair at the meeting and, after discussion, a statement of policy (a "resolution") voted on. The quorum for votes will be 15 members, of which 3 are Committee members.



PPL/IR Network:

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Note: The views expressed in this Newsletter are not necessarily those of the PPL IR Network. While reasonable efforts are taken to check the accuracy of statements in the Newsletter no reliance should be placed upon them unless confirmed and checked by an appropriate authority. Neither the officers nor the contributors nor the Network accepts responsibility for facts or opinions stated in the Newsletter.

PPL/IR newsletters are published by Compass Computer Group on the World Wide Web at <http://www.hiway.co.uk/aviation/pplirhom.html>