



LFC Newsletter

The Newsletter of the Limerick Flying Club

www.limerickflyingclub.com

May 2012

The hostile waters...

It seems that the licencing regime for the Aran Islands airfields has been handed over to Galway Aviation Services (t/a Aer Arann Islands), on the face of it by winning a tender and getting awarded quite a lot of money for their trouble. The suggested figure is published in other places, but I cannot personally verify the authenticity of the amount.

This has led to the issue of the SOP below for the three Aran Island airfields which effectively makes them inaccessible to anybody other than Aer Arann.

Aerodrome SOP's

Following the appointment of Galway Aviation Services (t/a Aer Arann Islands) as the new Licensee for the Inis Mór, Inis Meáin and Inis Oírr Aerodromes, we would like to make you familiar with our new standard operating procedures for these Aerodromes.

From March 1st 2012, airport requirements are revised as follows:

- ✦ Minimum of 3 hours PPR is required either by phone 091 593034 or by email info@aerarannislands.ie .
- ✦ Pilots may only land during opening hours and when two -way radio contact has been established with the destination aerodrome.
- ✦ Restrictive parking applies at Inis Oírr Aerodrome
- ✦ Contact must be made with the airport on 123.00 MHz while within the vicinity of the aerodromes.

Aerodrome Opening Hours

Normal opening hours:

0900 - 1700 March to September (local time)

0900 - 1500 October to February (local time)

Opening hours for Aer Arann Islands Operations will apply. Aircraft movements are prohibited outside of opening hours.

Charges

Landing fee: E10

Parking: Free

Whether that is the intention or not is still not clear, but there is quite a lot of anger being expressed by email and on Flying in Ireland forum concerning the matter. There have been calls to have the matter raised with local representatives and also with AOPA.

The difficulty is of course that the Aran Islands have always been private fields and PPR was always a requirement. Over the years there had been a lax attitude expressed by the operators of the airfields although Aer Arann and the IAA were not quite as benign. For some time there have been notices placed on the windows of some of the airfields which obligated the duty officer to report the to the IAA the Reg. of any aircraft which landed without PPR. Aer Arann have always been a little possessive as to who was on the runway, because they seemed to assume that the airfields were specifically for their use. Of course it has to be agreed that they have



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to provide an air service, all year round in terrible weather and it may be a bit annoying to have a 'swarm' of private aircraft around on the few fine days that present themselves in that part of Ireland.

However though the regime seems to be a little heavy and there should be some arrangements negotiable whereby private aircraft could use the facilities by agreement, outside of the very restricted hours that are published in the SOP. Of course there are insurance difficulties and so forth but there is also a high level of disregard for any flexibility. On the face of it if things remain as they are pretty much every airport in County Galway is severely restricted or out of bounds for general aviation. This cannot be a healthy development, especially as many of those airports have received considerable public money over the years. Two additional airfields, namely Inisboffin and Clifden have not yet opened but we believe that the licence for those two strips is also likely to come under Aer Arann.



This is not of course an official Restricted area because it is still in uncontrolled airspace. However with the restrictions which have been announced based on the hours of operation it virtually makes the entire hashed area out of bounds for landings.

The Limerick Flying Club has been a very regular visitor to the islands over the years and the destination has proved very popular. In addition to that it has also presented a valuable opportunity to fly over water and experience the necessary skills, and extra flight planning requirements. It will be a shame if we cannot continue.

It of course has to emphasised that the islands are still open when the required PPR has been sought and operations are carried out during the published opening hours. The requirement for two-way communication is a little controversial because the area is in uncontrolled airspace and as such aircraft have no legal requirement to have a radio on board, and have no legal requirement to communicate with anybody, providing they are operating VFR.

It should also be stated in fairness to both sides that Limerick Flying Club has distructed two aircraft on two different Aran Islands. The latest one caused considerable inconvenience to Aer Arann flights in Inismore because of the proximity of the wreck to the runway. Incidents and events like that of course do not help to get co-operation from the regular commercial operators.



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Organised club outings...

Foncy Hobbins has very kindly arranged some interesting visits to local aviation based places.

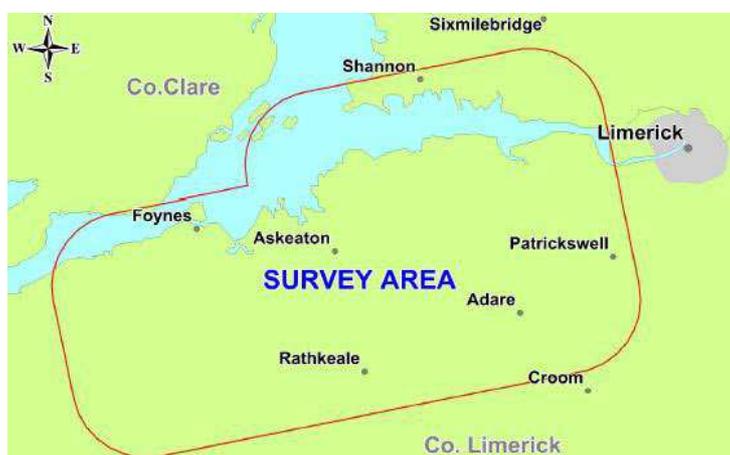
The first of those is to the ATC Shortwave communications station at Ballygireen. This visit is scheduled for 6th May. The assembly is in Coonagh at 13:50 (local). Places are very limited for this visit.

