

CHIRP FEEDBACK

Issue No: 86

Spring 2008

SECURITY REPORTS

CHIRP Narrative: We continue to receive reports from flight crew and engineers detailing ongoing problems with airport security screening procedures at UK airports. A further 16 reports on this topic have been submitted in the first three months of this year.

WHY NO REPORTS? - A COMMENT

Report Text: Reading CHIRP FEEDBACK 85 I was provoked into this response by the item 'Why only CHIRP reports?' (Front page).

I don't believe that CHIRP has undermined normal reporting channels but it has certainly stimulated reports that would not otherwise have been made. The most significant deterrent to pilots considering the submission of a report is the perception that it is a waste of time. Most will have seen the reports in CHIRP FEEDBACK, including that of an individual having been arrested and charged in dubious circumstances as reported in CHIRP FEEDBACK 83.

How many such reports are needed before action is taken to change the system? Many will know that representations have been made to the CAA and TRANSEC and yet nothing appears to have changed. What is the point of submitting a report to authorities who appear unable to see the stupidity of removing a bottle of contact lens cleaning fluid from a pilot about to be given charge of many tonnes of aviation fuel and even more tonnes of aluminium? As long as pilots perceive that TRANSEC care nothing for reports or representations then they won't see the point of making reports. Add to that the fact that a pilot who has suffered anger and frustration at an experience at security and subsequently operated a service might be admitting to operating while unfit and the lack of reports becomes a simple human factors matter. Talk of 'symptomatic of attitudes' looks very much like blaming the victim.

One further factor should be investigated. Operators that use an 'Air Safety Report' system may elect not to forward to the CAA reports that are seen as being not safety related. This has always been a questionable practice and some means of independent scrutiny of such reports is needed.

A PERFECT START TO THE DAY?

Report Text: The crew arrived at the passenger security point (there is no dedicated crew channel at AAA) at

0540. The security staff's attitude to the crew was abrupt and rude, treating us as if we were the problem. All of my crew behaved in a civilised manner, but the effects were still felt. By the time we got to the aircraft the crew were angry and stressed. This was on top of the expected stress for the day with storm force winds forecast at our first destination.

The minimum that is needed at AAA is the instruction to the security staff that they and the crew are part of the security solution, and a polite/positive/co-operative attitude is required. Additionally, a dedicated crew security channel should be installed.

This is not a good way to start a day's work.

RETRIBUTION?

Report Text: On passing through crew/staff security I was asked by the security agent if he could give me a "quick massage"; I declined his invitation. He then asked if he could search me, which I complied with; however, he insisted on searching through the contents of my wallet (removing bank cards etc). I took his name, and reported his behaviour/mode of speech to the supervisor; no effort at conciliation was made by the supervisor.

SECURITY VS SAFETY?

Report Text: I arrived at DDD to carry out navigation updates and battery changes on two company aircraft based there. When I arrived I was told that I was not expected even though notification of my arrival had been given two days earlier. I was then told no security staff were available to stay with me whilst I carried out the work required, and I would have to wait until 1430 (I had arrived at 1030).

They then found a member of staff who said I only had an hour until they went home, and I needed at least two hours with the aircraft, so I was rushing and hassled the entire time I was there. I was twenty minutes away from finishing when I was asked to leave and that if I didn't I would be escorted from the airfield.

I feel that this is totally unacceptable; the maintenance of aircraft should come before inadequate security staffing levels.

CHIRP Comment: In spite of representations by this Programme and a number of other organisations representing professional groups employed in the commercial air transport industry, including the Guild of Air Pilots and Air Navigators, the British Airline Pilots' Association and the Association of Licensed Aircraft

AIR TRANSPORT FEEDBACK is also available on the **CHIRP** website - www.chirp.co.uk

An Air Transport Safety Newsletter

from **CHIRP** the Confidential Human Factors Incident Reporting Programme

Engineers, both the Department for Transport and the Civil Aviation Authority continue to assert that reports submitted by pilots, engineers and air traffic control officers detailing inconsistencies in airport security procedures and search techniques as they apply to accredited professionals, do not constitute any significant threat to air safety.

Since the publication of the last issue of FEEDBACK, the CAA has requested and received copies of recent CHIRP reports not previously submitted; it is understood as part of a review. Hopefully, reading these and earlier reports will convince the Authority that the CHIRP reports are evidence of three major shortcomings in the present security arrangements that do have potential flight safety implications:

1. Irritating and illogical inconsistencies in security procedures: many of the reported incidents indicate varying levels of ignorance among security staff of the DfT guidelines and their application.
2. Inappropriate standards of customer service in the provision of security services for essential airport workers.
- 3 The failure to provide an appropriate process by which individuals are able to pursue genuine grievances against inappropriate behaviour by security personnel.

Solutions to these problems are not 'rocket-science'; acknowledgement of the reported concerns, improved standards for the selection and training of security personnel, and an appropriate complaint/grievance procedure would address most of the issues raised in the CHIRP reports received.

At this time, the CAA continues to express the view that although individuals do experience difficulties, aspects of the Crew Resource Management (CRM) training provided to flight crew members should enable individuals to deal effectively with any adverse experiences associated with airport security, and protect them against the deleterious effects of stress. The perceived benefits of CRM training, together with the safeguards afforded by flight crew members adhering to SOPs, lead the Authority to conclude that the risk of any security-related incident impinging on flight safety is adequately mitigated, as evidenced by the fact that no flight safety incidents have been reported.

The counterpoint to the CAA position is that Human Factors research suggests that if an individual believes him/herself to be stressed, notwithstanding any training, he/she will act as if stressed, with the consequent increased risk of human error. It is disappointing that an industry that has prided itself in being perceived as a model for promoting proactive safety management is not able to address this issue.

ENGINEERING EDITORIAL

A PERSONAL CONTRIBUTION TO SAFETY

Have you ever made a significant mistake; do you remember the feeling as you had to account for a personal error? While it's difficult admitting to these

events, particularly when no one else appears to be aware, it is perhaps worth considering that these types of incidents are not unique happenings.

Errors of judgement may lead to honest mistakes being made; not surprisingly, in a complex environment such as aircraft maintenance, these can and often do occur on a regular basis. Many are considered as a "near miss", because the systems of checks and balances that are in place, along with safeguards associated with modern equipment design, usually prevent the error from developing into an unsafe condition or a significant threat to safety. From our Human Factors training we know that the majority of these events sit at the bottom of the 'error iceberg', but unless minor incidents and their causes are considered they can materialise into something altogether more serious.

Errors have occurred in much the same way year-on-year, yet as an engineering community generally we appear unable to prevent them or perhaps learn from them. As a group we need to raise the profile of such occurrences through company reporting schemes, and/or by raising general awareness through this Programme.

In endeavouring to change attitudes to human error, clearly doing nothing is not an option. It is self evident that to "Keep on doing what we are doing", we will "Keep on getting what we've got"! Having the confidence to raise issues is one of the principal keys to developing a positive reporting culture in our industry. Taking advantage of a confidential reporting programme such as this and making an effective contribution to reducing

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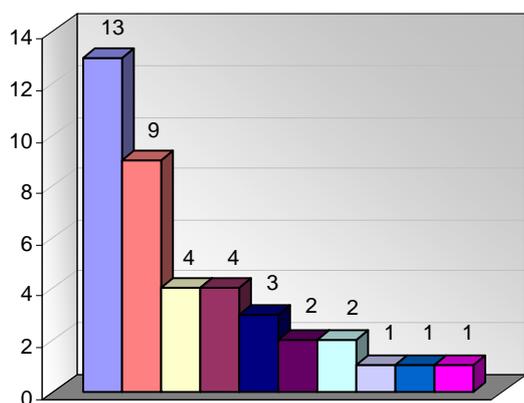
error is certainly not easy, but it must remain a worthy goal.

The benefit of learning from other engineers across the industry in a non-threatening environment can only be achieved if individuals are willing to provide the relevant information. In return, it is acknowledged that it is of paramount importance to reporters that the process for discussing incidents has a guarantee of being confidential in order to build the necessary trust that enables the process to succeed. CHIRP has demonstrated that it has an excellent track record for ensuring confidentiality over more than 25 years, during which time over 6,450 reporters have taken the opportunity to contribute to the programme.

Do you have an experience to share, from which others might benefit?

