

CEO Report to the Board – January 2023

a. National Centre

Manny has published a blog covering 2022 on the National Centre website which you can read here: <https://nationalcentre.bmfa.org/blog-2022>

We are still in discussion with Melton Borough Council (MBC), the Valuation Office (VOA) and Hampton-Lovett regarding the Business Rates levied on Buckminster. The VOA have published updated rating values from April 2023 and the value placed on the NC is set to increase from £31K to £39K, which would translate into an annual rates bill of ~ £20K. This is subject to a fast-track appeal.

Work is underway on converting one of the stable blocks into the multi-purpose space/café but has been subject to some delays due to prolonged periods of cold weather and the Christmas break. However, once completed this in itself will increase the rateable value.

I will be meeting with MBC in the near future to discuss the matter and whether there is any relief they can provide.

We have held two auctions at the NC which have proved very successful (total sales over £57K). There is clearly some demand for this service as Manny continues to receive lots of queries from members with items/collections to sell. It is a huge amount of work however and therefore and the software licence is quite expensive, so likely to remain at two auctions per year within the 3 month licence period of the software.

b. CAA Team Report

Article 16

I have been engaged in various pieces of work with the CAA, not least the renewal of our Article 16 Authorisation.

There were some additional requirements for the application this year, including details of our governance and structure. This information was translated into an article in the next issue of the BMFA NEWS to inform members about the changes.

The Article 16 Authorisation was in place prior to Christmas, though (as always) slipped to when I was supposed to be on leave, despite promised from the CAA that it would be issued at the start of December. The only changes relate to the changes to CAP722 and how they present the regulations.

CAP 722

The regulations are now contained entirely within UK Regulation (EU) 2019/947, which incorporates acceptable means of compliance, guidance material and a separate appendix (Appendix A) which provides full details of the arrangement for model flying under Article 16 authorisation within the framework of model aircraft clubs and associations. This appendix to the regulation replaces CAP722F which has now been withdrawn. The full document can be found here:

<https://regulatorylibrary.caa.co.uk/2019-947-pdf/PDF.pdf>

CAP722 has now become solely a document providing CAA policy and guidance for unmanned aircraft operators.

CAP722 still propagates the CAA's misinterpretation of the insurance regulation (EC785/2004) which I have challenged again. They have received a bit of adverse stakeholder feedback to the updated

CAP722 and are in the process of amending. Whether they will address the misinformation about EC785/2004 remains to be seen (previously they had concluded that I was right).

Operator/Flyer ID Registration

There were a few issues with the CAA Operator I.D. system at the start of our renewals cycle which created quite a lot of work for Andy. This was due to some changes at the CAA end which rejected some of our data. I think most problems are now resolved.

These issues diverted attention away from the Flyer ID project which we hope to move forward with and complete within the next few weeks.

CAA Fees

The CAA outlined their proposed fee charges for the next financial year in CAP 2402. The CAA were proposing a 13.5% increase in Operator Registration fee, with the sum rounded up to the nearest £1. Therefore £12 (=20% increase!) from April 2023. I encouraged members to respond to the consultation and await the outcome.

CAA RPAS Ecosystem Study

I participated in a study being undertaken by consultants working on behalf of the CAA, exploring the RPAS 'ecosystem' and how different organisations relate to each other and sit within the 'ecosystem'.

CAA Safety Reporting System Study

The CAA also commissioned consultants for a study on Occurrence Reporting, as they seem to have concluded that they need to follow the BMFA's lead with a more user-friendly system. You can find out more here: <https://www.caa.co.uk/drones/safety-advice-and-reporting/drone-and-model-aircraft-safety-reporting/>.

c. Computer Sub-Committee

On the 11th Jan, a staff member's email account was 'hacked' by spammers. An email came in from one of our Affiliated Clubs which appeared to be genuine and this was inadvertently opened. This resulted in the spammers gaining access to the mailbox from which a spam email was then sent out to those who had been in direct contact with the staff member. The issue was identified immediately and AIR IT locked down the mail account. However, an unknown number of spam emails had been sent by that point, but primarily to club secretaries. Advice created in collaboration with AIR IT was circulated to them.

The attack was contained to a single email account with no other systems being compromised in any way.

