

HOTEL BRAVO FLYING CLUB - 2014

Formed	1982
Purpose	To provide lowest possible cost flying to company staff, retired staff, contractors and their family members, through co-operative and voluntary effort on the part of all.
Membership	Varies up to thirty, to include qualified pilots, students and instructors.
Operates as	The Hotel Bravo Flying Club Ltd.
Licensed as	Irish Aviation Authority - Registered Training Facility (IAA RTF).
Operates from	Weston Airport - www.westonairport.ie .
Current aircraft	Four-seat Socata TB9 Tampico Club EL-CRX that the club has operated for 14 years - see www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/SOCATA_TB_family .
Instructors	Up to four available, all voluntary.
Flight bookings	Through our booking website www.aircraftclubs.com (needs logon).
Internal email	aib.fly@aib.ie
Calls to	Frank 086 891 3874/Greg 087 289 7557

Private Pilot Licence

Privileges	To fly a single-engine land plane anywhere in the world where the IAA/European licence is recognised.
Requirements	<p>Minimum of 45 flight hours, of which ten are solo with five of this cross country solo, including one long flight of at least 150 nautical miles.</p> <p>English language proficiency (ELP).</p> <p>Class 2 medical, with an IAA-approved 'Aeromedical' GP (www.iaa.ie/ames), renewed every five years up to age 40, shorter periods thereafter.</p> <p>Four short written exams (Flight Performance & Planning, Human Performance and Limitations, Air Law, Aircraft General Knowledge), taken when close to your final flight test.</p> <p>Final flight test with an IAA examiner.</p>
Minimum and Maximum ages	15 - to take instruction 16 - to go solo 17 - before grant of full licence Currently, our oldest active flying member is 86 years of age!
Website	www.iaa.ie/index.jsp?p=120&n=281

Aviation in Ireland

Regulator	Irish Aviation Authority - www.iaa.ie
Airfields	About 130 on the island, some unsuitable for our aircraft though.
Useful reference	www.flyinginireland.com

Member Costs

Club	<p>Like most member-run voluntary clubs, charges (maintained under continuous review; please discuss) are set in a number of ways in order to match costs, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Initial entry fee that includes the purchase of a share in the club. - Small annual club renewal fee. - Monthly fee that looks after aircraft fixed costs (major maintenance, parking and insurance). - Hourly flying rate related directly to variable operating cost of the aircraft - fuel, landings and minor maintenance. <p>Fundraising will be required in order to replace our engine and aircraft, in time.</p>
IAA related fees, mostly once-off, over your training period	Student licence: €75 English check: €40 Written exams: €35 each Ground school: Optional, varies Medical: €120 up, depending Final flight test: €430

Other FAQs

How do I learn?	<p>By flying with our instructors, with pre- and post-flight briefings to the standard PPL syllabus.</p> <p>A typical early lesson will last about 40-45 minutes, plus briefings.</p> <p>Attendance at a short ground school run by an associated flying school</p>
Do I handle the controls?	Yes, from your first flight, under your instructor's guidance and direction.
How long before I go solo?	Depends on commitment, aptitude, pace and frequency of lessons and normally varies between 10-20 hours and then you'll have <i>one of the most memorable experiences of your life, guaranteed!</i>
How long before I get my full licence?	Some have been known to complete the course in a summer but with work and the rest of life intervening, it could easily be up to two or three years.
Anything else that I'll need?	As your lessons progress, you'll be purchasing a log book, aviation maps, pilot manuals, a headset, calculator, kneeboard and other pilot accessories that will last you a lifetime (other than the maps) - all useful present ideas for others to buy for you!
What about insurance?	The aircraft, its occupants and third parties are covered to IAA/European standards. Details can be provided.
Any impact on life insurance?	At the rate at which we normally fly, this has not been an issue.
And when I gain my full licence?	Take the club's aircraft - and others - anywhere your experience and the aircraft's capability allows!

ONE MEMBER'S PERSPECTIVE...

The Club

You may have heard some talk of this band of brothers (and sisters) that is now in its 31st year of operation and is on its fourth aircraft as it provides flying and aviation-related learning and fun in a challenging environment that really provides a significant return on one's investment of time and effort?

One witness to the pleasure and personal satisfaction available to those who really get up and push themselves to attain their various flying qualifications is our own Dave Gibbons, of ES&T, based in Bankcentre. Dave is well on his way to achieving his Private Pilot Licence (PPL) with the club and this personal account of his progress is uplifting (*pardon the pun*) and illustrative of the great feelings and emotions experienced in overcoming such an exacting personal challenge.

First Solo

"Do or do not...there is no try." I had been building up to this moment all last summer, but hadn't expected Ray, one of the club's unsung heroes, to say "it's time to go solo"! A momentary mental check of possible excuses (weather, hectic day in the office, no camera to capture the moment) but only one conclusion... let's go for it!