ENGINEER REPORTS

**Most Frequent Engineering Issues Received:
12 Months to March 2008**



- Security**
(Ground)
- Maintenance**
(Line, Base, Repairs)
- Regulation/Law**
(Compliance with)
- Procedures**
(Use by Others, Adequacy, Existence)
- Resources**
(Manpower/Personnel, Tools/Equipment)
- Pressures**
(Commercial, From Management/Supervision, Time)
- Company Policies**
(Operational, Safety Reporting, Disciplinary/Grievance)
- Documentation**
(Suitability/Adequacy)
- Duty**
(Shifts, Resting, Disruption)
- Aircraft Technical**
(Systems)

LACK OF TRAINING

Report Text: On sorting out my licence paperwork following a recent merger, I noticed that my Human Factors and recurrent training expires shortly (my

previous course was exactly 2 years ago). On looking on my new personal authorisation certificate it stated that it does not expire until next year. On querying this, I found out that the 1hr Electronic Tech Log and 5 minute paper tech log training carried out as a result of the merger for handling additional aircraft was being counted as our 2 year human factors / recurrent training.

I queried this with Quality and asked for a current HF/recurrent training certificate so at least on paper it looked like we were working within CAA/EASA regulations. I was told that this was not possible due to lack of staff in this department due voluntary severance and redundancies. On further investigation it seems that nothing will be done until new company procedures are written and that Quality are happy with this situation even though in their own procedures it states every 24 months (extendable by 3 months with a written letter from quality to allow continued certification) we must undergo HF/continuation training and lays down the syllabus. Apparently this has been agreed with the CAA SRG.

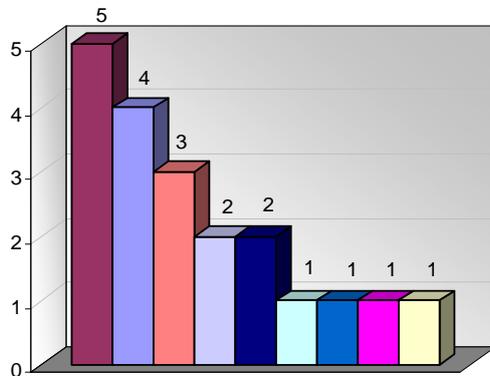
I find this very disconcerting. Every day I see errors in the tech log due no one being made the wiser about the procedures we should be working to, and I find it worrying the CAA are happy to turn a blind eye until the company is fully integrated which could be anytime in the future. Fingers crossed that there isn't a maintenance error because no one will know the correct procedure to be followed, the engineer will most probably be out of EASA 145-35(e) compliance and no one will be available to investigate from quality due lack of resources.

CHIRP Comment: The reporter's concerns were followed up with the company concerned.

It was established that as part of the transition plan agreed with the CAA some alleviations to engineer recurrent training requirements had been permitted during the agreed transition period; however, this information did not appear to have been communicated effectively through all engineering management levels to individual engineers; this was subsequently addressed.

ATC REPORTS

**Most Frequent ATC Issues Received
12 Months to March 2008**



- Air Traffic Management**
(Separation)
- Communications - External**
(Pilots)
- Duty**
(Length, Rest)
- Company Policies**
(Absence, Operational, Safety Reporting)
- Pressures**
(Commercial, Domestic, Management)
- Procedures**
(Use by Others, Adequacy, Use By Reporter, Lack of)
- Security**
(Ground, In-Flight)
- Documentation**
(Availability, Currency, Adequacy)
- Fatigue**
(Management, Effects)

ILS RTF PHRASEOLOGY

Report Text: As an operational ATCO I am concerned by the changes to UK ILS phraseology being implemented as described in AT SIN 114 [CAA(SRG) Air Traffic Services Information Notice]. This AT SIN seems not to consider - and certainly does not mention - the potential problem caused by the difference between the protected ranges of ILS localiser and glideslope signals.

At the airport I work at, these are 25 miles and 10 miles respectively. Routinely aircraft will establish on the localiser but still be outside the protected range of the glideslope (i.e. 10 miles). I have always been under the impression that an aircraft was not to be cleared to descend on the ILS until at 10 miles or less because of the risk of following a "false" glideslope signal. The current phraseology helps to prevent this from happening. My understanding was that if an aircraft is positioned (whether vectored or straight in etc) to establish on the localiser outside 10 miles, that aircraft should follow the localiser but comply with ATC instructions to descend to a specific level appropriate for the approach (such as 2,500ft), and only when within the glideslope protected range to descend on

the ILS. After an aircraft reports established on the localiser outside the glideslope protected range, the non-standard phrase "descend to altitude #### feet and then further with the glide (or ILS)" is being used.

Point 1.2 of AT SIN 114 states that new phraseology retains protection "against early descent, WHICH CAN CAUSE TRAFFIC CONFLICTS". This phraseology may be adequate in the scenario described above but the AT SIN makes no suggestion that protected ranges was considered or is even a factor. Point 4.2 states (again) "Where a controller deems it necessary, for traffic separation purposes," but does not mention that this could be used to address the disparity in protected ranges between the localiser and glideslope signals. It seems that if the phraseology in 4.2 is used to resolve the limitations of the glideslope protected range, it will increase R/T loading, rather than reduce it. If the conditional descent phraseology is already available (subject to CAA approval) at those airports where the R/T loading is such that a conditional descent instruction is warranted, and the ILS glideslope has the range to allow it, I fail to understand why it was felt necessary to change the current phraseology at all.

CHIRP Comment: The reporter's comments were referred to CAA ATSD, who provided the following response:

As you are aware, the change to UK RTF Phraseology for radar-vectored ILS approaches was necessitated by safety problems which have arisen with the current two-stage clearance where, on occasions, pilots have not received clearance to descend in sufficient time to follow the ILS glideslope, leading to unstable and rushed approaches. The essence of the change is that a one-stage form of phraseology, which has for some time been available for use as an alternative when frequencies are busy, will become the norm. You will appreciate that this has been a contentious issue for a number of years and the CAA Phraseology Working Group (a cross-industry body) deliberated on this aspect carefully for some time before concluding on this way forward.

We have had a small number of queries from individuals who, like the author of this CHIRP report, have assumed that part of the original rationale for the two-stage phraseology used in UK was to ensure that the controller became responsible for ensuring that aircraft did not capture a false ILS glideslope. This was not, in fact, part of the rationale for the current UK phraseology which was, as the AT SIN explains, actually necessitated by procedure design and UK airspace complexity together with lessons learned from flight safety related incidents involving traffic conflicts caused by aircraft descending below their cleared level.

Where a controller finds it necessary to position an aircraft on the localiser whilst held at a higher level (for example, to avoid conflict with other traffic), I would expect the controller to descend subsequently the aircraft such that it would intercept the glideslope in the normal way from below and within the protected range before being instructed to 'descend on the ILS'. To do this, the controller would exercise the option to revert to a two-stage clearance, as the AT SIN illustrates.

However, following receipt of this and other queries on this subject it is clear that a small number of individual

controllers are concerned that the phraseology change has overlooked the ILS protected range issue and we have therefore decided to expand a small area of text in MATS (Manual of Air Traffic Services) Part 1 at the next amendment to provide a more explicit interpretation of the above in amplification of this phraseology change.

CHIRP Comment: The amendment to MATS Part 1 referenced in the response is expected to be issued in the near future.

CANCEL TAKE-OFF PHRASEOLOGY

Report Text: My concern is in reference to the UK phraseology in issuing a take off clearance. This RT has been in place for a while, but a recent near incident with a foreign airline has made me think again, particularly in view of an ATISIN that has highlighted the appropriate times to cancel clearances and the correct RTF phraseology to be used.

I have concerns that a cancel take off clearance instruction includes the words 'take off' twice. The use of the words 'take off' in my opinion should only be used if issuing a clearance to take off. I can envisage a foreign crew with a poor command of English hear an urgent command from a controller, and only comprehending that the controller is saying take off twice, and misinterpreting this as an instruction to get airborne ASAP.

CHIRP Comment: The UK RTF phraseology for cancelling a take off, "ABC123 hold position, cancel take off - I say again cancel take off - acknowledge" is the same as ICAO (Doc 4444 - PANS ATM Chapter 12). The executive instruction "hold position" should be unambiguous, but in the event that an aircraft did commence the take off, the ATCO would issue a 'Stop' instruction.

