

FEEDBACK

Issue No: 63

July 2002

EDITORIAL

MAINTENANCE ERROR MANAGEMENT

THE MEMS PROJECT

Maintenance Error Management Systems (MEMS) are being progressively introduced into airline and third-party maintenance organisations in the UK. The CAA has issued Airworthiness Notice 71 to encourage those organisations engaged in maintaining large transport aircraft to adopt these systems to help reduce maintenance error incidents. MEMS seek to eliminate such events by discovering the underlying causes of errors. The process is greatly helped by the common use of the Boeing derived and Goodrich modified MEDA tool (Maintenance Error Decision Aid).

One drawback to the scheme is that, naturally, companies are reluctant to publicise their errors outside the confines of their own organisation. Until now, valuable lessons learned and safety initiatives taken have not been, by and large, passed on to other organisations.

Following an initiative by the UK Operators' Technical Group (UKOTG), supported by the CAA and the European Independent Maintenance Group, EIMG, CHIRP was requested to participate in a pilot project by setting up and maintaining a centralised database of reports received from organisations currently using MEMS/MEDA in maintenance error investigations. The objective is to disidentify reports from each company and to make the combined disidentified data available to all members of the participating group.

To date, approximately 250 reports have been entered on to the database. These indicate that a significant source of errors is incorrect installation; more detailed analysis shows complacency and failure to use available information as two significant underlying causes for installation problems.

Contributing agencies will, in the future, be able to access the disidentified database through a secure

website, now in course of development, and thus be able to conduct their own searches and analyses.

If the pilot project is successful, in addition to maintaining the database, it is proposed to produce a MEMS Newsletter periodically, aimed at licensed and non-licensed engineers and mechanics, highlighting some of the reported errors and the measures taken to prevent recurrence.

A Working Group comprising nine organisations has been set up to develop this initiative and is now in the process of refining ideas for the operating software for the scheme. If the pilot programme proves to be successful, it is proposed to start the process of enlarging the Group progressively to the point where all maintenance organisations will be welcome to participate. Others from outside the immediate circle of maintainers are known to be interested in participating, in particular the airframe manufacturers.

The intention is to make this valuable safety information source available to the widest possible audience within the Industry.

CONFIDENTIAL - NOT ANONYMOUS

Recent reports in the media have referenced 'anonymous reports' in relation to this Programme. It is worth repeating our policy in this respect.

In almost all circumstances, we will not take any action on anonymous reports because we are not able to follow them up. It is an essential part of this Programme that we are able to contact reporters to verify the information, and, importantly, to discuss any action that we might take to represent the concern in a manner that will protect the reporter's identity. Similarly, it is important to complete the information loop by reporting back any action taken by a third party in response to a report.

We do not retain reporters' personal details; these are always returned in the form that they are submitted to us when a report is closed. Safeguarding the identity of reporters has been and remains an essential precept of the Programme.

Confidential Human Factors Incident Reporting Programme

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CHANGES OF ADDRESS

If you receive FEEDBACK as a licensed pilot/ATCO/maintenance engineer or medical examiner you will need to notify the relevant department of the CAA of your change of address and not CHIRP, details as follows - [ATCO/FC/ENG Licensing Department], CAA (SRG), Aviation House, Gatwick Airport South, West Sussex RH6 0YR

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FEEDBACK is published quarterly and is circulated to UK licensed pilots, air traffic control officers and maintenance engineers, if you are not already on our circulation, and would like to be, please send your application in writing to Kirsty at the above address.

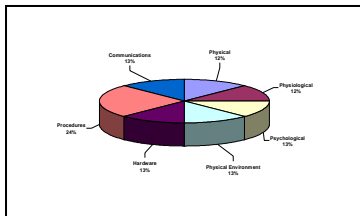
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ATC REPORTS

ATC Reports received in Period: 3

Key Areas:



WHO'S IN CHARGE?

At around 1700hrs at a busy GA airport with a significant percentage of training traffic, ATC were advised that no Aerodrome Authority representative was available for the remaining period of operation that day -

estimated at being between 2300 & 2400hrs. The ATC services at the airport are contracted out but all other airport staff are employed directly by the airport.

