

## AOPA INCREASES ANNUAL DUES

In a June 5, 2014 letter to members, AOPA President Mark Baker cordially told members that they have to pay more when they renew their membership. He wrote “I am writing today because I wanted to tell you personally that, for only the second time in the past 24 years, we’ve made the tough decision to increase AOPA member dues. Beginning Sept. 1, regular membership dues will be **\$59** a year.” Then, later on in the letter “All of these efforts [. . . working to create an environment where many more people can share in the experience of general aviation, where we can reverse the rising cost of flying, and where all of us can fly more often and much later in life than we ever imagined.] rely on member dues to some extent. Your dues cover about 30% of AOPA’s annual operating costs, with revenues from other sources like advertising and sponsorships covering the rest. Since I came on board less than a year ago, we have significantly cut operating costs by doing things like eliminating four executive positions, reducing mailings to save on postage, and selling the Caravan. As a result, our 2014 operating budget is the lowest it has been since 2006.”

Toward the end of the letter he wrote “Members with expiration dates of August 31, 2014 or later will receive renewal information in the coming weeks and months with the new dues rates. I know some of you will have questions and concerns. As always, we want to hear from you. Feel free to contact us at [dues@aopa.org](mailto:dues@aopa.org). Your comments are important and, while we may not be able to respond to each one, we will read every message we receive.”



## CBP (CUSTOMS & BORDER PATROL) SAYS IT WILL BE NICER TO PILOTS

The U.S. Customs and Border Protection Air and Marine Operations Center’s announcement that it would alter its current procedures for stopping general aviation aircraft is among the first fruits being seen from AOPA President Mark Baker’s recent one-on-one meeting with CBP Commissioner R. Gil Kerlikowske. Less than one month after AOPA President Mark Baker met with Customs and Border Protection Commissioner R. Gil Kerlikowske, CBP has publicly said that it will be more careful in targeting general aviation aircraft for search. NPR (National Public Radio) produced a story about this and found that

because of the methods the CBP used to contact law enforcement, local police were treating visiting aircraft as if Osama Bin Laden were aboard. In the May 28, 2014, NPR *Morning Edition* program an official with CBP’s Air and Marine Operations Center responsible for the stops and searches “told NPR his agency has heard pilots’ grievances and the program is being altered so as not to needlessly affront law-abiding pilots.” CBP Air and Marine Operations Deputy Assistant Commissioner Eddie Young acknowledged to NPR that local police departments have approached law-abiding pilots with excessive force when responding to a tip from the agency. “When we do make a mistake and we come up against somebody that necessarily didn’t need to be, I think that’s where we do our best to ensure that we don’t repeat those mistakes again,” NPR quoted Young as saying. “You get a call from the feds that you may have illegal activity around this aircraft, they get pretty excitable at these local airports. Certainly in many of these cases they have overreached what we consider to be the due process,” Baker told NPR. “We appreciate the CBP Air and Marine Operations Center’s effort to bring these overzealous encounters to an end,” Baker said. “But the monitoring and random targeting of general aviation pilots and aircraft remain the heart of the problem, and AOPA believes that such stops and searches—some of which have involved the use of police dogs and masked officers and drawn weapons—must be halted unless there is valid evidence of criminal activity.”

(Information adapted from [AOPA News](#) 05/28/14, [NPR Morning Edition](#) 05/28/14)



## AVIATION QUESTION OF THE MONTH

**Answer to last month’s question:** *You are flying your Cessna 182 on a VFR cross-country flight. You plan to avoid Class B airspace by remaining above it at 9,500 feet MSL, although you will be within the lateral boundaries of the Class B airspace. Is a transponder required?*

**According to AOPA and the FAA:** Yes. According to [FAR 91.215](#), a transponder would be required in this scenario because you will be within the lateral boundaries of the Class B airspace and below 10,000 feet msl.

**This Month’s Question:** During which phase of flight is a pilot at increased odds of experiencing a somatogravic illusion? (Do you know the term? If not, [Google](#) it!)

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## GEORGIA'S PRIVATE AIRFIELDS GRANTED LIABILITY PROTECTION

Georgia has become the latest state to pass a measure giving private airstrip owners immunity from civil liability in connection with the recreational use of their airfields. [House Bill 494](#) was signed into law by Gov. Nathan Deal on April 29. Among its provisions was language that adds aviation activities to a list of definitions of recreational property uses for which property owners are afforded liability protection. There are approximately 200 private airstrips in the state, said Bob Minter, AOPA southern regional manager. "Needless to say, we're pretty happy," said Minter. He credited state Sen. Rick Jeffares (R-District 17) with introducing the key amendment, and Sen. Bill Heath (R-District 31), a pilot, for working with aviation advocates in spearheading the legislative effort.



"We're very pleased to add Georgia to the growing list of states that recognize the value of recreational aviation," added Eric Davis, the organization's Georgia state liaison, who worked with Minter and Heath to mobilize private airstrip owners and win passage for the provision. The aviation advocates added that support from Amy Hudnall, deputy director of the Aerospace Division of Georgia's Department of Economic Development, was "instrumental to the effort" to pass the liability protection. (Information adapted from [AOPA News](#) 05/13/14, [Georgia House Bill 494](#) )

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## EAA SUBMITS IMPROVEMENTS TO FLIGHT TESTING MANUAL

The last week of May EAA submitted comments to a proposed revision to FAA Advisory Circular [\(AC\) 90-89](#), the Amateur-Built Aircraft and Ultralight Flight Testing Handbook. EAA was instrumental in the original drafting of the



AC, and the organization's comments to the recent revision are part of its continued work on the document, which lays out recommended practices for flight testing amateur built and ultralight aircraft. The suggested changes include new, better detailed guidance on fuel flow testing prior to the first flight, the use of GPS data to confirm the accuracy of pitot-static derived airspeed readings, stall testing, and more. The comments were written with the help of the EAA Homebuilt Aircraft Council and some of the world's leading flight-test experts on the EAA board of directors Safety Committee. "These changes will help keep this already comprehensive document relevant for the next generation of homebuilts and ultralights," said Sean Elliott, EAA vice president of advocacy and safety. "In submitting these comments we are continuing our involvement with this AC, which has helped ensure safe and effective flight-testing for more than 25 years." Information adapted from [EAA eHotline](#) May 29, 2014 and the FAA )



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## FBI: \$10,000 BOUNTY FOR LASER-POINTING PERPS

Identify who is pointing a laser at you while you are in your plane and you could get some cash!

Laser incidents are a known problem among airline crew, but they also affect general aviation aircraft. The FBI is [offering up to a \\$10,000 reward](#) for information leading to the arrest of those who intentionally point a laser at aircraft and seeks to educate the public on the severity of such actions. "We are also working with state, local, and international law enforcement on the campaign, and we are conducting outreach to schools to educate teens about the dangers associated with lasing," the FBI said in a news release June 3. The program has been successfully tested in 12 locations, and is being expanded to all 50 states, Guam, and Puerto Rico.



Earlier this year, according to [AVweb](#), A 26-year-old California man was sentenced to 14 years in prison for pointing a laser at a police helicopter that was responding to a report of his previous attack on a medevac helicopter. "This is not a game," U.S. Attorney Benjamin B. Wagner is [quoted by The Associated Press as saying](#). "It is dangerous and it is a felony." Rodriguez's girlfriend, 23-year-old Jennifer Coleman, has also been convicted of felony charges and could end up in jail for five years when she is sentenced.

(Information adapted from [AVwebBiz](#) 03/14/2014, [Associated Press](#) , [AOPA News](#) June 4, 2014, [FBI.gov](#) 06/03/2014 )