



The Leader In Recreational Aviation

Chapter 736 Newsletter for October 2014

EAA Submits Hangar Use Policy Comments

EAA [submitted formal comments](#) today to the [FAA's proposed policy](#) regarding non-aeronautical hangar use. EAA's comments mirror the main points the organization has emphasized over the past two months. EAA is urging the FAA to recognize active homebuilding and restoration projects as approved aeronautical uses for hangars, and to permit hangar tenants and owners at federally obligated airports to have non-aeronautical items in their hangars, provided those items do not detract from the primary aeronautical purpose of the hangar.

The FAA's proposed policy offers guidelines on appropriate hangar uses under the federal grant assurances, which are land and facility guarantees that all airports receiving federal grants must follow. While the FAA's proposed policy is notable because it is the first time the FAA has recognized homebuilding as an approved aeronautical purpose, EAA believes that the policy should be expanded in scope to recognize other traditionally accepted uses of hangars at general aviation airports.

This expansion, EAA argues, should include a formal recognition that active homebuilding and restoration projects (not just "final assembly of aircraft") are permissible aeronautical uses. EAA also argues that once the aeronautical use of a hangar is satisfied, i.e. if the hangar holds an aircraft or an approved aircraft project and cannot reasonably house more aircraft, then the left over space is free to be used for items that contribute to aircraft building, maintenance, and aviation community-based social activities. Additionally, EAA urged the FAA to formally recognize the aeronautical nature of aviation community-based organizations with hangars that provide invaluable safety seminars and community building events such as EAA chapters, Commemorative Air Force chapters, and the Ninety-Nines.

New FAA Policy Will Prevent Crashes

The FAA has updated its policy on experimental-amateur built (E-AB) aircraft to allow pilots who build their own airplanes to bring along a qualified additional pilot on their initial test flights. This policy change comes after years of data suggesting that the most accidents in the E-AB fleet occur in aircraft during their first eight hours of operation. The majority of those accidents were related to pilot loss of control and were preventable.

The new policy should "drastically reduce" the number of such accidents. The change is voluntary, and pilots still can fly on their own if they choose to.

"This is the first time that builders can get the best of both worlds: going airborne on the plane's first flights and having an experienced test pilot on board to add an additional layer of safety," said Tom Charpentier, EAA government advocacy specialist. "The APP [Additional Pilot Program] is a great example of a program that is a constructive response to safety data," Charpentier said. He said the change has "significant potential" to reduce the number of accidents during the initial flight-test phase. "We hope this will set the stage for additional positive reforms in the future," Charpentier added.

Skeptical Lawmakers Call for Shakeup at FAA

Facing "growing skepticism" among the aviation community about the FAA's ability to successfully modernize the nation's airspace, two top lawmakers are calling for reforms that could spark significant changes to the agency's organizational structure.

Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman Bill Shuster (R-Pa.) and Aviation Subcommittee Chairman Frank LoBiondo (D-N.J.) issued a call for reform at the FAA after a scathing Department of Transportation Inspector General report questioned the agency's progress on ADS-B implementation.

"For over 50 years, the FAA has effectively managed air traffic in the world's busiest, most complex airspace while maintaining the highest levels of safety," the lawmakers said in a statement. "However, a recent report by the U.S. Government Accountability Office reveals widespread and growing skepticism among the aviation community about the FAA's capability to successfully modernize our nation's airspace — the effort known as NextGen."

The Congressmen say they will push for a top-down review of the FAA's roles and responsibilities as they relate to airspace modernization to ensure the agency can remain on track with NextGen programs in the future.

"Now with the Department of Transportation Inspector General's report on the FAA's inability to effectively deploy a significant component of NextGen nationwide," they said, "Congress must thoroughly reexamine whether the FAA's organizational structure will allow the agency to successfully execute new technology programs safely and cost-effectively in the decades ahead."

3rd Class Medical Reform

The FAA hopes to have its proposal for medical certification reform out for public comment by the end of the year, FAA Deputy Administrator Michael Whitaker told AOPA President Mark Baker at the AOPA Homecoming Fly-In Oct. 4.

Whitaker told Baker and an audience eager for news on third class medical reform that while regulations are necessary, his agency wants to have the lightest regulations possible

to maintain safety. The FAA's proposal is now at the highest levels of executive review, he said.

From a regulatory standpoint, the FAA announced in July that it had sent a proposal to reform the third class medical process to the Department of Transportation for review.

Next Meeting

Our next meeting will be held on Monday, October 20th at the Weathervane Restaurant in Waterville. If you plan to have dinner, please arrive around 6:00 so that the meeting can begin at its usual 7:30 start time.