A representative of the RFFS (Fire Services) approached ATC expressing concern about the situation, primarily as to the consequences in event of an emergency, but also as there was no one in operations to process a build-up of flight plans and thus RFFS would be unaware of the movements expected and whether an increased crash category would be required. During the day CAT II services are provided with a reduction to CAT 1 for the evening. Upgrades are frequently required at short notice - in fact a flight requiring CAT II cover landed later that same evening.

ATC advised RFFS that, as a contracted agency, ATC's responsibilities could not extend beyond ATC to adopting the role of Aerodrome Authority and only the Airport Management had the authority to resolve this situation.

RFFS re-approached the Airport Manager, who despite having been previously advised that there was going to be a problem after 1700, still seemed unable to grasp the ramifications.

Eventually a person was found to cover the role of Aerodrome Authority, however, some doubt existed about their qualifications to fulfil this role.

The reporter's concerns were represented to CAA (SRG), as a result of which the Airport Authority's responsibilities were subsequently clarified.

DOCUMENTATION

I work at #### and am concerned by the lack of up-to-date paperwork, and the increasing problems of viewing this information.

The Manual of Air Traffic Services Part 1 is a controller's 'bible', so to speak, and it is worrying to think that controllers at this Unit are not being kept up to date. The MATS Part 1 is currently at Amendment 53 (which is actually a full reprint). However, the copies at this Unit (if you can find one, as there are not very many) are still only up to Amendment 52, which is now over a month out of date. This means that this Unit does not have a legal copy of the MATS Part 1 available to controllers.

Incidentally, one reference copy I have found is only up to Amendment 51, which is around eight or nine months out of date.

A summary sheet was produced highlighting the changes, for example, "addition of definition for 'controller overload'". However, without the amendment you cannot find out what this definition is. There are other more significant changes, for which a title was given in

the summary sheet, but no information about the content or implications can be obtained without the actual amendment.

I felt I should bring this to everyone's attention, as this is the second time this has happened, to my knowledge. The first time resulted in all MATS Part 1 copies available to controllers being out of date for about two months before the amendment was finally added.

One question springs to mind: If there is significant change in the MATS Part 1 and up-to-date copies are not available for controllers to familiarise themselves with the changes, who would be held responsible if an incident occurred because controllers were doing things the old out-of-date way (which he/she believed to be correct)?

Within the Manual of Air Traffic Services Part 1 itself (Page 8-3), under the heading 'Publications' there is a list of documents which includes the MATS Part 1 at the top of this list. It states that the documents are to be available for immediate reference at operational control positions, and that the documents are to be correctly amended.

Surely, it is unacceptable for one of the principal units providing air traffic services within the UK not to have the most recent editions of this vital Manual.

In addition to the above, the MATS Part 1 and the MATS Part 2 (the Unit-specific Manual of Air Traffic Services) are now only produced on CD-ROM, except for a small number of paper copies within the Unit. Therefore, if you are computer illiterate or do not own a computer, you are unable to obtain a copy of these Manuals and no provision has been made to issue any paper copies.

The report was passed to the Unit management and CAA (SRG), as MATS Part 1 is a CAA document. It is understood that there was an administrative delay in the publication and distribution of Amendment 53.

The Unit management is reviewing the presentation and availability of MATS Part 1/Part 2 information.

RAS/RIS, A 'FOREIGN' CONCEPT?

I work at an airport in Southern England with Class G Airspace where the majority of the commercial operators are foreign registered. When requesting a radar service some of them have no idea what a Radar Advisory Service (RAS) or Radar Information Service (RIS) entails.

We have a good working relationship with our main base operators and through their operations departments are able to remind pilots about RAS and RIS. It is random visitors and over-flights where the problem lies. It is difficult to explain to foreign nationals with a limited

grasp of English the rudiments of RAS and RIS, especially at a time of high R/T workload.

It is often left to the individual ATCOs' common sense and experience on the type of service he/she provides bearing in mind flight conditions, workload and traffic density on the screen (not everyone talks to you in Class G).

The provision of a RAS or RIS is unique to the UK and full details of these services are published in the UK Aeronautical Information Package (AIP) ENR 1.6.1 Paras 3.1 and 3.2.

