

AS ALWAYS, THANK YOU TO THE MANY READERS WHO TAKE TIME TO PUT FINGERS TO THE KEYBOARD, OR MORE RARELY, PEN TO PAPER, AND WRITE TO US.

Viv Dore was one of many readers who were moved by the story of the Smith family - 'Three Years On' in the last issue.

It ... 'brought back memories of a similar event in New Zealand almost 40 years ago. I had received my pilot training in the Air Force, held a commercial pilot's licence, and was working as a relief air traffic controller at a regional airport. One of the local ag pilots had invited me to accompany him ... He was operating out of a narrow paddock between two lines of tall trees, and in the light wind conditions would load up and depart in one direction, then land in the opposite direction so as to finish his landing run near the loader, where he could quickly reload and repeat the exercise. On his final run for the day,

the pilot flew down the strip at low level and high speed, prior to pulling up into the vertical, rolling off the top, and then making another approach to land. I was stunned by this exhibition, as it was contrary to everything which I had been taught. My impression of the pilot, who I had met through friends and had come to know quite well, was that he seemed to be a sober and sensible individual, a professional operator, and certainly not a cowboy. His act seemed quite out of character. However, I don't recall if we actually discussed what had occurred and that would be consistent with what Gaylene found when she discussed examples of aberrant behaviour with other pilots. A few weeks later ... I heard a radio news item reporting the crash of a top dressing aircraft with two fatalities. The pilot was the one I write about, the passenger his loader driver. The accident occurred when the pilot performed what was reported as an identical manoeuvre to the one I had witnessed a few weeks earlier. Your article refers to the

discipline required when flying and the responsibility for others to 'speak up' about undisciplined behaviour. Forty years on, and after a career in aviation, I could not agree more with those sentiments.

Our feature: 'A Career with Altitude', also occasioned some good debate. Geoff Scrimmes was one of the correspondents.

G'day guys,

In your article 'A Career with Altitude' you raised a couple of points with which I disagree. A paragraph starts 'Teaching in a little single is regarded as demeaning ...' in which the author makes the point that a grade 1 instructor on \$90K will leave to fly an airliner for \$70K. I think the point here is that the instructor is likely at the top of his career path and earning potential as an instructor, while the new entry airline F/O is just beginning. The F/O can reasonably expect command in a few years and make \$130K and up. This career path may well lead to far higher

Red Baron flight training

Emergency Manoeuvre Training

Flight safety begins and ends with the pilot - YOU!
Can you confidently handle your aircraft in all situations?
If you hope for the best or just pray the worst does not happen, the risk of an accident increases. EMT Training is a proven way to improve your flying skills and ensure you enjoy your flying as much as possible.



Advanced Aircraft Control

Want to improve your skills and feel more confident with your flying?
Our Advanced Aircraft Control Course combines a Basic Aerobatics Rating, a Spinning Endorsement, Advanced Handling and Emergency Manoeuvre Training into one comprehensive course.

redbaron.com.au

Red Baron Flight Training Bankstown Airport Sydney +61 2 9791 0044 training@redbaron.com.au



earnings and better lifestyle in the future. Hence it seems to me and a few of my friends who were instructors, that it is simply a natural progression to pursue a higher-paying career path and there is nothing 'demeaning' about the job. My ex-wife, three years instructing, went on to the regional airlines for just that reason. She claims to prefer instructing, but there is no real career path and you have very few weekends at home with the family. Think about job security in a small GA company as well.

The other point made in the article is the low participation in flying by women. To compare the percentage participation rate with other professions is, I contend, an utter nonsense. Women are able to operate any aircraft as well as any man - I don't think that has been in debate for a couple of decades - but the attendant lifestyle often leads a young woman to choose not to participate. My ex again as an example, pulled her application to Qantas the day prior to her testing because she realised that life as a long-haul pilot, at least a junior

one, is not a bit family-friendly while there are many 10, 12 and 14-day trips to be flown. She actually gave flying away and moved into a regulatory area for a more 'family-friendly' lifestyle. I have been in the aviation industry for many a long day, and I hope this will give weight to my points. Keep up the good work.

Wayne Daly submitted a long and detailed analysis of the safety issues raised by the pilot shortage and lack of pilot experience. Here's an extract:

I've just read with interest the article *A Career with Altitude* (FSA Issue 63, Jul/Aug 08). There's little doubt that the current pilot shortage affects every corner of our industry, as acknowledged by the *Future Pilot Task Force*, quoted in the article. However, the negative outcomes of the pilot deficit extend way beyond route/schedule disruptions and reduced training capacity. The issue of safety is a major and rarely published factor that is suffering as the pool of experienced pilots reduces. As one who came to

flying from a professional background, I can't agree more with the experts in the article that the disparity between training costs and remuneration is a significant contributor to today's low pilot numbers.

Why is it that other professions and trades place such relevance on experience, relegating inexperienced, albeit still qualified staff to highly-supervised and non-critical tasks, when aviation, which demands acute, highly refined manipulative, judgement and decision-making skills, seemingly does not? Maybe the lives of airline passengers and those underneath overflying aircraft are less important than the clients of other trades and professions, all of whom take comfort in knowing that inexperienced staff are not responsible for split-second, life-critical judgements and decisions. Dramatic? Yes, but it is real. The pilot shortage brings with it a significant range of problems that cannot be overlooked ...

Call Now!

**Floatplane Endorsements
Gold Coast**

From \$4400.00

I.C.U.S and Professional Pilot packages available

1300 CLOUD NINE
flyfloats@cloud9seaplanes.com

Cloud9
SEAPLANES

SECOMBE AVIATION

THE ATPL SPECIALISTS

ATPL THEORY
Bankstown Classroom
& Correspondence
COURSES

1st attempt pass rate >90%

- FULL COURSE or INDIVIDUAL subjects
- Flight Planning made easy and logical
- Individual attention assured
- 34 practice exams ensure great results!
- Professionally prepared texts
- Accommodation available

SECOMBE AVIATION
PO Box 4260
Winmalee NSW 2777

1800 636 830
www.atpl.com.au