

## MINUTES OF A COMMITTEE MEETING

Date Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2023 commencing 7 pm.  
Venue EGC Clubhouse Ridgewell Airfield

### Committee Members Present

John Whitwell (Chairman), Tony Brook (Treasurer), Dave Hertzberg (CFI) Steve Jessup (Secretary) y, Will Burry, Callum Hitchings.

Apologies  
Vince Earl

Also present Mike Harris

Minutes taken by Steve Jessup

### 1. Nature of Meeting

JW explained that this was a special meeting called principally to discuss tug maintenance. For this reason Mike Harris (Tugmaster) had been invited to attend.

### 2. Tug

- a. The tug is due for its annual inspection in April 2024
- b. Ideally the inspection could take place in February 2024 to enable the tug to be ready for the new season at Ridgewell
- c. There is an identified problem with camshaft pitting which would generally indicate a remaining engine life of 1-2 years before this needed to be dealt with. In the worst case scenario the next annual inspection could cause the grounding of the aircraft for this reason.
- d. This would require engine dismantling to the extent that it would then be uneconomic not to fully renovate the engine with new bearings etc. Mike mentioned new 'millennium' cylinders.
- e. The parts for such a renovation might take some time to secure and to avoid a prolonged loss of the tug ideally all parts should be sourced by the person doing the renovation before the tug is taken in for the work.
- f. The cost of the work would be up to £75K depending on who did it. There was some discussion on the possible options
- g. There is a possibility that the camshaft pitting is historic and not getting any worse in which case the engine might have a much longer life. An oil analysis would enable this to be assessed.
- h. Andy Daines will be arranging for the oil analysis which should be done within the next few weeks

### Decision

**We will await the result of the oil analysis.**

**(Post Meeting note: The oil check revealed that action at this time was unnecessary as the check was very encouraging as to the state of the engine.)**

### 3. Wattisham

DH said that Wattisham had offered to provide hangarage for the tug over winter. This seemed to be on the basis that it could be used over winter for their members (and ours). The fuel bowser would need to go too.

There was considerable discussion of the matter centering around the following

#### Advantages

Better environment for the tug over winter

Members could keep current on aerotow over winter

#### Disadvantages

Tug is subsidized by EGC members. There might be some backlash against members of other clubs benefitting.

There will be increased tyre wear because of the tarmac runway

Concern about who would be flying it.

Bowser has only two wheels. There will be a cost in getting it roadworthy.

Legality of towing bowser without a permit.

Could only be until February because of Annual inspection (see 2b above)

#### Decision

- 1. It was agreed in principle that the tug could go to Wattisham if issues with bowser could be resolved or if refueling at Elmsett Airfield was a viable alternative.**
- 2. Charges would be increased to £40 for a 2000 ft tow and the usual increments thereafter. This would apply to both Wattisham and EGC members. This to cover increased tyre wear.**
- 3. Only EGC tug pilots to fly the tug. Could be enforced by only issuing bowser keys to these.**

#### Actions

**DH/CH would liaise with Wattisham**

**SJ would seek to find missing two bowser wheels (Post meeting note search unsuccessful but there are rims which might fit but would require new tyres)**

**JH would research legality of towing bowser.**

**(Post meeting note. It is illegal to tow a bowser of our size on the road without a permit even if empty)**

#### **4. Tug Pilots**

MH was concerned that our cadre of tug pilots was likely to be diminished next year and that it is getting increasingly difficult to recruit new ones.

Some of those we have are severely limited on the time they can give and others are of an age when they might decide to stop.

#### **Action**

**CH to put something on website asking for tug pilots. Need tail dragger and sailplane towing ratings plus willing to come to Ridgewell at least twice per month.**

#### **4. Any Other Business**

There was none