Both RAS and RIS are only available outside Controlled Airspace, but availability depends upon the ATSU being able to provide these services.

RAS is only provided to flights operating under IFR irrespective of meteorological conditions. The controller provides advice on maintaining separation from other RAS traffic and advice on action to avoid a conflict with non-participating traffic that is known to the controller. The pilot must advise the controller before changing heading and level.

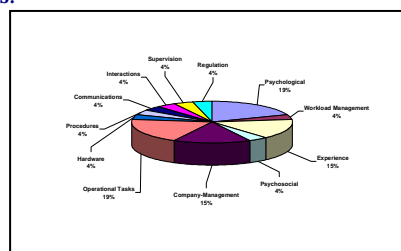
In the case of a RIS, the controller will provide information on conflicting traffic known to him/her. The pilot is entirely responsible for maintaining separation from other aircraft, and must request an update on a confliction. Radar vectors, if given, will not be to provide separation. The pilot must advise before changing level or route.

With regard to language, ICAO is conducting a study with the objective of establishing proficiency requirements in common English.

FLIGHT CREW REPORTS

Flight Crew Reports received in Period: 30

Key Areas:



ATC 'BLACK HOLES'

In the Northern North Sea helicopter route structure, NATS provide an air traffic control service to offshore oil and gas flights. The flight information area is covered by a number of ATC VHF relay stations. Since these were provided, we have suffered from having to fly in a significant number of areas where we cannot hear ATC unless we switch off the squelch control on our aircraft radios (we call these areas "Black Holes"). The problem

is not one of excess range from the transmitters. It seems to be one of interference when we are almost equidistant from two transmitters.

The end result is that for many years, on certain routes, we have had to fly IFR public transport flights, in a hostile environment, for significant periods of time, out of direct contact with ATC. Although ATC say we are being provided with a FIS, by definition, they cannot do so because of the inability to speak directly to aircraft without having to relay messages through other aircraft.

The failing may well be with the aircraft radios but I cannot believe there is not a technical solution. Because the problem has been so longstanding and "there hasn't been an incident" it seems to be ignored.

I am submitting this as a human factors report as most of the humans involved have fallen into the trap of giving up reporting the problem when it occurs because nothing has been done to improve the situation, despite various MORs in previous years.

CAA (SRG) and NATS have conducted an investigation into the reported RTF communications difficulties.

In the case of the area to the northeast of Aberdeen, suitable sites for additional relay stations are available and a proposal has been developed that would provide a technical solution to the problems raised in the report. This solution and the associated costs have been discussed between the various stakeholders and agreed in principle. It is hoped that the proposal will be formally endorsed shortly enabling the resolution of this issue by early next year.

In the second area, to the west of Shetland, there are no suitable land-based sites and alternative facilities are currently being investigated.

TAXI PRIORITY

Along with many of my colleagues, I am concerned about the lack of taxi priority given by ATC to aircraft vacating the runway after landing at Heathrow. Having been based there for five years, I have repeatedly been asked by the Tower after landing to give way to aircraft taxiing on the outer taxiway - before we can fully cross the CAT 1 holding point and legally vacate the landing runway. Similarly, whilst taxiing, I have on many occasions been given taxi priority from Ground ahead of an aircraft turning off the landing runway, despite this resulting in a delay before the landing aircraft can fully vacate. I assume that a standard landing clearance (vs. a land after) can only be issued when a runway has been COMPLETELY vacated; i.e the whole of the vacating aircraft has crossed the CAT 1 holding point, rather than just being "clear"?

Where a priority has not been explicitly allocated by ATC, one still sees vacating aircraft stopping astride the CAT 1 hold due to another aircraft approaching their exit route on the outer taxiway, sometimes resulting in the runway not being completely vacated for an unnecessarily long period. One even occasionally sees, dare I say it, taxiing aircraft deliberately speeding up to get ahead of a vacating aircraft. Given the high controller workload and sheer volume of R/T on the Ground frequency, surely as pilots of taxiing aircraft we can give way to vacating aircraft without being told?

