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Information regarding the EU Comitology Committee meeting on EASA's Opinion on FCL has been coming out in dribs and drabs. This News Item consolidates the information as known to date.

We are indebted to Vasa Babic who represents PPL/IR as well as being an AOPA member for this information from a UK DfT EASA Forum meeting. Vasa kindly offered to cover AOPA's interest at the meeting, which clashed with an EAB meeting in Cologne.

Susan Hamilton and Pat Ricketts of the DfT reported on the 2 day EU Comitology Committee meeting on EASA items that took place this week.

The agenda included EASA FCL and several other items, but the entire 2 days were taken up with the discussion of EASA FCL. The two main issues reviewed were

The addition of FI ratings to the LAPL

It was agreed that FI ratings for Balloons and Sailplanes could be added to a LAPL (note: but not FI ratings for aeroplanes and rotorcraft – these can only be added to a PPL)

3rd Country Pilot Licences

“The EU Commission was very aware of the concerns on this subject and the UK Minister sympathised with some of the concerns”. There was a “difficult discussion”. The outcome was that a 2 year derogation was agreed – ie. the requirement for a EU resident to hold an EASA licence in order to fly a 3rd country aircraft is to be deferred by 2 years from April 2012 to April 2014. The intention is that this 2 year period will allow for a Bilateral Aviation Safety Agreement to be signed with the USA.

Some additional changes were agreed to FCL which the DfT will report on when the meeting minutes were available.

EASA FCL then passed the required unanimous vote of the Comitology Committee. Thus this stage of the process is over, and only a vote of the EU Parliament remains in the process, which should take place in ~3months time.