

Try training the trainers



THE ARTICLE "Even worse than the real thing" (Flight Safety Australia, March-April 2002) made a lot of sense to me. However, on www.pprune.org (the professional pilots rumour network) your article was used to further the argument that there should be "less

of that risky training". I read your article and thought "we should train the trainers better".

My argument is: "we should, within reason, equip our pilots in all situations that the aircraft can throw at us". I suppose we are arguing as to what is the

"within reason".

I agree that with turboprops where the prop automatically goes to feather, zero thrust is better. But in the piston aircraft I fly, the prop windmills until the pilot fixes it.

I conducted an instrument renewal in a Duchess a couple of days ago. We did an ILS at Richmond with an asymmetric overshoot at the minima. The candidate put the power and nose up but left the gear and flap down. We had 80kts (Vyse is 85kts) and were going down.

I had to restore power on the "dead" engine. I suppose you could argue that if the engine did not come back we would die. I still had the option of landing straight ahead. I would rather do that than let the pilot

"practise" it with a real engine failure and real passengers on board. I haven't bent anything in 35 years, so I must be doing something right.

The airlines have the luxury of sophisticated simulators; we in GA don't. When a pilot does his or her pre take-off safety brief, it has to be realistic.

After an engine fails pilots must know when to land straight ahead and when to climb away. At times the difference can be very thin. Where does the pilot get the experience to know the difference?

Less emergency training is not the answer. The solution is better training for the trainers.

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Houdini did it, or did he?

YOUR ANSWER of Harry Houdini to the question: "Who made the first controlled powered flight in Australia?" (FSA March-April 2002) is incorrect.

I quote from the publication, *Australia Through Time*, page 183, "Houdini pipped at post":

"Friday 18 March: The race

to make the first powered aeroplane flight in Australia has been won – not by visiting American escapologist, Harry Houdini, as expected, but by Australian mechanic, Fred Custance of Adelaide.

"While the famous Houdini ... bided his time, waiting until today for suitable weather

conditions to make his flight in his Voisin biplane at Diggers Rest outside of Melbourne, Mr Custance had already won the honour in the early hours of yesterday morning.

"[Mr] Custance climbed into [his] ... Bleriot monoplane from France [and] according to an eyewitness, 'The machine ... rose quickly and ... the area was covered thrice in rapid succession – a distance of about 3 miles. The height of flying was between 12-15ft. The machine was in the air about 5 minutes and 25 seconds."

Stanley Brogden, in his *The History of Australian Aviation*, after reviewing the evidence, says: "In my view, he [Custance] was first to fly in Australia."

Keith Collett

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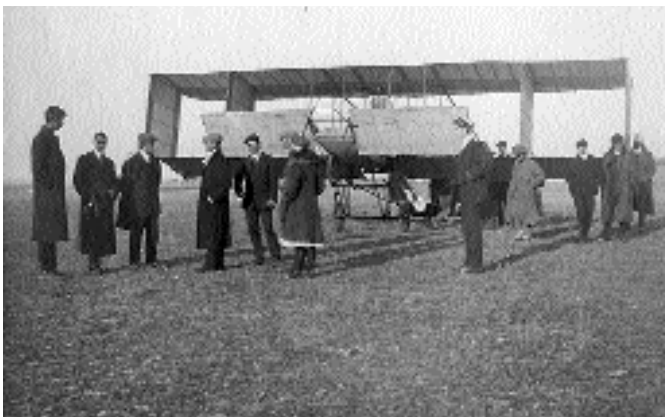
Myth understanding?

LAST ISSUE'S cover story, "17 aviation safety myths dispelled" has generated some interesting discussion.

Watch out for full coverage in our letters section next issue.

Drop us a line

- Ideal length for publication is 150 words. Letters may be edited to save space.
- Send letters to *Flight Safety Australia*, GPO Box 2005, Canberra ACT 2601; faxes to (02) 6217 1950; emails to fsa.magazine@casa.gov.au.



Pipped at the post? Harry Houdini, third from left has a challenger for the title to the first Australian powered flight.