



Operation Australia

Rainbow Aviation Services and The Hang Gliding Federation of Australia Partner to Expand the LSA Repairman Training Courses to include the Sport Pilots of Australia

Operation Australia began with an invitation from Chris Fogg , the General manager of the The Hang Gliding Federation of Australia (HGFA) , for the LSA Repairman Inspection Courses to be presented at the Royal Newcastle Aero Club in Rutherford, AU. Even before it began, the complex cooperative effort was not without challenges and adventure.



One of the little known benefits of the ASTM Standards for Light Sport Aircraft is the option for other countries to adopt the ASTM standards without the time and expense of creating their own. In this vein, Australia adopted the LSA standards in December 2005. Now, nearly three years later, Rainbow Aviation Services in conjunction with the HGFA recently hosted two Light Sport Repairman Inspection Training courses at the Royal Newcastle Aero Club in Rutherford, Australia.

"The intent of working with Rainbow Aviation is to foster the development of a single standard for maintenance of microlights within Australia," says Chris Fogg, general manager of the HGFA. "Australian laws currently provide for owner maintenance and our respective administration prescribe maintenance standards, however there is no specific maintenance training provided to owners or to maintainers who generally derive their qualifications from other aircraft types.

By working with Rainbow Aviation the HGFA hopes to implement a training curriculum in Australia based on the renowned and endorsed Rainbow Aviation courseware, encouraging and progressing the high standard of learning to our local sport aviation pilots." Brian and I were delighted to receive the HGFA invitation but it raised a number of critical issues which had to be addressed before the invitation could be accepted. In the early versions of the discussions the HGFA had proposed that we teach a

Maintenance Matters

week long speciality course while training an Australian Instructor. In the end, an Australian Instructor was sent to the LSA Maintenance Course held at EAA Headquarters in Oshkosh, WI in September 2008. This allowed for continuing face to face planning and collaboration, over a period of three weeks, regarding the aircraft, parts, tools, supplies, and student materials required while simultaneously providing instructor training. And the weeklong course became two LSA Repairman Inspection courses, allowing for more pilots to participate. Chris Fogg, the HGFA General Manager, worked closely with us arranging the final details as the target date grew closer. Chris seems to have unlimited energy and was a joy to work with.

After eight months of planning and collaborating the first LSA Repairman course was held in Australia. We played to a full house with over 20 participants in each course. The 42 total participants had an interesting range of experience from several student pilots to the experienced veteran pilots

and mechanics. All 42 successfully completed the course and were presented with an HGFA Repairman certificate.

So what's next? The planned arrangement, which is set out in a licensing agreement between Rainbow Aviation Services and the HGFA allows for future training and on going courses to be held in Australia and in the States for the Australian pilots. This arrangement is expected to provide broad benefits to the aviation community in Australia, by the implementation of skilled mechanical training for the light sport aircraft which was previously unavailable.

Overall, perhaps the most striking feature of the first international repairman course effort was that the entire enterprise was created within only four years of the adoption of the ASTM standards in the states and less than three years after the adoption of the standards in Australia.

For more information on the LSA Repairman Courses call Rainbow Aviation Services at 1-877-7 Fly LSA or visit www.rainbowaviation.com.

And Brian and I – well, we were in Australia long enough to start calling each other “mate”, but not long enough to successfully open the appropriate car door. We did manage to stay on our side of the road for the most part. And certainly enjoyed the