I fail to see that there is any appreciable loss of ATC ground movement efficiency by always allocating priority to vacating aircraft - quite apart from the clear safety and airmanship considerations. Similarly, from a pilot's perspective, does a 30-second delay to allow another aircraft to vacate the runway ahead of you really make that much difference? I guarantee you'll appreciate the return favour the next time they're running 2.5nm spacing and you're trying to vacate with a 747 landing behind you!

The runway vacation guidelines for London (Heathrow) were recently reviewed and published in an amendment to the UK AIP dated 27 December 2001, as follows:

AIP (AD2-EGLL-1-15 Para.7):

- a. Due to the High Intensity Runway Operations at Heathrow it is necessary to ensure pilots adhere to the following guidelines.
- b. **Aircraft instructed to hold short of the outer taxiway:** This means the controller has judged that sufficient spacing exists for the landing aircraft to hold short of the outer taxiway possibly infringing the runway without affecting the following aircraft. In this case the pilot should pull up to the edge of the first outer block, but not enter it, and hold position.
- c. **Aircraft lands but cannot contact Heathrow Ground due to RTF congestion:** In this case the pilot should completely vacate the landing runway and taxi into the first taxiway block. The pilot should then hold position until contact with GMC can be established.

AIRPROX REPORTING

I am a professional pilot and had some 4,500hrs helicopter time when the following incident occurred. I did not 'Airmis' the incident because in my experience I have noted that, whatever the rights and wrongs of any 'Airmis', the reporting subject always seems to be at fault, and, in the organisation I work for, that means an interview with the boss without coffee and a further period of re-training. Better to keep quiet and learn your lesson without creating work for idle hands!

I was returning to base in a company helicopter from a task elsewhere and was coming up to the ### Zone. I requested and received a Radar Information Service (RIS) from ###. At 3,000 ft with about 10 miles to run to the Zone boundary I was given a reported target in my six o'clock at a range of six miles, in the descent from FL70. I continued on track towards the Zone boundary and just before entering the Zone a light twin GA aircraft descended immediately in front of me and through my level. It was so close that I heard the engines and felt the prop wash. I watched the twin continue into a lazy loop towards an airfield close by.

I suppose it was my fault for not realising that a slowing descending aircraft would have had a nose high attitude, the twin had a long nose anyway, so the pilot was never going to see anything immediately on track beyond a mile unless he weaved. I assumed, wrongly, that a RIS would help me after the initial call of the reported traffic, after all I cannot see behind me. What other protection did I have? Frankly, none - other than good fortune. It was one of those things.

What have I done about it? Well, I pay more attention to traffic which is in conflict with me, I am proactive in changing course or height, I ask for a RIS whenever I think I can get one and, if I think reported traffic is a threat, then I ask for further updates.

I am not convinced that the Airmiss Committee (*Airprox Board*) would have helped me in any way, and nor do I think they would have brought any more safety to that incident. I am sure they would disagree, but I wonder what it is that they consider they can do to help?

The report was forwarded to Gordon McRobbie, Director UK Airprox Board, who provided the following comment:

There are several very good reasons why reporting an Airprox is better than doing nothing and the pilot in this particular case has almost answered his own question. The UK Airprox Board (UKAB) believes that when it comes to air safety, we are all in this together and it is counter productive to talk in terms of "fault" and "blame". For what it's worth, here are just two good reasons why reporting an incident is better than ignoring what happened:

- a. All incidents that are reported are investigated - not to point the finger of blame (that has no flight safety benefits at all), but to find out what caused the encounter and the associated risk. The big pay-off from this approach is identifying the lessons to be learned - and spreading these widely to help enable others to avoid getting into similar situations. This method of learning plays an important part in any serious approach to raising safety standards in the air. People who are unwilling to share their experiences (keeping lessons to themselves) - for whatever reasons - should think again about how much they might be

able to help their fellow aviation enthusiasts. The pilot (above) sets out a number of lessons he has taken away - others could too.

- b. Reporting Airprox incidents helps to build up a picture of how many encounters take place and where. Geographic 'hot-spots' can then be identified and looked at. This process is far more likely to produce positive and constructive change than keeping possible problem areas under wraps.

One final point - from what the pilot in this case has said, there would seem to be some air traffic control lessons here also. It's a pity these remain unknown.

