

POLICY

GAMTA sets up training policy group

The UK General Aviation Manufacturers and Traders Association (GAMTA) has set up the Flight Training Policy Group (FTPG) to lobby for improvements to Joint Aviation Requirements-Flight Crew Licensing (JAR-FCL), drawing up a list of "top ten" priorities for regulatory change. GAMTA is also lobbying for changes on differing European national rules on value added tax (VAT) for professional flying training fees.

Most of the argument over JAR-FCL is for rationalisation and clarification of the rules. Flying training organisations are finding it difficult to interpret and implement them. GAMTA chief executive Graham Forbes says that among the rules which need rationalisation are: entry requirements to the flight instructors course; definitions of acceptable use of simulators during training; requirements for conversion; and instrument rating validation for foreign and former military pilots.

UK-based schools charge VAT on professional pilot training, whether for UK or foreign students. GAMTA cites BAE Systems' decision to move its main *ab-initio* pilot training base from Prestwick, Scotland to VAT-free Jerez in Spain as one example of why the government should not maintain its existing tax stance.

CHARTER

Rifton readies for AOC ops

Rifton Aviation is hoping to receive an FAA Part 135 charter operator's certificate next month and, in preparation, has added a new Dassault Falcon 2000 business jet to its fleet.

The aircraft will form part of the core fleet of the New York company's fractional ownership-based programme, set for launch in the third quarter.

ROLL-OUT KATE SARSFIELD / LONDON

Grob Aerospace sets sights on low-cost business aircraft

German military specialist says commercial sector represents flourishing opportunity

Grob Aerospace is expanding into the business aircraft market with the unveiling of its four-seat G140TP single-engine turboprop.

The \$890,000 Rolls-Royce Allison 250-B17F-powered aircraft, also designed as a high performance aerobatic, trainer and utility aircraft, will offer a lower-cost alternative to other single-engine turboprops, says Grob.

Tussenhausen-Mattsies, Germany-based Grob rolled out the G140 on 13 June following fast-track development of the all-composite aircraft. From first design to prototype was achieved in four months.

Grob admits that although the bulk of its business is military-

related, the flourishing corporate and general aviation market seemed a logical and potentially lucrative move for the company. It could adapt technology from its current aircraft lines, the G115 and G120 trainers.

The all-plastic G140 will be available in pressurised and unpressurised versions, each offering a maximum cruise speed of 395km/h (215kt) and a maximum range at 1,000ft (300m) of 2,130km (1,150nm). The aircraft is set for European Joint Aviation Requirement JAR 23 certification in September 2002, and US approval will follow "shortly after".

Grob is planning to strengthen

its sales, marketing and customer support in an attempt to stimulate sales of the G140 and gain recognition as a civil aircraft manufacturer. "This is a new market for us and a new type of customer with different needs and demands," Grob concedes.

Meanwhile, Grob's launch customer for the G120 trainer, Lufthansa Flight Training (LFT) which has converted three of its four options to bring firm orders to six. The aircraft will be deployed at LFT's Airline Training Center Arizona subsidiary in Goodyear, Phoenix, for initial flight training of German armed forces pilots.

REBRANDING

Galaxy and Astra are renamed

Gulfstream has doubled its product line by rebranding the Galaxy and Astra SPX business jets as the super mid-size Gulfstream 200 (G200) and mid-size Gulfstream 100 (G100), respectively. Their incorporation into the Gulfstream line up follows the acquisition of Galaxy Aerospace earlier this month by Gulfstream parent General Dynamics.

The deal means Gulfstream can meet range requirements from 5,450km (2,950nm) to 12,500km, and allows its customers to progress from medium cabin aircraft to larger types in the Gulfstream range.

The first of the new generation of super mid-size business aircraft to enter service, the G200, has a range of 6,700km at speeds of up to Mach 0.82 and a cruise altitude of up to 41,000ft. The G100 offers 5,450km.

Former co-owner Israel Aircraft Industries will continue to make the G100 and G200 at its Tel Aviv base. The green aircraft will be flown to Gulfstream's completion centre at Alliance Airport, Texas.

COCKPIT DISPLAYS

MX20 work will end this month

UPS Aviation Technologies (UPS AT) plans to complete development this month of a new version of its Apollo MX20 multi-function display (MFD) for general aviation. It will incorporate full terrain awareness and warning system (TAWS) display capability as well as displaying uploaded NEXRAD weather radar data and automatic dependent surveillance-broadcast (ADS-B) information.

The work builds on a version of the MX20 modified with the Universal Access Transceiver (UAT) datalink for the US Federal Aviation Administration's Capstone trials in Alaska, and allows graphical weather data to be received in the cockpit. "The aim is for the new version to interface with a wide range of input, from weather radar to TAWS and EGPWS [enhanced ground proximity warning system]," says UPS AT.

Hardware for the new version was built in March and the software interfaces, gain and range adjustments are expected to be completed by July. UPS AT believes the TAWS and datalinked weather capability will provide significant safety enhancements.