LOCAL COMPETENCY SCHEME

Report Text: During my career as an ATCO I have enjoyed a fulfilling professional career, no two days the same and very rewarding.

Just lately we seem to be losing the plot. We have robust procedures in place that are being enforced on our particular watch with the resolve of the Taliban; whilst other watches seem to carry on a normal responsible un-pressurised way, we seem to be rigidly cajoled at every opportunity and even a minor matter is penalised. Despite requests to be treated as professionals and adults, we seem to be constantly berated like school kids.

I now find that I am spending more time thinking about what I am saying, rather than what I am doing. Perhaps I should be pleased that my controlling is such that only minor matters arise but this nitpicking is getting to the point of serious distraction. We are all collectively under enough pressure with the job without the nitpicking crusade of some of our LCEs (Local Competency Examiners). Yes, they do a necessary job, but some form of common sense needs to be applied.

CHIRP Comment: The reporter's concerns were represented to a senior safety manager, who stated that whilst the LCE scheme was working generally well,

a small number of interpersonal difficulties similar to that reported had come to light; how these might be best addressed and avoided in the future was being reviewed.

SEE AND NOT BE SEEN (FB85) - AN ATC COMMENT

Report Text: The reporter raises issues around ATC service provision in Class E airspace and parts of both the report and the CHIRP response may give rise to some misunderstanding of procedures to be employed within such airspace by both pilots and controllers.

Class E airspace is, by definition, controlled airspace so Air Traffic Control Service will be applied within it. The Manual of Air Traffic services Part 1 (CAP 493) provides rules for the application of Air Traffic Control Service within the various airspace classifications in the table at Section 1, Chapter 2, Page 1. For Class E Airspace this table shows:

Class	Flight Rules	Aircraft Requirements	Minimum Services by ATC Unit
E	IFR and VFR	IFR flights to obtain ATC clearance before entry and comply with ATC instructions. VFR flights do not require clearance.	a) Separate IFR flights from other IFR flights; (b) Pass traffic information, as far as practicable, to IFR flights on VFR flights; (c) VFR flights in contact are to be given traffic information as far as practicable.

As can be seen Air Traffic Control Units are not tasked with providing any separation between IFR flights and VFR flights so ATC separation standards (defined elsewhere in the MATS Part 1 and units' local instructions) are not relevant to this situation.

Operation under IFR in class E airspace does not necessarily mean, as the reporter states, that "we would have been ... obliged to give way to VFR traffic" (See Rules of the Air, Rule 17). The CHIRP response rightly points out that controllers may well suppress the display of some categories of radar responses. Controllers, too, may not be aware of VFR traffic within Class E airspace since such traffic does not have to report its presence or (at the time of writing) carry a transponder.

It can be seen, therefore, that Class E airspace does not constitute a known traffic environment, nor does it place any obligation on Air Traffic Control Units to apply ATC separation standards between IFR flights and VFR flights. Indeed, the provision of traffic information to IFR flights (and to VFR flights) is not required beyond that which is practicable. The avoidance of collision between IFR flights and VFR flights in Class E airspace, a responsibility of aircraft commanders whether operating under either IFR or VFR, must be undertaken with much less reliance on ATC systems than in other classes of airspace.

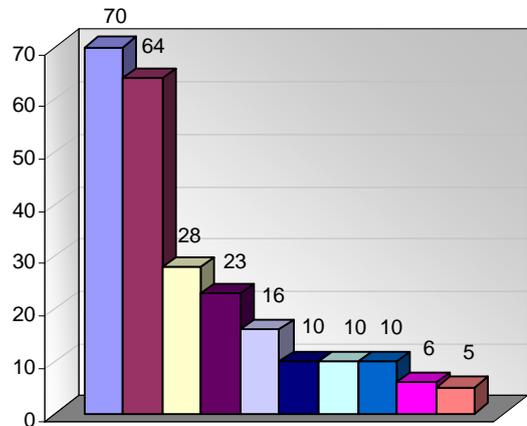
CHIRP Comment: The reporter's comments are correct and are worthy of note. The use of Class E airspace within the UK FIR is limited and it is possible that pilots who do not operate into the Belfast CTA, the Scottish TCA or the Durham Tees Valley Control Zone may be unaware of the limits of the ATC service that is available to IFR flights operating in airspace designated as Class E; however, as was noted in the last issue, Class E airspace is more widely used elsewhere particularly in France.

Many pilots have probably not reviewed their knowledge of airspace classifications since studying for their licence. For example, are you aware that if you are operating as an IFR flight in airspace designated as Class D (most UK airport Control Zones/Areas), whereas ATC will provide separation from other IFR traffic, the requirement is to provide only traffic information on conflicting VFR flights?

Details of ATS Airspace Classification and notified airspace in the UK FIR can be found in the UK AIP En Route (ENR 1.4) ; the content of the UK AIP is available on the AIS website at www.ais.org.uk.

FLIGHT CREW REPORTS

**Most Frequent Flight Crew Issues Received:
12 Months to March 2008**



- Duty**
(Rosters/Rostering, Rest, Length, Crewing, Disruption)
- Security**
(Ground)
- Communications - External**
(ATC, Regulators/Government)
- Company Policies**
(Absence, Operational, Safety Reporting)
- Air Traffic Management**
(Separation)
- Aircraft Technical**
(Systems, Propulsion)
- Procedures**
(Use by Others, Adequacy, Use by Reporter)
- Handling/Operation**
(Aircraft Handling by Crew, Airmanship)
- Physiological**
(Illness, Health, Injury)
- Regulation/Law**
(Compliance with)

CAA (SRG) ATSINS

The following CAA (SRG) ATS Standards Department ATSINS have been issued since January 2008:

- Number 125 - Issued 25 January 2008**
Public Consultation - UK Air Traffic Services Outside Controlled Airspace
 - Number 126 - Issued 6 February 2008**
Notification of Suspected Communicable Disease: Guidelines for Air Traffic Service Units
 - Number 127 - Issued 14 March 2008**
Automatic Recording of Surveillance Data by ATS Units
 - Number 128 - Issued 14 March 2008**
Introduction of Callsign Prefix for Vintage Aircraft Permitted to Operate at Airspeeds in Excess of 250 kts IAS Below FL100 When in Receipt of a Radar Service
 - Number 129 - Issued 20 March 2008**
Safety Review of Operational Procedures
- CAA (SRG) ATS Information Notices are published on the CAA (SRG) website - www.caa.co.uk/default.aspx?categoryid=33 and click on the link 'Search for a CAA Publication'

SEE AND NOT BE SEEN (FB 85) - A FURTHER COMMENT

Report Text: I feel moved to comment by the "See and Not be Seen" report together with the Chirp comments that have just been published in the CHIRP FEEDBACK Winter Edition.

It's not that I take issue with anything within the report, it's rather the reverse. The report talks about airspace classification, the boundaries of controlled airspace together with the need to lookout. My comments upon these items are:

1. The most commonly used airway/IFR charts that I have seen do not show the boundaries of controlled airspace; neither do they show the relevant airspace classification. As far as I am aware, the only IFR charts to give this information are those low-level airway charts of the RAF. Therefore, for most of the time we airline pilots are not aware of the classification of the airspace in which we are operating.

2. It's my considered opinion that a majority of airline pilots do not know the definitions/implications of the various airspace categories and it seems to be a common misconception that, effectively, airliners are always under full radar control in Class A controlled airspace. For my own part, during 18 years of airline flying I have never had any education re-air-space classification and my awareness of this subject has arisen out of my general-aviation activities.
3. Similarly, during these 18 years of airline flying at no time has mention ever been made of "Lookout" and it seems to be the case that most "born and bred" airline pilots cease looking through the window at Vr and start again at around 500ft on the ILS! During training there is much emphasis on SOPs, CRM, QRH procedures etc etc.....as for Lookout...not a chance! Thank God for TCAS!!

CHIRP Comment: In addition to the comments on the previous page, any move to simplify the classification of airspace and its use would be welcomed and would probably make a positive contribution to flight safety for both commercial air transport and General Aviation pilots.

LIGHTWEIGHT DEPARTURE

Report Text: We departed AAA on a positioning flight. The aircraft was very light. The captain had briefed that he would like to hand fly the departure, which I had no problem with.

The departure was very busy. The aircraft was climbing extremely quickly, and I was working very hard to monitor the other pilot, make selections on the MCP, retract flaps, change frequencies etc.