I'd spent the previous months of the summer taking lessons with Ray in how to fly 'the circuit', which puts into practice all of the essential manoeuvres required to take off, fly and land an aeroplane. Ray had often joked that "a 'good' landing is one from which you can walk away. A 'great' landing is one after which we can use the aeroplane again"! I convinced myself I could do at least a 'good' landing!

Conditions could not have been better - light winds, scattered clouds and excellent visibility. With no other 'wannabe' Chuck Yeagers flying that evening out in Weston Airport, I was immediately given clearance to start up and taxi to the holding area for runway 25. There I completed my engine and pre take-off checks. Before declaring to the tower that "Charlie Romeo X-ray is ready for take-off", I dispelled a fleeting thought of my wife, Sharon, who I knew would be disappointed not to witness the occasion, with the excuse that she would have been a bag of nerves.

The instructions that Ray drills into all of his students kicked in: apply full power, check that there are no lights or warnings, rotate at 65 knots and I'm flying solo! No time to relax; retract the flaps at 500 feet, turn onto the crosswind leg of the circuit and level off at 1,000 feet. I quickly turned left onto the downwind leg in order to avoid crossing into Baldonnell military airspace. Now flying parallel to the runway, I thought "the easy bit is over... now I just have put CRX on the tarmac in one piece".

I looked to the right-hand seat, half hoping that Ray was occupying it. No such luck! Thankfully though, in a "may the force be with you" moment, Ray's instructions came to mind: half-flaps, slow to 80 knots, turn finals, apply full flaps and track the runway centre line. I called 'finals' to the tower and was cleared for a touch-and-go. Slowing down to 65 knots, I watched the four white bars of the runway threshold grow larger in my windscreen. I touched down with the elegance of a Top Gear caravan challenge. My adrenalin overrode any thoughts of returning to the parking ramp. Full power applied and I was off again. Awesome! I had *done* it!

Cross Country Navigation

I've since completed five hours of solo circuits and am currently learning the art of aerial navigation. On the road, I usually leave that to Sharon and a trusty sat-nav, on agreement that there will

be no u-turns! While flying, I'm reduced to a compass, map and watch. U-turns are common!

A typical cross-country lesson is based around a three-legged flight with each leg ending at a town, landmark or airfield. Preparation is based on first working out the direction, distance and flying time for each leg, while making allowances for the forecasted wind speed and direction. Next, the noticeable landmarks along each track are identified, along with the minimum safe-flying altitude. All of this information is captured on a 'PLOG' (or pilot's log) for reference during flight. It couldn't be easier, or so the theory goes.

My first couple of excursions saw some classic student mistakes: burying my head in the map while not noticing the plane turning off course or descending; convincing myself that the road beneath me was the main road from Kilcullen to Athy, when it was actually the motorway to Waterford (roads look mighty small and traffic signs are hard to read from 3,000 feet!) or almost accidentally crossing into restricted airspace (a real 'no-no' and much worse than clipping the kerb while attempting to reverse around a corner in a car driving test).

Ray tells me that I'm making good progress and that it won't be long before I'm ready for my first solo navigation. For marital bliss, I'll have to give my wife a heads-up on this one!

Ground School

Thereafter, the final hurdles to obtaining my PPL include passing the theory exams and the practical flight test. So it has been back to school for the last number of weeks as I learn the principles of flight, how to read weather charts and the effects of aviation on the human body. This presents a good opportunity to meet other students and instructors, to discuss places to go and things to do once you've obtained your PPL and to agree on the latest must-have gadgets!

How About You?

So, are you tempted? How would you like to join Dave, Ray and our other members and instructors as they take to the air over Ireland, and beyond, throughout the year?

If you'd like to take an introductory flight and join this happy band in experiencing those delights only available to the few who really push their vertical limits in a manner well illustrated by Dave's personal perspective and, quite emotively, in John Magee's poem below, do call Dave on Bankcentre ext. 13719 (01-641 3719) .

High Flight

*Oh! I have slipped the surly bonds of Earth
And danced the skies on laughter-silvered wings;
Sunward I've climbed, and joined the tumbling mirth
Of sun-split clouds, - and done a hundred things
You have not dreamed of - wheeled and soared and swung
High in the sunlit silence. Hov'ring there,
I've chased the shouting wind along, and flung
My eager craft through footless halls of air*

*Up, up the long, delirious burning blue
I've topped the wind-swept heights with easy grace
Where never lark, or ever eagle flew -
And, while with silent, lifting mind I've trod
The high untrespassed sanctity of space,
Put out my hand, and touched the face of God.*

John Gillespie Magee Jr.
1922-1941, American aviator and poet