



Dear EAA Chapters Leaders and Members:

As EAA chapters are among the most essential and valued parts of our organization, Paul and I are sending you this letter to update you on the facts regarding some of the changes within EAA announced last week and the background behind those changes.

During the past year, I have traveled extensively to our chapters and aviation events across this country, meeting thousands of members and learning their views and concerns regarding today's aviation issues. We held 31 Grassroots Pilot Tour sessions that allowed up-close and personal dialogue with members and non-members alike, to better understand how EAA can best promote aviation and meet their needs.

It's with this knowledge that we are strengthening our organization by adding key leadership positions, flattening the management structure, and concentrating resources in EAA chapters, youth education and homebuilding, while improving our capabilities in member services.

EAA's mission remains the same: to grow participation in aviation, by inspiring people to fly, build, volunteer and outreach to promote aviation. That hasn't changed since our founding and won't change in the future.

What will change is how EAA operates its business. We will be more concentrated in areas that support our mission, just as described. We will respect our generous supporters by managing our costs, with the goal of spending 100% of donor dollars directly on the programs that we are all passionate about as we inspire the next generation of aviators, builders, and aviation professionals.

We will continue to support our members with knowledge and services that keep them flying, building and restoring so they can realize their dreams of flight.

In addition, EAA is welcoming Jeff Skiles to head our chapters and industry-leading youth education programs. Jeff is a passionate aviator who brings a wealth of experience and represents the very essence of what is possible and achievable in aviation. As co-chair with Sully Sullenberger of Young Eagles – the world's most successful aviation youth outreach program – Jeff has been inspirational to thousands of young people who dream of flying.

Chad Jensen, Manager of Homebuilder Communities, has been promoted to EAA's senior leadership team and will report directly to me. You may be interested to know that Chad's position had reported three levels of management below EAA's president for many years. We have elevated Chad's role to a strategic level to ensure our continued leadership in amateur-built aircraft and to lead our future initiatives in homebuilding, including the expansion of our homebuilding area at AirVenture Oshkosh. Chad will also represent our special interest communities, including Homebuilt Aircraft Council, Ultralight Council, IAC, Warbirds, and Vintage by providing them a seat at the senior leadership table for the first time in decades.

We've said goodbye to some employees as well. EAA has treated its employees with the greatest respect, and we have provided them with generous severance packages and assistance to help them transition to their next steps. We have also invited them to remain part of our extended EAA family and join us at AirVenture for The World's Greatest Aviation Celebration.

Leading the world's most dynamic aviation organization comes with unique challenges and wonderful opportunities that sometimes require making difficult decisions. We hope that what we shared with you today is helpful to better understanding EAA direction and plans for our continued success.

Feel free to contact us if you have any questions. We'd be happy to talk with you personally at the numbers listed below. Thanks again for being a part of EAA.

Best regards,



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WEIGHT INCREASE FOR LIGHT SPORT AIRCRAFT POSSIBLE

Weight increases for light sport aircraft are in the earliest stages of internal discussion by the FAA. It is possible it may be intended to allow for the installation of safety equipment, like ballistic parachutes, without affecting payload. Whether the weight increase will open trainers like the Cessna 150 and 152 to be included in the category, as many people have suggested since the category was created in 2008, is not clear. Dan Johnson, president of the Light Aircraft Manufacturers Association (LAMA), said that the weight increase proposal may be compensation for a joint proposal by EAA and AOPA to the FAA to relax medical requirements for pilots of certified aircraft with no more than 180 horsepower.



Rod Hightower talking about the weight increase at LAMA on January 19.

Rod Hightower, the president of EAA, in answer to a question following a speech at the Light Aircraft Manufacturers Association (LAMA), stressed the preliminary nature of the FAA's consideration of the idea but he did acknowledge the idea is being floated internally at the FAA. He called it an "interesting" opportunity to possibly enhance flight safety but he also said it hadn't reached the "discussion" stage.

(Information adapted from multiple sources including *AVwebFLASH* 02/23/12)

FAA: BY 2020, ALL IFR TRAFFIC WILL RELY ON SATELLITES FOR NAVIGATION – HALF OF VORs WILL GO

The FAA has proposed to A 50-percent reduction to the existing VOR network, part of the transition to NextGen, is planned by 2020, with a scaled-down VOR network retained as a backup to GPS. According to the notice, the FAA plans to transition from defining airways, routes, and procedures using VORs and other legacy nav aids toward a National Airspace System based on area navigation (RNAV) everywhere, and required navigation performance (RNP) where beneficial.



VOR

FAA proposes retaining all existing VOR stations in the mountain west region, Alaska, Hawaii, and U.S. islands and territories as the current infrastructure of 945 FAA-maintained VOR stations is reduced to 483 (the minimum operational network) by 2020.

Flying Magazine's Pia Bergqvist writes that the FAA believes that the cost of the VOR system is excessive but "it seems a little premature to begin a major reduction of the established navigation system. The system could prove immensely valuable in case of GPS interference, a threat that is real and has recently been widely discussed in relation to LightSquared's launch of a new broadband network." Also, as many pilots are finding out right now, with the current tests of the GPS system February 3, 2012 – February 10, 2012, suddenly the GPS they use or depend on now is not working and they have to resort to using the VOR system, ADF, or the old fashioned IFR (*I follow roads*). Note that the "test" is centered just off the coast of North/South Carolina and covers all of North & South Carolina and most of Georgia. According to the FAA "Each event lasts 45 minutes followed by 15 minutes off and may start at any time during the requested periods." and "During testing, the GPS signal may be unreliable or unavailable."

One pilot commented about the VOR elimination: "Until the ridiculous expense of IFR certification of GPS receivers goes down, I cannot consider eliminating most VORs an option. Right now, a GPS receiver that can be used for IFR navigation (the way manila VOR radios can) costs at least \$6000, while a VOR radio costs \$2000 (also ridiculous, but less unaffordable)." (Information adapted from *Flying* e-magazine 01/03/12 and AOPA on-line; also FAA 02/01/12)

Words of Wisdom From Aviators

I've flown in both pilot seats, can someone tell me why the other one is always occupied by an idiot?

Son, you're going to have to make up your mind about growing up and becoming a pilot. You can't do both.

They invented wheelbarrows to teach FAA inspectors to walk on their hind legs.

The FAA Motto: We're not happy till you're not happy.