Because of this, I would estimate it took about a minute and a half before I was able to contact the departure frequency on the initial climb out. At this point we were already maintaining 5,000', as per the SID.

The controller's tone of voice on initial contact can only be described as 'icy'. We were given a radar heading and shortly afterwards, told to climb to a Flight Level. I read back the clearance but evidently made a mistake, because I was corrected by the controller, who spoke in a very ratty tone of voice and also asked me to climb expeditiously. We were climbing at about 4,500' per minute at this point, so I didn't really know what to make of his comment (it may have been an attempt at humour but I was too busy to comprehend that at this time). I simply replied that we were climbing 'expeditiously'.

The captain asked if I could confirm our cleared flight level with the controller as he was unsure. On requesting confirmation I was almost shouted at by the controller. He then gave me a frequency change, in an equally ratty tone. I read this back. He replied 'correct well done'. This was said in a very patronising tone of voice.

The reason I felt I had to report this was that the controller's ratty and patronising way of communicating was not only unprofessional, but put me in a pretty bad

frame of mind for the rest of the short, hectic flight. Being annoyed is not conducive to flight safety.

The vast majority of ATC in the UK is excellent, and this incident was totally out of sync with anything else I have experienced. I have spent a day at Swanwick control centre and have seen the work the controllers have to do. The controller in question was no doubt very busy. But so was I. I would strongly suggest he arranged a trip on the flight deck of one of the aircraft he controls, and maybe he would see it is not so easy.

CHIRP Comment: The situation described by the reporter; a light, high performance aircraft flown manually during the departure phase can place unusual demands on the Pilot Flying, the Pilot Not Flying and also the air traffic control officer. This combination of circumstances can lead relatively easily to a misheard clearance, a level bust incident or a loss of separation as a result of all three 'players' operating at close to their mental capacity due to the time compression in a rapidly changing sequence of events.

As noted, the reporter was working extremely hard and did not have the capacity to make the initial departure call; also, the fact that the Captain was unsure of the cleared flight level was possibly indicative that he was also working hard. It is therefore perhaps understandable that the air traffic controller was unimpressed by an aircraft departing with an unexpectedly high rate of climb and not making the initial departure call. Notwithstanding this, the controller's alleged comments were unnecessary.

This report serves as a reminder about the potential risks in hand flying a very light aircraft on a non-revenue flight. A better alternative might be to use an appropriate mode selection/level of automation for the conditions and intelligent use of a thrust setting less than minimum climb thrust if SOPs permit this option. Finally, if an unusually high rate of climb is anticipated, let ATC know in advance.

LIMITED APPROACH OPTIONS

Second Report: AAA is having some work done at the eastern end of the main runway. This means that the ILS to the easterly runway is not available. The options are an R-NAV approach, an SRA or a visual.

My airline is not yet approved to do R-NAV approaches (we have done the training, but something hasn't happened yet). We could do a fully managed NDB approach (i.e. an R-NAV approach that we can check on the ADF), but the NDB approach is no longer available (we have it in the FMGS and a Jep plate for it). ATC don't like doing SRA approaches, I suspect because it admits that the work should cease and the ILS be re-instated.

A few nights ago I was offered radar vectors to a visual approach or an R-NAV. The visibility was given as 3,500 metres in ground fog. I asked for the ILS, but was told that other aircraft were having no problems with a visual approach. I suspect they were doing what we did, setting the FMGS for an R-NAV and using it as "extra information".

We were turned on to a closing heading at 12 miles and asked to call "field in sight". Since we could see the field

and the controller was very busy we did so, although it later proved that the workman's floodlights were much more visible than the runway or approach lights. On short finals the visibility reduced considerably, particularly between 100 and 50 ft; just about enough to maintain a visual segment, but getting close to the weather that I would rather Autoland.

Perhaps someone should be looking hard at the weather in which AAA can park machinery on the runway (making the ILS unavailable). I would suggest that the visibility reducing and the temperature and dew point closing at night with a clear sky is a good time to re-instate the ILS.

CHIRP Comment: The reporter's comments were passed to the ATSU concerned. The ATC SOP is to issue the instruction "Report when visual" at the beginning of a radar directed approach because of the subsequent RTF loading. On occasions, controllers may inform an aircraft of the range that the preceding aircraft reported "Visual" to assist them, but this should not be taken to imply any pressure on flight crew.

It is worth remembering that in shallow fog conditions, similar to those described in this report, the horizontal visibility may be significantly less than that apparent from the slant visual range.

The issue of ILS availability/weather limits pertaining to the work-in-progress is also being discussed between the ATSU and the airport authority; however, there are limits to how quickly the ILS can be re-instated, should its use be necessary.

WEATHER DETECTION / AVOIDANCE

Report Text: Both pilots flying with ND display set on maximum range. Unbeknown to us, we approach an active Cb cell (thunderstorm) and go into its outer limits without anything showing on our weather radar. We immediately reduce weather radar range and it becomes visible on radar. Immediate turn left 90 degrees and we 'get away with it'.

Background to this: The company has recently removed the two auxiliary weather radar displays we used to have by our sides, which would normally be set to 80 mile range to pick up these localised small cells, apparently to 'save weight' (on a 400 tonne aeroplane?). This has impacted directly on flight safety. The pilots were never consulted before this decision was taken.

Can someone apply some pressure and ask them to put them back please?

CHIRP Comment: The matter was raised with the operator, who advised that the reliability/repair costs associated with the auxiliary displays had led to the decision to remove the additional displays but only after a risk assessment had been undertaken.

Irrespective of the type of equipment/number of displays, training in the correct use of weather radar to obtain the optimum weather information varies considerably.

SOPs for its use may differ in detail depending on the exact type of weather radar equipment but should include guidance on operating techniques, such as the

selection of the most appropriate ranges/slant angles, to ensure that as far as is practicable adverse weather information is available to at least one pilot to permit it to be detected in sufficient time for appropriate avoiding action to be taken.

PARKING INCIDENT

Report Text: Non-UK aircraft registration ###### on parking stand ## was being pushed back by local contracted ground handling agents and aircraft sustained damage to tail on impact with adjacent/nearby steel blast/noise barrier next to boundary fence. The local Security Officer observed damage to aircraft and reported to ATC Ground who in turn contacted the aircraft. Fire service attended. Tug was reconnected and aircraft was towed back onto a different nearby stand where the passengers disembarked to the terminal.

A temporary repair was made to the tail cone fairing beneath APU outlet and the aircraft was ferried back to base the following day. The space for manoeuvring aircraft in the vicinity of parking stand ## with the adjacent boundary fence and steel noise/blast barrier is very restricted. Extra vigilance, attention, caution and possibly special procedures may be required by pushback/tug crew when operating in such a restricted and confined area and space.

Given the potential for pushback problems as this occurrence demonstrated, is this parking stand appropriate for this size of aircraft?

CHIRP Comment: The reporter's concern was followed up with CAA (SRG) Aerodrome Standards Department (ASD), who provided the following response:

The airport authority's investigations revealed that a non-standard push back had been carried out by the tug driver, who had failed to comply with the airport authority's promulgated procedures for push-backs from these particular stands. This resulted in a full review of procedures, including the training of staff and included such guidance for 'wing men' or banks men as detailed in HSG 209. ASD is confident that the measures taken by the airport authority are sufficient to address the matter.

SELECTION ERROR (FB85) - A COMMENT

Report Text: In the flight crew report titled "Early Morning Wake Up Call" published in the latest edition of Chirp, the F/O retracted the flaps instead of the gear. In your response to avoiding "motor actions" errors you state that in the selection process - confirmation should be made to confirm the correct action. Our SOPs in the above situation have historically been:

Pilot flying (PF) - "Gear up"

Pilot Not flying (PNF) - repeats request "Gear up" to confirm, pauses momentarily to seek a correction and then carries out this task.

Likewise, the selection of any other aircraft configuration changes is dealt with in the same manner, thus reducing the chances of errors, if a command is misheard.

We as a company are now in the midst of aligning our SOPs with another company due to a merger. Their process is similar to that described in the above referenced flight crew report, the PF requests the configuration change and the PNF does them (of course the PNF would have checked limitations before completing the task).

I feel that to move away from an SOP that confirms any configuration changes prior to selecting them increases the chance of errors such as those highlighted in "Early Morning Wake up call".