ATC INSTRUCTIONS

(1)

I am concerned about ATC passing taxi/runway exit instructions during the landing roll.

This can be a very busy time for both pilots, passing instructions, monitoring speed, braking, speedbrake operation and reverse thrust. The capacity at this time for understanding instructions is limited or maybe the instruction might be missed altogether. Remember vacating on a rapid exit we are (hopefully) controlling many tons of aeroplane at speeds faster than you drive your car!

Please wait until we reach walking pace/have vacated. It doesn't happen on take-off so why should it on landing?

(2)

The following report was received from the pilot of a corporate business jet:

I was involved in an Altitude 'Bust' on a SID from ###. The event was reported to CAA, as required. A short time later it almost happened again, but on this occasion was caught with less than a 200 feet excursion.

On reflection, the altitude bust and the subsequent incident were both caused whilst I had been 'head down' dealing with ATC instructions. Many times in busy TMAs, ATC issue several instructions that have to be either copied down long hand or selected on the instruments, together with a frequency change. These tasks can be subject to a number of errors. The 'new' 8.33kHz frequencies are harder to remember, witness the many repeats that are necessary. As we get older, memory gets shorter.

I don't know whether a process exists, but I recommend that consideration be given to the content of ATC instructions transmitted to aircraft. For example, as height busts are a major worry to us all, only transmit a change of level as a single order. Do not clutter it with

heading changes, expectation of future height/level clearances, and never with a frequency change. With a single order for a level change it can be assimilated by both crewmembers, recorded if necessary, acted upon and monitored in execution.

I know the time 'on air' is often at a premium especially at rush hour in the major UK TMAs, but when it is busy we are also busy in our heads. It is much more important that height instructions carry 'weight', 'clarity' and 'unambiguity', when transmitted.

From a flight crew standpoint, it is particularly important that flight deck procedures during the departure and arrival phases of flight are based on sound CRM principles to minimise crew error.

In relation to TMA RTF procedures, NATS has provided the following comments:

The reporter makes a number of comments on TMA RTF procedures and timing of calls. This is an important issue and NATS has been involved in a number of initiatives to improve the quality, timing and content of RTF. It should be noted that there are currently no 8.33KHz frequencies in UK TMAs.

The first and most important point is to make all calls brief and succinct, using standard phraseology. The following procedures and guidance exist to help address the concerns that the reporter raises:

- First contact radar frequencies are being printed on SID plates to help reduce cockpit workload.
- Controllers should not give frequency change instructions at the same time as instructions that require a mandatory readback.

MATS Part 1 provides further guidance:

- It may be prudent to pass level and heading instructions separately.
- Use standard phraseology.
- Consider speed of delivery; do not use excessive courtesies.
- Messages should not contain more than three specific phrases.

It would be very unusual to get an 'expect' clearance on departure in the TMA. 'Expect' clearances are generally used in the en-route environment.

TCAS ALERTS

In the cruise at FL350 we received a TCAS TA, "Traffic Traffic", which was immediately followed by a TCAS RA commanding a high rate of climb.

Having completed the manoeuvre it became apparent that the reason for the RA was opposite direction traffic

climbing to a Flight Level 1,000ft beneath us but with a high rate of climb.

My main concern was that there was reciprocal traffic 1,000ft above us 20 miles ahead when the RA was received. We climbed 500ft during the traffic conflict and I feel that this caused unacceptably small separation of 500ft from the oncoming traffic. The controller was understandably concerned. An MOR was filed.

I believe that this situation would not have occurred pre-RVSM days. Do other pilots feel that since the introduction of European wide RVSM there is an increased risk of an Airprox or even a mid air collision?

With regard to the reporter's concern about the reciprocal traffic, the TCAS in his own aeroplane would be tracking the approaching aircraft and would post a new or amended Resolution Advisory to reduce the risk of collision. The TCAS in the aircraft 1,000 ft above would alert its flight crew to the proximity of the reporter's aeroplane and - if necessary - post a compatible RA.

