

Report from Norway to CIMA – November 2010

General information

Microflight flying is an expanding activity in Norway, and together with Model Flying is the fastest growing section in the Norwegian Airsports Association with about 10 % increase in memberships each year. Compared to most European Countries, we operate only half as many weeks a year due to weather and lack of daylight during the available free time.

There are not so many competitions, but many Fly-Ins here and there. Due to rapidly changing weather, we often gather on short notice thanks to our web page, where the members can use the Notice Board to spread the news. The National Championship is arranged every year, but due to our long stretched country, the participants consist mainly of local pilots with some few exceptions.

Crossing the borders to Denmark and Sweden requires an application to the UL organisation or CAA, and permissions are granted promptly free of charge.

Statistics

Microflight members	1048
Microflight clubs or PFC-subgroups	43
Number of active three-axis	238
Number of active weight shift	43
Number of active gyroplanes	13
Number of PPG (licenses)	146 (operated by the Hang- & Paraglider section)
Number of PPT (trikes)	10 (operated by the Hang- & Paraglider section)
Flying hours 2009	10732
Number of flights	29871

Our aircraft

During the latest years we have seen a lot of modern composite types like WT-9 Dynamic, CTSW, ATEC Zephyr, Petrel amphibiums and MCR-01 been added to our registry. Also ICP Savannah and C-42 Ikarus are popular types. For weight shift we have added one Air Creation Tanarg, a few Quik and some Ramphos amphibiums.

Since gyroplanes were allowed for all members a couple of years back, we have now 12 of them. They are ELA07, Xenon and MTO.

As usual we have great problems motivating our members to observe and obey all rules in microlighting. The MOTM is difficult to match with two onboard, and there are lots of flights probably above the regulated maximum, but hopefully not above the factory design limits.

We are very very disappointed about the slow and complicated LSA process in EASA. Since the birth of the class seems farther away than ever, we have decided to address this problem in a more serious way. We cannot just sit and witness all these weight-violations without trying to seek any solution. One simple way is to ask our CAA for a national rule allowing 495 kgs for all two-seaters. That would keep most flights within the "green legal range". Another well known, but more complicated way is getting 560 kgs. That would include some legal issues to be solved, but in return it would probably strengthen the respect for the rules.

Look what happened with other classes: LSA 560 => 600, Gyro =>560, VLA 750 => 890, ELA1 1000 => 1200, ELA2 2000 => 2100 (Volare oktober issue) and CS-22 750 => 900kg.

When quite a few classes have got their increases in MTOM, is our share for some urgent needed 50 - 100 kgs too much to ask for?

Safety initiatives

The relationship to the Norwegian CAA is very good, and communication is easy and fruitful. At the beginning of this year we successfully completed a new Safety System in cooperation with the CAA, where we describe the rules and regulations as well as operational and technical recommendations in great detail.

Each year we gather Instructors and Operational Managers from all clubs to symposiums in order to give them updates in new rules, and prepare them for the next annual safety initiative, selected from both pro-active ideas, findings after incidents and international campaigns. This year we had focus on the EuroControl Airspace Infringement Initiative and Communication Mistakes/Errors in promulgated airspace.

We are also encouraging all pilots to report near accidents, unsafe operations and unfortunate behavior in order to warn all pilots about adverse trends or actions with inherent high risk level. Such reports are of course difficult to obtain, but we also get information out of hangar gossip and "good stories" that can be used to get a better aim for our safety work.

Accidents

This summer we had two fatal accidents only four days apart, involving two Rans S-6ES, killing four persons. The reports are issued, and there are a clear indications that human judgment has contributed to the fallout. Operations at low height made recovery impossible after slow flight in turn. The second was probably caused by a steep turn with erratic rudder controls shortly after takeoff. Both planes hit the ground at steep angles.

Before that, two fatal accidents occurred the past decade in 2005 and 2000, which conforms to the minimum safety level our CAA has recommended for microlight operations in Norway.

International competitions

Norwegian pilots have up to the latest years been quite unfamiliar with international competitions, but with great determination and leadership from Mr. Tormod Veiby, things have changed to the better. In 2008 we participated in the EMC in Leszno, Poland with one team in the WL2 class. Last year we participated in the World Air Games in Torino and the World Championship in Jihlava. This year Norwegian pilots participated in EMC in UK year with three teams, both weightshift and three-axis. We would like to continue.

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Norwegian Airsports Association