CHIRP Comment: There is a natural tendency following a merger of two companies for individuals to view any difference in SOPs as being a retrograde step.

However, in this particular case, it might be argued that the new SOP is not as robust in preventing a misspoken/misheard instruction being acted upon as the alternative SOP.

COMPANY INTEGRATION & TRAINING - A COMPANY RESPONSE

Two reports on Company Integration and Training in Feedback Issue 85 (Pages 9/10) described processes employed by XXX in our merger with YYY. I feel it would be useful to address the points of those two reports and put them into perspective as the pilot management team, Training Captains, and indeed the line pilots, have gone to such great lengths to ensure a successful integration of the two airlines. Both reports have generated comments that suggest many pilots do not concur with their content. With that in mind, I write to portray the other point of view and to provide a degree of balance and context to these two articles.

It is understandable that anyone not directly involved in the integration exercise from the outset might underestimate the amount of work required to achieve a successful outcome. All of the management processes, training mechanisms, manual amendments, SOP revisions, route analysis, hardware changes, and software modifications were subject to detailed Hazard Identification and Risk Mitigation modules under a programme agreed with, and monitored by, the CAA. The exercise has been extremely complex but thanks to a high degree of cooperation between the two communities, the training staff, those managing the project and the regulator, the last two pilots recently completed conversion training.

Taking the principal points in the order that they appear in the reports...

(1)

A couple of weeks before the integration we were bombarded by memos from management covering new SOPs, new aircraft and route differences, new destinations and route briefs, operations over high ground with decompression escape routes, operations in African In-flight Broadcast Areas, new aircraft performances tables and operations on the Tango routes

The new SOPs for XXX pilots involved no changes in actual operating procedures and no new ways of flying the aircraft. We did take the opportunity to define the SOPs in more detail but the actions were the same in all but one case. YYY pilots had to deal with SOP changes of some significance over the transition period leading to integration hence these were introduced in a modular fashion and with a focus on training/checking these pilots as part of the integration conversion. There are no 'new'

aircraft types involved in this integration; we have taken the opportunity to harmonise some equipment to enhance operational capability and further ensure commonality.

New destinations? - Yes, but pilots were not asked to familiarise themselves with all of the different routes overnight. XXX pilots will be exposed to new routes/destinations gradually. All of these destinations had been carefully assessed and any that posed greater difficulties to Commanders were restricted until a check flight was organised. None of the XXX Commanders had less than six years of Command time at the time of integration, during which period they would have been exposed to a number of challenging destinations.

Decompression escape routes are a new concept for some XXX pilots; this topic has been added to recurrent training in the same manner as that for other XXX pilots who fly similar routes. African In-flight Broadcast areas require some additional RT transmissions and this is clearly and simply described in the Company Operation Manual.

New aircraft performance tables were certainly introduced, in A4 format to make them clearer and easier to use. Apart from reversing the ambient temperature scale, the presentation of information is exactly the same.

The Company has been using Tango routes regularly for many years. All pilots undergoing line training are trained in MNPS (Minimum Navigation Performance Specifications) airspace and its rules. All Captains should remain fully conversant with these procedures through regular review of Company documentation

"Our pilot group also includes a significant number of recent joiners who are new to the job and low hours. Apart from one trip to a metric altimeter destination we receive no line training for our new destinations..."

Prior to the integration XXX recruited a small number of pilots, representing less than 5% of the total workforce. All were given extensive training commensurate with their experience. No inexperienced pilot (less than 100 hours post line check) was, or is, allowed to operate on any mid-haul routes unless under Training Captain supervision. One metric altimeter familiarisation trip with a Training Captain was given to all Commanders prior to unsupervised operations on such routes, and destinations assessed as posing additional or unfamiliar challenges were subject to prior familiarisation and checking under the supervision of training staff.

"We used to benefit from proper annual technical refresher classroom days with excellent trainers providing very useful information not to be found in our manuals. However now we only get issued with a DVD for home study..."

Previously XXX provided limited classroom study with a ground instructor; frequent feedback indicated that it was a less than effective method of teaching in that it concentrated on narrow subject areas. The pilot feedback on the CD-based structured system of training and examination is positive. There is no evidence of any reduction in levels of technical knowledge amongst the pilot community.

The Company has experience of training issues from a major incident some years ago and I am concerned that a lot has been forgotten from that.

All of the current senior flight operations managers have been with the Company for more than 20 years. They will never allow the culture to waver from the maintenance of the highest achievable levels of safety. None of the lessons learned internally by the Company, or externally by the industry, have been

forgotten. The Company last wrote of its encouragement and supports for all pilots in this quest just before publication of the Winter CHIRP Newsletter.

(2)

I have concerns about the suitability of continuation training following the absorption of another company into the operation. There have been significant changes to the SOPs in the Company so much so that we all carry a green and red card...

The significance of the SOP changes has been explained above. The compatibility card was a sensible solution to an integration that threw up a situation where, for a number of months, XXX would be faced with managing pilots with different level of qualifications. The problem was magnified by the determination to as safe as possible. The multiplicity of qualification levels was fundamental to ensuring that pilots were not asked to take on too much. Also, we had to isolate all the YYY pilots (a fundamental philosophy of the CAA) from existing XXX pilots until conversion training had taken place. The compatibility card was a sensible safeguard and back-up to the qualifications database.

Our new colleagues cannot fly the (aircraft type) or do short field landings until checked through the Company LPC/OPC and then only on their own after 8 sectors of line training. To this end it now transpires that the Company is/has been actively rostering two captains on the same check and also 2 F/Os....

There was a need to get YYY training captains checked out as soon as possible, so that skewed the initial balance of the pairings. This is a Company conversion course which is different from 'continuation training'. On conversion courses, one may find two Captains or two F/Os teamed up together to be checked. If the F/Os are inexperienced a cover Captain is scheduled. None of the F/Os coming from YYY could be considered inexperienced in this context.

It was reported that at a training meeting when the other company trainers came across, they were told that we were not interested in how they did things before, this is how it is now

This statement is incorrect. The YYY trainers were told that the standardisation day was about learning XXX training procedures. The integration process involved no changes to how XXX training was organised or controlled and focused on familiarising YYY training staff with XXX training procedures. The trainers were briefed that there was no bar to further changes in the future and it was very much recognised that XXX did not have a monopoly on how to do training correctly. The YYY trainers have subsequently integrated very well into the enlarged training community.

To that end our Company dispatched crew with little or no knowledge of the part of the world to which they were operating, the resultant scene in the crew room was one of our company crew hunting down the other company's crew for some gen....

The Company operations manuals and supplementary publications on the Company intranet contain a wealth of information on the 'new' destinations and their associated climatology. It is not the first time XXX pilots have been asked to operate in a different environment or theatre. After comprehensive Risk Assessments, where routes or destinations have been identified as requiring additional training, this has been provided. It would not be in the least surprising to find one pilot asking another for some additional information if the opportunity presented itself. That is not quite the same as being sent unprepared which appears to be the suggestion here.

In summary, during any period where the business is transformed, there will always be individuals who do not view such change as positive for their particular circumstances. By providing the information above, I trust that the integration process and the efforts to ensure its success are placed in perspective for both the original authors and the wider community.

CHIRP Comment: This response highlights the complexity of managing the change process involved in a merger of this kind, several of which are currently taking place.

Whilst a comprehensive integration plan and an effective communications plan are essential prerequisites to ensure that all of the regulatory and corporate requirements are met and understood by everybody involved, as these changes are implemented, it is often the case that some management actions/initiatives are viewed as being inadequate by some of those affected by the changes.

One of the key factors in a successful change process is to maintain the morale and enthusiasm of those affected; therefore, if and when concerns are expressed, it is important to review whether these concerns are real or perceived and whether the integration/communications plans have proved to have been effective with respect to the issues raised.

CAA CONTACT DETAILS

Report Text: It is extremely important for the name and contact details of the CAA Flight Operations Inspector to be available to pilots (of that airline). Can you please ask the CAA to make airlines show his/her contact details in their manuals?

CHIRP Comment: The CAA does not consider the publication of individual FOI's contact details in the manner described to be a practical solution, particularly as most FOIs are responsible for the oversight of several operators.

However: as an alternative, the CAA has established a new e-mail address for reporting safety-related matters that are not within the scope of the CAA MOR scheme: flightoperationsafety@caa.co.uk. This e-mail address is monitored by the Flight Operations Inspectorate and will be promulgated on the new CAA website in due course.