In relation to high rates of climb, ICAO is developing proposals that operators should specify procedures appropriate to the type flown that the pilots would use to reduce the aircraft's vertical speed when an autopilot is engaged. Operators would be encouraged to consider authorising pilots to use a modest vertical speed throughout a climb or descent when the vertical interval is not large - such as a change of altitude in a holding pattern, or a step climb of a couple of thousand feet - and to specify how this is to be accomplished.

FLIGHT CREW COMMENTS

MORE TAXIING CONFUSION (FB62)

Reference the item in FEEDBACK Issue 62, there is an enormous amount of confusion at ### caused by the poor naming of taxiways and confusing marker boards.

"H" is both a major taxi way and a major holding point. "HK" is both a minor taxiway and a minor holding point.

It is better to use a taxi chart than it is to read the sign boards in order to avoid getting lost.

I have been to ### about 300 times in the last two years. It needs sorting out.

After reviewing the previous CHIRP reports on this subject and other information, CAA (SRG) held discussions with the Airport Authority. It has been accepted that the designators could be improved and a plan has been agreed to amend some of the designators in Spring 2003; the timing of the changes being co-ordinated with other aspects of the overall infrastructure plans.

We continue to receive reports related to the recent changes in aircraft security arrangements; here is a different point of view.

SECURITY REPORTING

I was interested to read the front page of FEEDBACK 62, which arrived on my doorstep this morning. Whilst I can sympathise with your view that aircraft security procedures should not be in the public domain, without the discussion, we will almost certainly get it wrong. I am responsible for my airline's security programme, all feedback on this issue is necessary to ensure that we are not building issues for the future.

The debate has already gone public, a recently published paper on the web discusses in great detail the issue of flight deck doors and the problems that may occur when you turn the place into a fortress. The debate that needs to be had is about the human factors part of the procedure, not the detail of the arrangements, and this should be public.

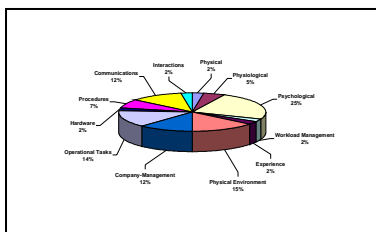
We in the security industry often hide behind National Security, but the socio-technical aspects of this change in our working environment are no secret, so I would urge you to reconsider before we have another Kegworth (B737-400 G-OBME fatal accident-8 Jan 1989), and people realise we got it wrong.

The human factors implications of the revised security procedures are most important and, for this reason, the numerous reports that we have received on this subject have been reviewed by the CHIRP Advisory Board (Air Transport) and forwarded to CAA (SRG) for consideration in relation to the new policy and, where relevant, to facilitate discussion with the respective operator. We welcome further reports on this important subject.

ENGINEERING REPORTS

Engineering Reports received in Period: 5

Key Areas:



APPROVALS TO JAR 145

I am a LAE working for a third party maintenance organisation. With the advent of the JAR 66 licence and introduction of new licence categories and responsibilities, it was inevitable that some engineering tasks and roles would be re-defined, but I believe my

employers have taken a step too far in their interpretation of JAR 66 certification responsibilities, in their efforts to "get around" manpower shortages (specifically licensed engineers) and meet newly defined commercial targets.

The company has had a long and difficult battle to retain certifying engineers due to a number of the usual peripheral issues, low pay with respect to other engineering companies, a nation-wide shortage of certifying engineers, etc. However, it would seem that a new method of dealing with this shortage of qualified engineers has been found, this is to delegate certification responsibilities to non-licensed staff.

Specifically, during transfer of our Authorisations from one company's JAR 145 Authorisation, to the present one. This included not only limited and simple tasks, but pilot reported defects, fault diagnosis and rectification up to the replacement of components not requiring specialist test equipment (electrical and avionic disciplines). This level of cover equates to approximately 95% of all Tech Log entries for the particular trade, as I understand specialist test equipment in a line maintenance role, is only required for a very limited number of components such as aerial installations or air data equipment.

It has always been my understanding that the certification responsibilities granted in this way were to be used as avionic extensions to licensed 'A' and 'C' (or JAR 66 B1), licence holders who have undergone electrical avionic extension training.

In my experience the grant of authorisations and CRS to unlicensed staff has always been for limited and simple tasks in its true sense, i.e. wheels, brake units, filaments, and cabin trim, or procedurally, for PDI and Daily inspections, otherwise why employ licensed staff?

