

New Zealand National Report 2011

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The recreational scene:

Since the inception of the Recreational Pilot Licence (RPL) 2 years ago there has been a steady flow of private pilots switching to this type of licence. The main reason is naturally the lower medical standards required to operate under an RPL. NZ is one of the only country requiring Class 2 certificate holders (private pilots) to undergo regular exercise ECGs if the estimated cardiovascular risk reaches 10% or above at 5 years. In contrast the RPL is enabled by a commercial driving medical endorsed for the carriage of passengers.

The current number of RPL holders is 258. This compares to ~ 6000 active Class 2 medical certificates holders and ~ 4000 active Class 1 medical certificates holders.

Accidents:

There have been a number of disturbing accidents.

- 1) One powered hang glider (trike), killing two on board, the passenger being a tourist, when it probably encountered unexpected turbulence on the lee side of a mountain. The wing mast ruptured. A photograph taken by the passenger, a paying tourist, minutes before the accident shows a normal flying situation with the pilot appearing relaxed.
- 2) A hang glider crashed, killing two on board, the passenger being a tourist, when the pilot embarked in a dive. The control bar failed in compression when leveling off, as demonstrated by a video recorder that was running at the time.
- 3) A glider crashed in circumstance highly suggestive of pilot incapacitation. The pilot, who was alone on board, was known to have had episodes of tachyarrhythmia. His GP had advised against carrying passengers but not against flying.
- 4) A homebuilt aircraft with two on board and a powered hang glider crashed in separate accidents, both in circumstances suggesting the possibility of incapacitation.

Civil Aviation Rules Part 115

New rules are about to become effective. These pertain to Adventure Aviation and cover the certification of operators who carry out "Adventure Aviation" activities. These include for instance warbird passenger flights, paying glider passenger flights, paying hang glider flights, Tandem jumps etc.

Statistics

I enclose as a separate document the statistics for recreational aircraft and accidents. Unfortunately we do not have the number of hours flown by these aircraft.