MORE ON OXYGEN EMERGENCY ROUTES

Report Text: In CHIRP FEEDBACK 83 Summer 2007 - OER's, you noted that there is anecdotal evidence that some short-term/ad hoc charter flights operate without OER consideration.

I operated several sectors requiring OERs with ### (UK Airline) last year. We asked for OER procedures and were told that they were not available. A Training Capt asked the senior flight operations manager for their provision; no response.

We all, including TRES and TRIs continued operating the routes, it was company culture.

It is not anecdotal.

CHIRP Comment: CAA Flight Operations Inspectors have been briefed to monitor this matter.

However, it is worth remembering that it is the operator's responsibility to ensure that all relevant information is available before departure and the aircraft commander's responsibility to ensure that he is in possession of all of the information required to complete the flight safely.

CABIN AIR QUALITY - HEALTH CONCERNS

Report Text: I've been an Airline Pilot for several years, and from quite early on I found that I was often feeling fatigued, and I assumed it was due to the unusual work schedule that I wasn't used to before. As time went on, I found that my levels of fatigue were increasing, and I was beginning to feel that my short-term memory was getting worse, it was getting more difficult to concentrate, and generally I was really not enjoying the job anymore.

It wasn't until about a year before I stopped flying, that I began to realise this was probably not normal, and a few months later began to experience neurological problems including tremors, muscle twitches, speech problems, light-headedness and worsening fatigue and cognitive problems. I had heard that bleed air could get contaminated by engine oil that contains TCP, an organophosphate and neurotoxin, and I suspected that breathing day-to-day background levels was causing my health problems. I had an opportunity to change aircraft types, and I hoped after the change to the new type, my problems would disappear. As it happens they worsened, to the point I had to stop flying due to concerns for my health, and the safety of the aircraft.

As I investigated the issue, my suspicions were reinforced as I found there were many more people who had had similar experiences, and that the airlines and CAA are aware of the concerns of aircrew on this issue, but do not want to acknowledge the problem, and have only carried out half-hearted and endless research that never manages to come to any conclusions. I keep hearing about people who have become sick after flying and are suffering long-term health problems, and I believe there are many other pilots, cabin crew and passengers that have been similarly affected, some of them possibly not knowing why, as this problem is still not widely known or acknowledged. I also believe there are aircrew who have some of these symptoms, and are still flying, presumably due to financial pressures, and because they don't want to lose their livelihood.

This is a serious problem for flight safety, and it's time for the Airlines and authorities to tackle it head-on. Fume detectors and bleed air filters could be fitted, and I believe there is a jet engine oil available that doesn't contain toxic organophosphates. Safety (and people's health) first.

CHIRP Comment: As with all reports received on this topic, the reporter's concerns were passed to the Civil Aviation Authority, which has provided the following response:

The Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) and the Department for Transport (DfT) take health concerns raised by aircrew very

seriously and have been actively engaged in tackling concerns that have been raised about cabin air quality. The DfT chairs an Aviation Health Working Group that considers key issues in aviation health; meetings are attended by a broad range of stakeholders, representing the airline industry, trades unions, the Department of Health and the CAA's Aviation Health Unit.

In order to address the concerns about cabin air quality the DfT instructed the independent Committee on Toxicity (COT) to conduct a full enquiry. The Committee reviewed evidence from the scientific literature and from a wide range of stakeholders, including the CAA, BALPA, engine manufacturers, oil manufacturers and aircraft companies. Their report of 20 September 2007 <http://www.advisorybodies.doh.gov.uk/cotnonfood/index.htm> stated that it was not possible to conclude whether exposure to substances in cabin air caused ill health in commercial aircrew. They recommended, as a matter of urgency, that research be undertaken to ascertain whether substances in the cabin environment could harm health.

The House of Lords Select Committee on Science and Technology also addressed this issue as part of a wider inquiry in 2007 and published its findings in 'Air Travel and Health: an Update' in December 2007. <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld200708/ldselect/dsctech/7/7.pdf>

In response to recommendations from both of the above reports, the DfT has commissioned research, which will be co-ordinated by Cranfield University, to measure a range of compounds in cabin air. The essential questions to answer are 1) What compounds are in cabin air? and 2) Is there a link between exposure to these substances and subsequent ill-health? The first stage of the research, a "functionality study", has been completed and the report is available at: <http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/aviation/hci/cabinairtest.pdf> The next stage will commence in May 2008 with the aim of sampling cabin air on different types of aircraft to ascertain what substances are present and in what concentration.

The UK Government is taking a world lead in addressing the health concerns of aircrew and commissioning this ground-breaking research.

LOCKED FLIGHT DECK DOOR POLICY

Report Text: This report is not related to any specific flight but involves a serious issue that I believe needs addressing. On numerous occasions recently I have witnessed a worrying disregard for flight deck door procedures. On approx a third of flights I have been placed in the uncomfortable position of having to remind senior crew of the correct procedure.

I now have to re-brief EVERY crew on door procedures before departure to ensure they know that I take it seriously. It makes them think I am a pedant who has a CRM down side but it just might make sure I don't get to host an unwanted guest on the flight deck.

It might help my CRM if the company were a little more forthright in highlighting the importance of these procedures.

My door is only armoured when it's closed!

CHIRP Comment: This report was published in CABIN CREW FEEDBACK (Issue 25) with a comment stressing

the importance of crew members complying strictly with their company SOPs and ensuring that the flight deck door is opened only when essential and then for the least amount of time required.

CABIN CREW REPORTS

MISUSE OF FASTEN SEATBELT SIGNS?

Report Text: The flight was a 40-minute shuttle and the Captain announced that he would be leaving the seat belt signs on simply because it was a short flight. I asked the In Charge if they had heard this as we wouldn't be able to serve hot drinks with the seat belt sign on. The In Charge told me the sign was only on because the flight was short and not turbulent and that we should still serve hot drinks.

As far as I was aware no hot drinks should be served if the seat belt signs are on irrespective of the reason for the signs.

CHIRP Comment: This report is an excellent example of the importance of effective liaison between flight crew and cabin crew.

This report was raised with the operator concerned for clarification who confirmed that in the case reported there would be no reason why hot drinks could not be served. However, this appeared to be more of a case of not communicating the intention to keep the seat belt signs ON and the level of cabin service that could be provided, including serving hot drinks.

Whilst the flight crew's intentions were probably to assist the cabin crew in providing a speedy service without passengers moving around the cabin, as there was no turbulence present, passengers could be inclined to ignore the signs - which would not only negate their purpose in this instance, but could lead to the signs being ignored should turbulence be expected.

CAA (SRG) FODCOMS

The following CAA (SRG) FODCOMS have been issued since January 2008

3/2008

Implementation of EU-OPS - Transition Arrangements

4/2008

Area Navigation (RNAV) - CAA Guidance Material

5/2008

Cabin Crew - Crew Resource Management (CRM) Forum

2008

6/2008

Runway Incursion Prevention - Recommended Best Practice for Radiotelephony (RTF) Phraseology, Procedures and Airport Taxiing Operations

7/2008

EASA Noise Certification and Transition to EASA Certificate for Noise (EASA Form 45)

8/2008

Revised Emergency Locator Transmitter (ELT) Requirements

9/2008

Initial Safety Training of Cabin Crew

10/2008

CAA Acceptance of Accountable Managers

11/2008

Go-around Training

12/2008

Guidance on Dealing With Fires in the Cabin Caused by Portable Electronic Devices

13/2008

CAA 'On Notice' Procedure

14/2008

Provision of Fire Fighting Services (FFS) for Helicopters Operating at Unlicensed Helicopter Emergency Medical Service (HEMS) or Air Ambulance Operating Bases

15/2008

Operations Manual Requirements for the British Formula 1 Grand Prix Even at Silverstone on 6 July 2008

16/2008

Cabin Crew Medical Assessments

17/2008

Smoke Drills

18/2008

Implementation of EU-OPS - Update to EU-OPS Text

19/2008

European Aviation Safety Agency Consultation Process

CAA (SRG) Flight Operations Department Communications are published on the CAA (SRG) website - www.caa.co.uk/default.aspx?categoryid=33 and click on the link 'Search for a CAA Publication'

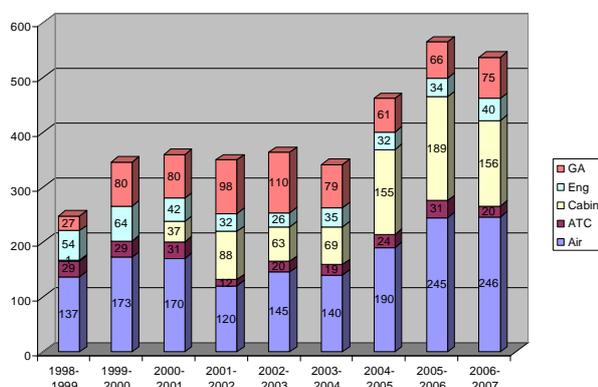
CHIRP REPORT ANALYSIS

The CHIRP Air Transport Programme (Pilots/ATC/Engineers) received a total of 306 reports in the twelve-month period from 1 November 2006 to 31 October 2007, compared to 310 in the same period the previous year. Of this total, 246 (245) reports were submitted by flight crew members; engineers submitted 40 reports (34 - 2006) and ATCOs submitted 20 reports (31 - 2006).