My report is aimed at highlighting what I believe to be a serious deviation from AWN 14 Supplement 2 and as a way of circumventing the requirement for licensed certifying staff that cannot otherwise be attracted and employed.

Enquiries by the CAA into the specifics of this report at the time revealed a lack of comprehension on behalf of the Company in interpreting the requirements; appropriate rectification action has been taken.

AWN 14 has now been extensively revised and the Supplements withdrawn and it is no longer possible for unlicensed personnel to be Authorised at Category A level.

ENGINEERING COMMENTS

FIRE SAFETY & CARGO CONTAINERS

During a recent trip I found that the standard of maintenance on cargo containers and catering trolleys

was still leaving much to be desired. A recent FEEDBACK mentions dangers of hold fires, but with the high number of damaged cargo containers used, containment would be minimal.

Safety with catering trolleys is also a factor with regard to brakes and door security. One intercontinental airline with an exemplary safety record, some years ago, had traffic staff check every container and route items for repair to line maintenance; the catering company had a rig to check cart locks etc.; these items were also routed for repair as necessary.

A very good practice.

ARE YOU REPORTING?

This is not so much of an account but more of an observation to your comment in FEEDBACK Issue 61, as to why you are not receiving many reports. Have you ever thought that style of engineering management or morale might play a part?

Let me give you an example. The Company I work for to my knowledge does not run a MEMS system. Should an incident occur, QA will instigate a MEDA not necessarily to apportion blame but more to prevent it happening again, incidentally the findings are only ever made known to the people involved and not circulated to all engineers.

Just recently we have had two serious incidents during base maintenance. The management decided not to instigate a MEDA report but to hold disciplinary action. The outcome was that two mature highly skilled inspectors were demoted.

My concern is what sort of message does this send to other certifying inspectors? Especially when AWN 71 Para 4 advocates that no punitive action should occur. I would think that in future, things would be kept quiet.

Unfortunately, styles of management vary from company to company. Commercial pressure, the events of Sept 11, shift changes, being classed as a unit of production not as a person; all of these contribute to mistakes.

Who does the inspector go to then? Certainly not his management team.

The item on Page 1 outlines the initiative to distribute safety lessons learned from MEDA investigations more widely. Benefits accruing from this process will, it is hoped, encourage a more enlightened view within the Industry into the causes and resolution of maintenance errors.

CAA (SRG) FLIGHT OPERATIONS DEPARTMENT COMMUNICATIONS (FODCOMS)

The following CAA (SRG) FODCOMS have been issued since April 2002:

CAA (SRG) Flight Operations Department Communications are published on the CAA (SRG) website - www.srg.caa.co.uk

8/2002

1. Cabin Crew Medical Assessment

9/2002

1. Disruptive Passenger Incident Reports

10/2002

1. Variable Maximum Take-off Weights

11/2002

1. Transport of Dangerous Goods by Air - Incident Concerning a Device Powered by Butane

12/2002

1. Letter of Intent: Proposal to Amend the Air Navigation (Dangerous Goods) Regulations 1994
Proposal to Revoke and Replace the Present Air Navigation (Dangerous Goods) Regulations

13/2002

1. Letter of Consultation: Proposal to Amend the Air Navigation Order 2000
Proposal to Amend Schedule 5 of the Air Navigation Order 2000 for the Purpose of Introducing Changes to Operational Equipment Requirements for the Carriage of a Secondary Surveillance Radar Equipment that Includes a Pressure-Altitude Reporting Transponder on Aircraft Flying for the Purpose of Public Transport

14/2002

1. Cabin Crew Operating with More Than One Air Operator's Certificate Holder
2. Confidential Human Factors Reporting Programme (CHIRP) [for Cabin Crew]

15/2002

1. Authorisation of Flight Crew Personnel to Issue Certificates of Release to Service for Maintenance: Aeroplanes and Helicopters

16/2002

1. Loss of Communication

17/2002

1. Availability of International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) Documents

18/2002

1. JAR-Ops 1 and 3 Sub-parts K and L and National Requirements Compliance Document