

# GBR Microlight report 2013

Microlighting remains very active in the United Kingdom. However, like last year the general poor economic situation has meant that new aircraft sales are very low, in fact the lowest for 13 years at only 43. The deregulated Sub 115kg microlight category is doing well and this type of aircraft seems to be selling well. Microlight training generally seems to be busy with schools reporting lots of business, especially around the South East, whereas by comparison light aircraft schools seem to be really struggling.

This year in comparison to last year has seen fantastic weather for flying which has meant flying schools have been very busy as well as general sport flying and competitions.

By working with the UK Civil Aviation Authority and the Light Aircraft Association the BMAA has developed a new system for the oversight of Permit to Fly aircraft that will reduce costs by recognising that we, the owners and operators, are aware of the risks that we take and are intelligent enough to be able to make reasoned judgements about those risks. The result is less regulatory oversight and less cost.

The first obvious sign of the new approach to risk based regulation is the proposed expansion of the Single Seat De-Regulation (SSDR) category of microlight to include all single seat microlights. A simple change of wording within the Air Navigation Order could herald a new era of home based development and open the door for the importation of foreign built single seat microlights.

There has been a reasonable amount of new development during the year and at the time of writing the VLA Sky Ranger Nynja, Savannah XLS and Tanarg / Bionix 13 amateur-built types are all in flight test. The 500kg MAUW Sky Ranger Nynja – the BMAA's first VLA approval project – is largely complete, with the first customer example to be constructed in the New Year. The P&M PulsR semi enclosed composite Trike is all but approved.

## General Statistics:

The British Microlight Aircraft Association (BMAA) has

- 3500 active members
- 2000 flying microlights in permit
- 4000 active microlight pilot licenses (approximately) and 365 new

licenses in last year.

- 100,000 annual flight hours (approximately)

The Light Aircraft Association (LAA) has approximately 800 microlight members.

#### Accident statistics

- 37 BMAA reported accidents in 2013
- 7 fatalities in Microlights

#### Competitions

The BMAA held 5 national competitions in 2013 and all of them went ahead due to the good weather. The Competitions Committee is still actively looking at ways of making competitions more accessible and attractive to new competitors, having had some success in recent years in bringing in new people. This year saw A 'Show and Tell' competition to actively promote and encourage new people into competitions, this proved very successful and we saw the largest number of people competing in National competitions for some time.

The BMAA also ran again the 'Round Britain Rally', a distance competition run over 3 flying days with turnpoints all over the United Kingdom.

The British Team competed in Slovakia this year and despite a small team won Gold in the AL2 Class and Silver in the WL1 class.

British competitors remain concerned about dwindling numbers in the AL1 and WL1 classes

Finally, the UK has submitted a preliminary bid to host the World Microlight Championships in 2016 in the London area. A strong team is being assembled to run this competition if the bid is accepted.

Rob Grimwood

UK Delegate