



INTRODUCTION

The Bustard Flying Club exists to stimulate air-mindedness and to encourage a practical interest in and knowledge of flying among the staff at MoD Boscombe Down and other eligible personnel linked to the MoD and QinetiQ.

The Club owns a fleet of two aircraft a Robin DR400-140 [G-PVCV] and a Slingsby T-67 Firefly Mk2-160 [G-BUUI] which are available for hire by Club members; the Club provides training to the Private Pilot's Licence (PPL) and National Private Pilot's Licence [NPPL] standard. Some members operate their own aircraft under the auspices of the Club and this allows the Club to support significantly more flying than could be achieved with just the two aircraft. The Bustard Flying Club is affiliated to the Royal Air Force Flying Clubs Association [RAFFCA] and is administered by a Committee which is elected annually.

A HISTORY OF THE BUSTARD FLYING CLUB

The Bustard Flying Club was formed by Aircraft & Armament Experimental Establishment [A&AEE] staff in 1957. With the help of the Kelmsley Trust and some working capital from the RAF Unit, 2 ex-Ministry Tiger Moths were acquired. With one restored to the civil register and certificated, flying started in 1958, operating from Old Sarum. The aircraft was used for pleasure flying and flying training carried out by Service instructors, with costs kept to a minimum.

In 1976 the Tiger Moth was replaced by a "modern" cabin aircraft - although the choice was limited by the requirement that it should have a stick and a tail-wheel! Hence Jodel DR 1050-M1 [G-AYYO] was acquired and remained the mainstay of the club for many years.

In 1989, the Commandant at Boscombe Down was keen to see a club at the Establishment. At the same time the BFC's tenure at Old Sarum was becoming less and less secure. The invitation to move to Boscombe Down was accepted, not without some reservations about the loss of some freedom and the use of a pleasant grass airfield with its own special ambience.

Flying training was started again in 1990, first on Victa Airtourer [G-ASYZ] which was later replaced by Beagle Pup 100 [G-AWKO]. In December 1995 the Jodel DR 1050-M1 was sold (to a group of Club members who continue to operate it at Boscombe under Club auspices) and Cessna C-172M [G-SKAN] was purchased as a replacement. Eventually the Pup was sold and replaced by Robin DR1180 Aiglon [G-ROBN].

In 2006 it was decided that the Club would benefit by returning to its aerobatic origins. The Aiglon was sold and now lives at Old Sarum; it was replaced by Slingsby Firefly Mk2-160 [G-BUUI]. Members were now legally allowed to turn a club aeroplane upside down after a 30-year delay!

The modernisation of the fleet continued in 2007 when the Cessna 172M was sold [again to some Club members who still operate it within the Club] and replaced by Robin DR100-120 [G-OYIO]. In due course the Robin DR400-120 was replaced by Robin DR400-140 [G-PVCV] in order to benefit from the better performance with the 140HP engine. The current fleet therefore consists of the Firefly T67 and Robin DR400-140.



Slingsby T-67 M2-160 Firefly
Introduced into the Club in 2006



Robin DR400-140
Introduced into the Club in 2011

CLUB ACTIVITIES

If the weather is suitable, there is usually some flying taking place every weekend and most summer evenings. PPL training takes place most Saturdays using the Robin and whilst the intention is to continue with such training the implications of the new European regulations have yet to be fully assessed. Aerobatic coaching and practice is available in the Firefly. Whilst much of the Club flying comprises local flights or trips to nearby airfields in Southern England, longer flights within the UK and to the Continent are possible. Club aircraft have taken part in rallies as far as Wick in the north of Scotland, to Ireland and the Isle of Man. Individual flights through France, Germany, Spain, to Ibiza, Poland and to Sweden have been achieved. Both Club aircraft spent a week touring northern France and the Channel Islands during recent summers, individual members have returned both to northern France and the Channel Islands on an independent basis. More recently, Club aircraft participated in an around UK tour and also a navigation competition where prizes were won!

CLUB MEMBERSHIP

To comply with MOD policy for use of MOD facilities, the Club operates two main levels of membership, FULL and ASSOCIATE. FULL membership is available to military personnel and MOD Civil Servants, Boscombe Down QinetiQ staff and permanent contractors' staff based at Boscombe Down. Subject to specific Committee agreement, other potential members may be able to join in an

ASSOCIATE status. Pilot members of both categories may include immediate family as passenger members in their membership. There is also an arrangement for the acceptance of "passenger members" and also "waiting members" who may be installed if the training capacity is temporarily full. "Day members" may be introduced at any time by a member who has been issued with an establishment pass.

The Club operates very much on a "self-help" basis at all levels; in consequence the flying rates are extremely attractive. Annual membership subscription for pilots is £115 for FULL Members and £140 for ASSOCIATE Members. Pilots also pay a £100 "Contingency Fund" deposit on joining but this can be reclaimed on written notification of resignation from the Club. Passenger membership (and a combined family passenger membership for pilots' immediate family) is £10 annually. All annual subs run from 1 Jan to 31 Dec but paid on a "pro rata" basis by those members joining/leaving in mid-year. Day membership costs £2 per person.

Aircraft hire rates are £90 per hour (take-off to touchdown time) with the training rate £102 per hour (also take-off to touchdown time). However, to partially offset the combined costs of engine time/fuel consumption an additional £5 taxi charge is made for each sortie specifically flown out of the Boscombe Down airfield.

The Club occupies new office accommodation alongside the club aircraft hangar. The accommodation includes a kitchen, toilets and plenty of space for Operations, Planning and Training. The only minor difficulty is that any in-hours access does require an Airfield Driving Permit. However at weekends and during out-of-hours these restrictions are normally relaxed.

HOW TO APPLY

Further information and application forms may be obtained from the **New Members Secretary** who can be contacted as follows, preferable by email:

Charles Irvine
68a Stormore
Dilton Marsh
Wiltshire
BA13 4BH

07982 075922
irvine358@btinternet.com

The Club web site is at <http://bustardflyingclub.co.uk>

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