The second visit is to the Coastguard SAR facility in Shannon Airport. This visit will take place on Saturday 19th May, and assembly is in Coonagh at 13:50 (local). Please note that you must reserve your place for this visit and the places are limited to 12 persons.

For further information and to book your place please co-ordinate directly with Foncy mobile (087) 989 5488.

Aerial Survey...

During mid to late April a low-level airborne geophysical survey will be flown over part of north County Limerick. The survey is being carried out on behalf of Lundin Mining Exploration Limited. The plane will be flying in daylight hours from Mondays to Sunday inclusive, at an altitude of 80m-85m over rural areas, along lines spaced 75m apart in an east-west direction.



As you can see from the map provided, quite a lot of this operation is in our training area. For that reason I have spoken to Susanne at the helpline provide by the survey operator and have advised them of our training area and also our frequency is they require to contact us. Other than that they have no specific message for us.

My friend learned to fly from that...

By S N Walsh

As some of you know I spent many years as an Instructor, not just on single-engine machines but also on multi and pressurised types. However I was never under any illusion about the ability of students to spring surprises but nobody ever did it like this one.

For some years we operated a twin in Coonagh and did quite a lot of multi training. One day a student who was a first timer in the type proceeded to do what should be a routine normal takeoff. Of course a twin takeoff in Coonagh is never quite routine, but we had become accustomed to the extra skills that were needed. One of those was that the rotate point on runway 28 was past the taxiway B intersection at an IAS of 67 Kts. That was very close to the end of course but when airborne the boundary wall was no longer a 'worry'.

The acceleration was quite normal and we had just about reached rotate point and speed, but what was to happen next came as a total shock and completely unexpected. At taxiway B intersection the student suddenly slammed on both brakes! Now as my Indian friend would ask 'what to do?' and unfortunately there was very little time to decide. The only thing that I could do was to haul the aircraft off the ground before the speed reduced, although at a slightly too-slow IAS. The stall warning was having a 'field day' for the first 15 seconds of the climb. The next thing I did was to put my hand very firmly on the students throttle hand



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to make absolutely sure that he would not reduce the power, or worse still reduce the power on one engine, in which case I would probably be putting up daisies by now. Also the decision to rotate at any speed was the only option available because stopping the machine between taxiway B and the wall was out of the question.

It took a long debrief to find out what on earth possessed the student to take such a drastic action. The only explanation that he could give was that the fence was looking him straight in the face and he felt it was time to stop. Wow what a few moments of absolute scare and I consider myself somewhat fortunate to have made the right decision with absolutely zero time to think and of course also fortunate to be in a position to write about the incident.

I am not quite sure what I learned about flying from that but I certainly got a very stark insight into human psychology. Of course the poor student got an even more stark insight into human anger when I had him back on the ground. So as always the Instructor's lot is not a happy lot!

The club fly-out...

The fly-out is planned to proceed to Haverford West in Wales on Saturday 30th June and return to Coonagh on Sunday 1st July. The club in Wales are prepared to help with the provision of nice pub or two and also advise on accommodation. The seats are presently full but Foncey has a reserve list. Anybody on either the active list or the reserve list who does not want to travel should contact Foncey as soon as possible to ensure that nobody is disappointed. It would be a fiasco if the fly-out were to happen with some empty seats because of lack of communication.

The trip should be extremely interesting and give some valuable international experience.

Club Fly-in...

Final arrangements have now been made for the annual fly-in which will take place at the end of August. Hopefully the weather will be kind to us and that we get some interesting activity. As always we will be hoping for a good turnout of visiting aircraft, but as we know this is always very weather limited.

However the bar-b-q and few pints will go ahead regardless of the weather conditions and it is nice to have something to fall back on when the elements decide that it is not our day. Indeed those aspects of the fly-in have proved to be extremely popular. The social scene at the club needs to be kept going at all times, because whatever about other matters we always try to tell ourselves that we are a club.

Library...

By Foncey Hobbins

I have created a small library of some of my own aviation books in the bookcase in the portakabin which you might find of interest. If you borrow a book please **Return** it so that someone else can read it. You may have some good books yourself which others might like, why not loan them to the library of the club? Hope you enjoy some of these.

Articles

The LFC Newsletter is published monthly, in the first week of the month. All articles, letters, etc. must reach the Editor at least two days before distribution. All club members, and non-members who are interested in our club, or flying, are invited to publish articles. Please submit your article by email to newscoonagh@gmail.com or in person or by post. They may on any subject you wish, information, gossip, fun, logistics, or anything else.

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