In the same period a further 156 reports (189 - 2006) were received from cabin crew members and a total of 75 reports (66 - 2006) were submitted on GA related topics.

The total number of reports received in the period was 537, a slight reduction from the total for the previous year, principally in the ATCO and Cabin Crew categories.

Reporting Trend 1998 to 2007 - [1 Nov - 31 Oct]



The number of reports submitted by flight crew has increased significantly in the past three years in comparison to earlier years. In 2005 and 2006 there was a significant increase in the number of flight crew reports related to duty/flight time limitations. Flight crew members have also submitted a significant number of safety-related security reports since the Department for Transport introduced more stringent airport security procedures in August 2006. Detailed summaries of these two issues have been provided separately to CAA (SRG) and, in the latter case, the Department for Transport. In comparison, reporting levels from the ATCO and Engineering user groups have been relatively consistent from year to year.

Although not covered in detail in this analysis, the number of reports submitted by cabin crew members has been higher in each of the last three years in comparison to previous years; the principal reason has been an increased awareness of CHIRP among cabin crew members employed by UK operators.

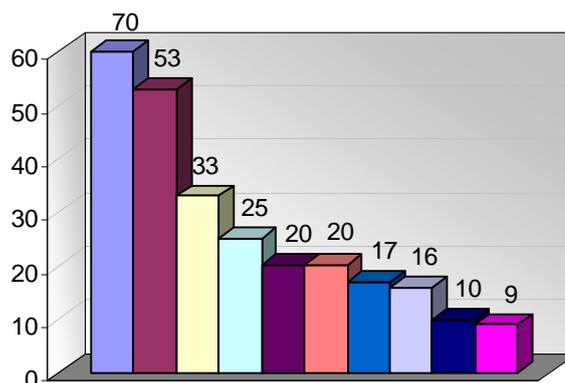
Feedback from reporters indicates that one reason for the recent high level of reporting is that user groups perceive that significant safety-related issues raised through the Programme receive appropriate consideration through the Advisory Board process and, when deemed appropriate, are represented to the

relevant agency, with the reporter subsequently being apprised of the outcome.

The principal issues reported by each of the user groups during the 12 month period are summarised below:

Flight Crew Reports - Principal Issues

In the period from 1 November 2006 to 31 October 2007, 246 flight crew reports were received; a similar reporting level compared to the previous year (245). The two most prominent topics were flying duty periods and airport security issues.



- **Duty**
(Rosters/Rostering, Rest, Length, Crewing, Disruption)
- **Security**
(Ground)
- **Communications - External**
(ATC, Regulators/Government)
- **Procedures**
(Use by Others, Adequacy, Use by Reporter)
- **Company Policies**
(Absence, Operational, Safety Reporting)
- **Air Traffic Management**
(Separation)
- **Handling/Operation**
(Aircraft Handling by Crew, Airmanship)
- **Physiological**
(Illness/Incapacitation, Health, Personal Injury)
- **Aircraft Technical**
(Systems, Propulsion)
- **Pressures**
(From Management/Supervision, Commercial, Time)

Duty

The most frequently reported topic in the past year was rostering (70 reports; 29%); this compared with 104 reports on the same topic submitted in 2006. The two most frequently reported issues on this topic were the same as the previous year, namely roster management/disruption (41 reports) and the use of rest periods of between 18 and 30 hours (11 reports). Where sufficient detailed information was available, the information provided in CHIRP reports was assessed against the CAA 'Safe' work/rest computer model. As in 2006, these assessments showed varying predicted levels of tiredness arising from rest periods of 18-30 hours.

As noted above, a more detailed analysis of this group of reports was submitted to the CAA; a summary of this was also published in the last issue. (FEEDBACK Issue 85, Page 6).

Security

The second most frequent topic reported by flight crew in the period concerned the effect on flight crew members of the more stringent airport security measures imposed by the Department for Transport in August 2006 (53 reports; 22%); this total was additional to the 24 flight crew reports submitted between August and November 2006 shortly after the introduction of the new arrangements. The main area of concern has been and continues to be the inconsistencies in the application of the procedures both between UK airports and between security staff at the same UK airport. There is little evidence to suggest that these problems are being resolved at a local level as the Department of Transport has recommended. More latterly there has been a growing perception among reporters that some flight crew members are being targeted by some security staff; this has led to overly zealous security checks and allegedly intrusive personal searches. Whilst a majority of flight crew members are probably able to handle such experiences without undue stress, the reports are indicative that some individuals, who undergo these experiences on a regular basis, do encounter situations that cause elevated levels of frustration/personal stress that continue during their subsequent flight duty period, leading to a perception that flight safety is being compromised. A key factor is the lack of any effective grievance/appeal process against inappropriate behaviour by airport security personnel, combined with the threat of an individual having his/her airport security pass suspended/confiscated without any form of balanced investigation process.

On the recommendation of the Air Transport Advisory Board and with the endorsement of the Trustees, the reported concerns were represented to the Head of Transec early in 2007 and later to the Permanent Secretary Department for Transport. Copies of the text of all reports received on this topic have also been forwarded to the CAA. The CAA has recently elected to conduct a review of the security-related issues that have been raised in CHIRP reports; however, to date neither the DfT nor the CAA has acknowledged that the reported concerns are indicative of a significant flight safety risk. Thus, this reported problem remains as yet unresolved.

Communications - External

The topic of communications between flight crew and ATCOs was raised in 33 reports (14%); in 2006 this category comprised 41 reports (17%). The principal issues in 2007 were further reports of RTF congestion; the content of ATC speed control instructions and a number of reports detailing poor ATC standards at some Southern European destinations. All reports in this group were reviewed by the Air Transport Advisory Board and either passed to the ATC provider concerned or in the case of phraseology issues forwarded to CAA (SRG) ATSSD for consideration by the RTF Phraseology Working Group. A number of examples/comments were published in FEEDBACK to promote 'good practice' in RTF phraseology.

Procedures

There were 26 reports (11%) relating to the adequacy of, or adherence to procedures. Many of the reports in this category drew attention to the potential safety implications of company/third party procedures. Examples in the group were: non-adherence to de-icing procedures; a company SOP to board passengers when refuelling with no flight crew members or engineers present in an effort to reduce turn-round times; ramp staff using mobile phones near aircraft; a change in one operator's emergency evacuation SOP which left passengers unsupervised after leaving the aircraft; an ATC procedure that parked an aircraft with a reported brake fire immediately adjacent to other aircraft on the ramp. The lack of information available to pilots regarding ATC standing agreements that determine the vertical profiles of Standard Arrival routings continued to be the subject of adverse comment, as did the variations in flight crew altimetry SOPs that are still required for some UK airfield Standard Instrument Departures and which continue to contribute to flight crew errors. A more recent issue was the differing expectation of flight crew and ATCOs with respect to the emergency descent procedure within the UK FIR; this is currently the subject of a CAA review.