Additional security measures were implemented with immediate effect with increased multi-factor authentication on all accounts. I have also implemented a training scheme with AIR IT.

d. Club Support Officer

Andy and I have been engaged in numerous club disputes including one which had become particularly nasty and required input and guidance from the Hon Solicitor. Thankfully with the Hon Solicitor's guidance, we steered all parties to an amicable outcome.

We have also been supporting members in the SW Area with responding to the byelaw consultation for Dartmoor National Park. As originally proposed, the byelaws would have required written

permission for any model to be operated. We invited members to respond to the consultation and made direct inputs from the BMFA. They are now 'minded to make' some amendments which would restore the status quo for the glider pilots and we have worked on a final submission in collaboration with the Area and clubs affected which will be submitted next week.

Much of Andy's time has been taken up with website work and ensuring that processes have run smoothly for the renewal cycle (not least the CAA Operator renewals).

Andy also provided the IT and administrative support for the two successful auctions held at the National Centre.

Andy has suggested a 'round the world distance challenge' for clubs to participate in during 2023 (in addition to the repeated record attempt) and this was discussed at the 'In The Air Tonight' session earlier this week. Andy continues to support the ITAT programme.

Andy has also been involved with the Members Director and I in discussions with the SAA.

e. General Aviation Alliance

The main focus of the GA Alliance is responding to the EGIS report which was, yet another study commissioned by the DfT and CAA on electronic conspicuity. <https://www.caa.co.uk/news/joint-statement-from-cao-dft-on-the-development-of-a-national-standard-for-electronic-conspicuity/>

The report was flawed because EGIS didn't actually speak to any of the stakeholders they claim to have engaged with and it appears to have been written with the CAA's preferred outcome in mind.

The Airspace 4 All trust which was set up with DfT funding to help co-ordinate responses to Airspace Change Proposals has run into difficulty and is unlikely to secure further funding. However, a significant sum was spent with no useful benefit. The work has been picked up by Tom Hardie the GAA Programme Manager.

f. European Model Flying Union

The 7th General Assembly took place in Duisburg, Germany on 15 & 16 October. I have appended a copy of the minutes for information below.

Dave Phipps

January 2023



General Meeting of the European Model Flying Union

Hybrid Meeting – Duisburg & Zoom, 15 & 16 October 2022
Commenced 13:00 hrs

Draft Minutes of Meeting

In Attendance

Attendees as per list in Appendix 1.

Opening of the meeting

Greetings of the hosting member (DAeC)

The secretary welcomed delegates to the meeting on behalf of the DAeC.

Session 1

Designation of a reporter for the meeting

As the usual reporter (Rob Buckley) was attending remotely, the President agreed to produce the report of the meeting.

Approval of the agenda of the 7. General Assembly

The agenda of the meeting was approved with no changes.

The meeting was being recorded to allow minutes to be recorded, there were no objections to the recording.

Approval of the 6. General Assembly minutes of 3 October 2021

The minutes of the previous Zoom meeting were accepted as a true & accurate record with no objections.

Election of the election supervisor and one election assistant

Session 2

Report of the President

The President reported on the recent work of the EMFU, including completion of the guide book on the implementation of Article 16 which EASA had commissioned for the benefit of the model flying community throughout EU Member States and their regulators. The President commended the time and effort that Jürgen Lefevere had put into drafting the document on behalf of the EMFU. EASA had not formally approved the document but had confirmed that they were content for the EMFU to share it with members.

The EMFU had also provided input into EASA's model flying video (<https://fb.watch/g8cXSk7hyC/>) and had been asked to review content and provide images for EASA's model flying website which was in development. The President re-stated his previous request for members to provide images of videos for EASA to include on their website.

The President commented on the continued good relations with Europe Air Sports and would be attending their Technical Conference at the end of October, with some senior officials from EASA also in attendance. Key issues for the entire air sport community remained the implementation of U-Space and the integration of BVLOS drones into the airspace.

The Secretary provided an update on his work with ISAD e.v. on the ongoing radio spectrum work.

The President raised a discussion point to seek feedback from members regarding the ongoing relevance of the EMFU to them. At the outset, the union had been formed specifically to deal with the negotiations surrounding the EU Drone Regulations. The President commented that requests for input from members on subsequent matters often received minimal response and he wanted to determine whether this was because members were content with the work being conducted by the EMFU on their behalf or because they were no longer engaged/interested. The consensus of the meeting was that the EMFU continued to perform a valuable function and would be needed to deal with future challenges. The President thanked members for their support.