Policies

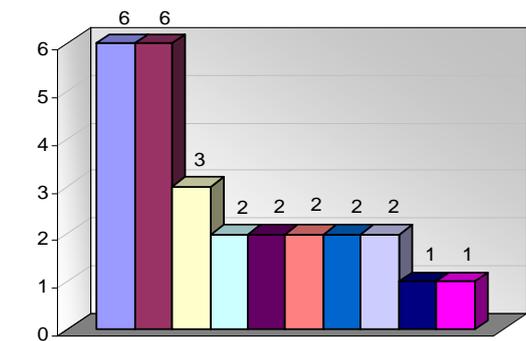
Company Policies were cited in 20 reports (8%). Six reports referred to difficulties associated with the introduction of paperless crew briefing systems that are increasingly being employed by UK operators to replace hard-copy processes. This is a new issue and whilst such a policy might have significant benefits for the operator, the evidence from the reports and other anecdotal evidence suggest that essential information may not always be as readily accessible to all flight crew members as the previous hard copy system. Moreover, in some cases the operator has assumed that individuals have proficient PC skills and little IT training has been provided. This has led to allegations that flight crew members' report times are insufficient to complete the required tasks. These concerns were referred to the CAA for review.

The management of sickness absence, which had allegedly led to individual flight crew members electing to report for duty when medically unfit and had been the subject of 11 reports in 2006, was raised in a further 5 reports, all early in 2007. Following a second approach to the company concerned, only one further report on this topic has been subsequently received.

Physiological

Ten of the 16 reports in this group were on the topic of cabin/flight deck air contamination. Of these, 8 involved one specific aircraft type. The main issues raised in the reports were represented directly to the operator, who initiated a number of actions in response to the issues raised. The health issues raised by reporters in several reports were also forwarded to the Head of Occupational Health, CAA Medical Department.

ATCO Reports - Principal Issues



- **Air Traffic Management**
(Separation)
- **Communications - External**
(Pilots)
- **Pressures**
(Commercial, Domestic, Management)
- **Regulation/Law**
(Compliance with)
- **Procedures**
(Use by Others, Adequacy, Use By Reporter, Lack of)
- **Handling/Operation**
(Operation of Equipment, Airmanship)
- **Resources**
(Compliance, Knowledge, Absence)
- **Security**
(Ground, In-Flight)
- **Company Policies**
(Operational, Safety Reporting)
- **Duty**
(Length, Rest)

Twenty ATCO reports were received compared with a total of 27 reports received in the previous twelve-month period.

Communications - External

Communications between ATCOs and flight crew were the most frequently reported category but the number of reports (6) was reduced from the previous twelve months (13). Four reports highlighted poor RTF phraseology by flight crew, particularly in relation to ATC speed control instructions. One report highlighted errors in the CAP 413 - Quick Reference Guide; these were passed to the CAA editor of CAP 413 for information.

Air Traffic Management

Air traffic management (ATM) issues featured in four reports. Two related to perceived equipment deficiencies, one of which involved the introduction of the Electronic Flight Progress Strip at an Air Traffic Services Unit. All ATM issues were represented to the relevant management.

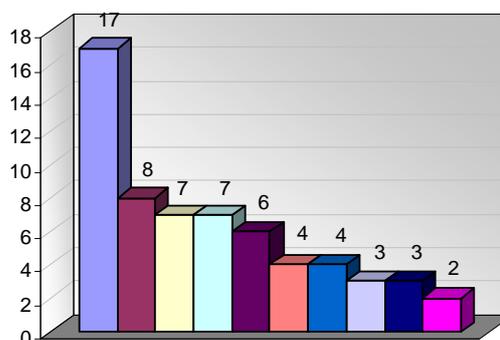
Security

Two reports commented on the difficulties that ATC staff experienced at two UK airports, where the ATC facilities were located airside, and raised similar issue to those reported by flight crew. Both reports were submitted by operational managers on behalf of their staff.

Company Policies/Relationship with Management

Five reports were received in these two categories. The trend for fewer confidential reports in this category to be submitted by ATC staff continued this year. The issues in these categories were principally related to shift resources to cope with increased traffic levels; all were reviewed promptly by the relevant operational management.

Engineer Reports - Principal Issues



- **Security**
(Ground)
- **Maintenance**
(Line, Base, Repairs)
- **Procedures**
(Use by Others, Adequacy, Existence)
- **Regulation/Law**
(Compliance with)
- **Company Policies**
(Operational, Safety Reporting, Disciplinary/Grievance)
- **Pressures**
(Commercial, From Management/Supervision, Time)
- **Resources**
(Manpower/Personnel, Tools/Equipment)
- **Aircraft Technical**
(Systems, Propulsion)
- **Documentation**
(Suitability/Adequacy)
- **Training**
(Technique, Relevance, Design)

The number of Engineer reports received in the year (40) increased slightly when compared to the equivalent period last year (34 in 2006). The principal groupings were airport security issues (43%) and maintenance related issues (43%). Maintenance concerns in the Line and Base Maintenance environments were in equal proportions and were related to a perceived lack of manpower and the application of maintenance standards.

Security

This issue featured in 17 reports (43%). As with the flight crew reports, the key concerns noted in these reports were difficulties/delays in gaining airside access, the inconsistencies of security checks and the overzealous nature of some security staff, leading to stress and anxiety to complete what the reporter assessed to be essential maintenance tasks. In one case, the reporter failed to gain airside access and in another the reporter was wrongfully arrested, charged and held in police detention before being released.

unconditionally; this incident led directly to the reporter electing to take early retirement.

Manpower issues

There were 8 reports (20%) dealing with concerns over a perceived lack of certifying staff, or the increased level of work load brought about by what was seen as a lack of staff with the appropriate type certification cover. One example was a temporary lack of cover following the merger of two companies, as the new management team sought to realign company policies and new working practices. All reports in this category were either represented to the operational management or to the CAA.

Maintenance standards

Nine reports (23%) were related to the application of maintenance standards. Principally, these were concerns expressed by individuals that some standards were being degraded by the way in which engineering managements were applying maintenance policies. In each of these cases, the matter was referred to the CAA and following a review by the CAA Regional Office, the issues were resolved. One example was a lack of clarity in the certification procedures associated with the manufacture of electrical harnesses; another was management pressure not to complete a required engine check on a scheduled basis in accordance with approved data.

Regulatory matters

Issues relating to policies by the Regulatory Authority appeared in 3 reports (7%), two of these were in regard to a reduction in UK engineer licence examination facilities; subsequent to the representation of this concern, the CAA elected to increase engineer examination capacity. One report concerned the difficulty in accessing Airworthiness Directive information via the EASA web site; after validating the reporter's concern as being a more widely held view, the matter was discussed with the CAA and contributed to a successful initiative by the CAA, which has led to EASA improving the utility of this on-line service.

Maintenance errors

During this review period there were no reports received from individuals detailing specific errors during maintenance; however, the Maintenance Error Management System (MEMS) database now contains over 700 reports of maintenance errors investigated by companies and submitted using the MEDA report format. Over 500 of these reports have been disidentified and analysed by CHIRP. The results of the analysis have been disseminated to members of the MEMS group and in presentations to a number of industry bodies, including the CAA. Also, through an agreement with the CAA, MOR reports relating to maintenance errors have also been analysed, and compared with the MEMS group data. More details of the analysis of MEMS data will be published in the next issue.

CONTACT US

Peter Tait Director
Flight Crew/ATC Reports

Mick Skinner Deputy Director (Engineering)
Maintenance/Engineer Reports

Kirsty Arnold Administration Manager
Circulation/Administration
Cabin Crew Reports

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CHIRP
FREEPOST (G13439) [no stamp required]
Building Y20E, Room G15
Cody Technology Park
Ively Road
Farnborough GU14 0BR, UK

Freephone (UK only): 0800 214645 or
Telephone: +44 (0) 1252 395013
Fax: +44 (0) 1252 394290 (secure)
E-mail: confidential@chirp.co.uk

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

If you receive FEEDBACK as a licensed pilot/ATCO/maintenance engineer you will need to **notify the department that issues your licence of your change of address and not CHIRP**. Please write (including your licence number) to:

**Personnel Licensing
CAA (SRG)
Aviation House
Gatwick Airport South
West Sussex RH6 0YR:**

Flight Crew Post - as above
Fax: + 44 (0) 1293 573996
E-mail: fclweb@srg.caa.co.uk
ATCO Post - as above
Fax: + 44 (0) 1293 573974
E-mail: ATS.licensing@srg.caa.co.uk
Maintenance Engineer..... Post - as above
Fax: + 44 (0) 1293 573779
E-mail: eldweb@srg.caa.co.uk

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FEEDBACK is published quarterly and is circulated to UK licensed pilots, air traffic control officers and maintenance engineers.

Registered in England No: 3253764

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