Report of the Treasurer and the committee for the verification of accounts

The President reported that the Treasurer had been inactive due to health problems and subscriptions had been collected and no accounts had been provided for the meeting to consider. The President confirmed that the Treasurer was now active and was willing to stand for re-election in his role, which would be discussed further during session 3.

The President commented that although subscriptions had not been collected for two years, the outgoings of the EMFU had also been greatly reduced due to the COVID pandemic. The only significant outgoings were the subscriptions to Europe Air Sports and the EMFU's finances would also be bolstered by the payment from EASA for the Article 16 guide.

As such, the President proposed that the outstanding subscriptions would not be recovered, as most members had long since closed their accounts for those years. However, updated membership numbers would be obtained from members and subscription invoices would be expedited by the Treasurer from this point forward.

Presentation and approval of the budget for 2023

Contribution from the Board, Membership fees. Discussion and decision

The Board proposed that the fees for 2023 would be:

Full Member:	0.16€ per represented pilot per year.
Non-commercial Associated Member:	0.08€ per represented pilot per year.
Commercial Association Member:	0.1% of the annual turnover limited to 2000€

For all classes of membership, a minimum of 30€ would apply.

This proposal was approved.

Session 3

Election of the Vice-President. Proposal: Laurent Henry (FFAM)

Laurent Henry introduced himself to the meeting and his election to the Board was approved. Delegates applauded Laurent on his election.

Election of the Treasurer. Proposal: Haagen Valanes (NLF)

In the absence of Haagen, the President outlined three choices for the GA to consider:

1. Not to re-elect Haagen, with other Board members to take temporary control of the finances.
2. Re-elect Haagen who was willing to continue but to provide greater support to help him fulfil his role.
3. For a new volunteer to step forward for election to the post.

After discussion, it was agreed that Haagen Valanes would be re-elected as Treasurer and offered greater support by the Board in his role.

Election of 3 Board Members. Proposal: **Espen Bakke (NLF)**
 Robert Buckley (LMA)
 Jürgen Lefevere (SMV)

The re-election of all three existing Board members was approved.

Election of the members of the committee for the verification of accounts

It was agreed that the committee for the verification of accounts would be comprised of:

Hans Krijne (who also volunteered to assist the Treasurer if required).

Bengt Lindgren (who had conveyed his willingness to be appointed in his absence).

It was requested by Robert Herzog (LBA), that arrangements for a secret ballot should be put in place for future hybrid GA meetings.

Session 4

New Members:

Short Presentation of the Real Federación Aeronáutica Española (RFAE) from Spain

Carles Ayman provided a brief introduction for the RFAE who were applying for full membership of the EMFU.

Short presentation of the Clube de Aeromodelismo de Assafora (CAAS) from Portugal

No representative from CAAS was present, but details of the application for full membership of the EMFU had been circulated prior to the meeting by the General Secretary.

Decision and voting about membership

Both the RFAE and CAAS were approved and welcomed to the EMFU as full members.

Session 5

Review of options for EMFU membership and possible change of statutes

- 1. Board Proposal for change of statutes**
- 2. Proposal for change of statutes from DAeC, FFAM and ÖAEC**

Following receipt of a request from DAeC, FFAM and ÖAEC for a change to the statutes, the matter was discussed at length. The wording proposed and agreed by the GA for the statutes was as follows:

- 6.1 Full Membership of the EMFU is open to organisations that represent model aircraft operators and pilots and have legal personality in a European country.
Organisations eligible for full membership may be regional, national or international, and represent all or specific branches or types of model flying. There may be more than one organisation within a country eligible for full membership of the EMFU.
~~The status of the organizations which have been full member before xx.xx.xxxx (date of change of the statutes) is not affected.~~
- 6.2 Associate Membership is open to persons or organisations that are not eligible for full Membership as stated in Article 6.1.
- 6.3 Persons or organisations who wish to join the EMFU shall submit their membership request with the relevant justifications to the General Secretary. The Executive Board shall examine this request and make a recommendation for a decision by the General Meeting.
- 6.3bis The Executive Board may decide to provisionally engage persons or organisations applying for membership in the work of the EMFU, without the right to vote or the requirement to pay membership fees, until the decision on their membership by the General Meeting.

End of Day 1

For the benefit of those physically in attendance in Duisburg, the General Secretary had arranged an enjoyable evening for delegates at Webster Brauhaus.

Day 2

Session 6

EU regulation and related issues

1. Implementation issues with EU Implementing Regulation and Article 16 Authorisations

Jürgen Lefevere led a discussion on issues encountered by members with the EU Implementing Regulation and Article 16 Authorisations. It was hoped that the newly produced guide to implementing Article 16 would provide useful assistance for members negotiations with their national regulators.

2. Review/Proposals to change EU Rules

3. U-Space and Electronic Conspicuity

The President gave a presentation outlining current projects in the UK to make model flying conspicuous. These included a trial using ground-based broadcast from an ADS-B obstruction beacons (see

<https://uavionix.com/projects/ukobsbeacon/?fbclid=IwAR10n2MJWoBhXz-1qcsrsm8POytLOVqiwo4f7Y-Ez4axzp9HR1Ls2sbese0>) and a separate trial using an app based notification system.

Other members including including LBA were already using app based notification and Robert Herzog provided a demonstration of the system in use in Belgium (see www.droneguide.be).

As U-Space and Electronic Conspicuity were issues of major concern for the entire model flying community, it was suggested that an EMFU Working Group be established to develop an EMFU position for presentation to EASA/the EC Commission.

4. Other issues (including topics raised by members)

The threat to model flying due to objections from wildlife campaigners was discussed and this had been a long-term issue for several members. Several members had conducted studies or compiled useful information and it was agreed that resources could be collated and shared via the website.

Session 7

Clarification of the Membership status of IG-Hangflug (in response to a letters received from DAeC, FFAM and ÖAEC and IG-Hangflug).

The membership status of IG-Hangflug was discussed at length in response to a letter received from DAeC, FFAM and ÖAEC and the subsequent response from IG-Hangflug. Following this discussion, the GA:

- Stressed that our common objective is to support aeromodelling and aeromodellers in Europe. In this context, the GA underlined the importance of constructive cooperation and open, friendly & respectful communication between members;
- Noted that legal personality is not a requirement for associate membership.
- Welcomed IG-Hangflug's report on its process to acquire legal personality and noted that should IG-Hangflug wish to become a full member in the future, then it can apply for full membership status pursuant to Article 6 in the EMFU Statutes (as revised).

In consideration of the above, it was the unanimous decision of the GA that the status of IG-Hangflug would remain unchanged as that of an associate member of the EMFU.

Session 8

Website and Social Media

It was agreed that the EMFU would maintain its current position of not having a social media presence.

Jürgen Lefevere provided an update on the status of the EMFU website and requested that members provide information to allow him to keep the site up to date. Of particular interest was provision of information for visiting pilots.

Jürgen proposed to create a resources page, collating useful resources for members to share, including the wildlife studies referred to in Session 6.

The President thanked Jürgen for the significant effort he had put into making the website a valuable information resource.

Session 9

Location for the 2023 General Assembly

The ÖAEC offered an invitation to hold the EMFU 8.GA in Vienna which the meeting accepted. The date was not fixed but it was suggested that the meeting would take place in 12 months' time (October 2023). It was agreed that if the GA was to be moved to October (from May) each year, that an amendment to the statutes may need to be agreed at the next GA.

AOB

The President closed the meeting offering thanks to the General Secretary for his organisation of the GA and thanking members for their ongoing support.

The meeting closed at 13.30hrs

Appendix 1

Attendees

Present in Duisburg

Dave Phipps	EMFU President & BMFA
Laurent Henry	EMFU Vice President & FFAM
Frank Tofahrn	EMFU General Secretary & DAeC
Jurgen Lefevere	EMFU Board Member & SMV
Espen Bakke	EMFU Board Member & NLF
Adrian Eggenberger	SMV
Achim Doerfler	IG-Hangflug
Gerd Holzner	IG-Hangflug
Harri Pihl	FAA
Hans Krijne	FLRCV
Leo Van Eylen	VML
Robert Herzog	LBA
Paulette Halleaux	LBA

Also present

Martina Tofahrn – Admin & Catering support

Rob Buckley	LMA
Arsenio Solana	AEAMD
Bernhard Rögner	ÖAEC
Christian Faymann	ÖAEC
Ernest Mattiusi	FAL
Michael Österlund	RCFF
Carles Aymat	RFAE
Vitor Ferreira	CAAS