

AUSTRALIAN ASSOCIATION of RETIRED AIRLINE PILOTS and AVIATION PROFESSIONALS

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EDITORIAL

Happy New Year from your editorial staff.

As usual we are calling out for details of the life and times of our members who have left us recently. Their names are listed under RIP later in the newsletter. Email us anything you may have on those late-members. We'll do the formatting and other editorial niceties so don't concern yourself with passing your English teacher's tests.

Include in this issue are valedictories for Captains Dick Glassey and Billy Johns, which were provided by member Captain Garry Honour. Neither Dick nor Billy were AARAP members having spent almost all their careers in PNG but many of you will have known of them, if not met them, at some time or other.

During my short stay with Air Niugini I had the privilege of flying with Billy and although I didn't fly with Dick, I remember quite a few enjoyable afternoons with him in the Port Moresby Aero Club. And for those of you who don't know Garry, he was with TN in PNG at the time of the establishment of PX (Air Niugini) in 1973 and elected to stay on with Air Niugini.

As Phil mentions below, there have been quite a number light aircraft accidents recently. 2024 was also a bad year internationally with Wikipedia listing 25. The worst of them being the Voepass ATR 72 which entered a flat spin over Brazil in August, the shoot-down of the Azerbaijan Airlines Embraer 190 in December, and again in December, the Jeju Air B737-800 at Muan International, South Korea. Let's hope for a better year this year.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT Phil James

The hot weather is upon us. How did we live before a/c?

The Christmas lunch at the Marquee Vic Park was enjoyed by a reduced number of members and guests due a very large number of apologies from members travelling, unwell or indisposed.

The change of venue was a great success so we have rebooked for 2025.

We had 9 Ancient Aviator certificates to award. Unfortunately, only two AA members were able to attend the lunch to personally receive theirs. The remaining 7 have been sent by mail. (Captain Adrian Fielding's certificate was 'returned to sender'. Anyone with any information on his situation, can you please advise me?)

It seems we have already had a number of light aircraft accidents this year, hopefully this trend will not continue.

Monday April the 7th is locked in for the annual combined Sunny Coast Lunch at the Alexandra Headlands SLSC. Reminders will be sent over the next couple of months.

This is your chance to catch up with members and friends from the far north and maybe take an extra couple of days to enjoy the Sunny Coast and the hinterlands.

WELFARE REPORT Bob Allan

An 80-something year-old retired aviator and good friend of mine, who, along with his wife were enjoying their retirement in a rural town environment, when unfortunately, about 8 or 9 years ago he had a stroke. He has learnt to live with the result, counts his blessings that he's still alive and now only needs a cane whilst walking when he and his wife are at the shopping mall.

Recently he felt ill and put himself to bed. The following day he didn't feel any better and his concerned wife phoned for an ambulance. The paramedics assessed his condition and determined he needed to be hospitalised and took him to the nearby town which had a small hospital where he was again assessed and admitted. His wife was in constant contact with their daughter, a registered nurse, who lived and worked in their state's capital city major hospital.

After a couple of days my friend's wife had become very concerned about her husband's health progress or should I say lack of progress that after another evening phone call with their daughter, the daughter decided to drive to where her parents lived and see her father.

On arriving at the hospital and seeing her dad, she determined that he was in a near-death condition and as a result arranged for him to be transported to a larger hospital in a nearby regional city where he was finally diagnosed properly with sepsis.

Believe me, when you're over 80 years old you don't need a dose of sepsis. My mate's now home, still counting his blessings and again enjoying his retirement. It's not up to me to comment on whether indifference, negligence, staff shortages, etc. may have been involved or even someone determined he'd had a good innings and it was time he just shuffled off "towards the light".

The moral of this story is if one of us oldies ends up in hospital and a close loved one is concerned about your progress it would be very wise to seek a second opinion as, after all, our overworked and highly qualified doctors and their staff are only human. Another moral to this story is that your welfare committee also looks after recruitment and it's getting harder to recruit new members so we don't need our total membership number being reduced by one of our oldies shuffling off "towards the light" way before their use-by date.

Happy New Year from your Welfare and Recruitment Committee, Laurie Gillham, John Gadsby and Bob Allan.

RECRUITMENT Laurie Gillham

I recently sent an email to an email list of retired Cathay crewmembers. The idea is that we should try to communicate with as many of our retired colleagues from all airlines if we can, and inform them of our association and encourage new members to join. This was quite successful and so far, we have welcomed six new members in recent weeks. We look forward to meeting up with them at our functions in the future and meetings.

With this in mind I would ask all members to keep their ears out for any other airline professionals or maybe retired email/Facebook group lists that we could use to enhance our membership.

TREASURER'S REPORT Bob Neate

Members, please be advised that effective February 14 our bank will no longer accept cheques. (It's easy to say just change banks but I fear they will all follow suit in short order.)

NEW JOINERS

Lance Bond:

Lance joined AN in 1979 flying F27 and F28. Post dispute he flew for BI on B757 & B767 from 1990 to 2000. He then joined KE where he operated the B777 until retirement in 2020.

Allen Chiesa:

Allen is an ex-Flight Engineer. He was with the RAAF on the P3-B Orion, then TN on the B727; CX from 1986 to 1998; QF from 1999 to 2001. Allen re-joined CX on the freighter fleet in 2003 and remained with them until retirement in September 2005.

Barry Collins:

Barry flew the Neptune and P3B/C Orion and the Argus CP-107 and Aurora CP-140 whilst with the RAAF from 1970-1990.

He flew with CX from 1990 to 2006 operating L1011, B744, A330, A340. He was then with JQ (Jetstar) 2006-07, 5K (Hi Fly) 2012-13 and FJ (Fiji Airways) 2013-14.

Malcolm Huff:

Malcolm retired from CX in 2019, having flown the B747-100/200/300/400/800. He joined CX from TN where he flew F27, DC9, and B727-200.

Mark Hulst:

Mark joined Ansett as an apprentice in 1970. He was a LAME with AN from 1975 and then became a Flight Engineer on the Electra in 1978. In 1984 he was endorsed on the B727 and then joined CX in 1987 as an FE on the B747. He retired in 1998. He flies privately a C172 and Jabiru J400.

Phil Morrissey:

Phil started his career in 1978 with the RNZAF until 1987 when he joined NF (Air Vanuatu). Later that year he joined CX retiring in 2021. He flew F27, P3B, B727-100, B747 200/300/400, L1011, A330-300, A340-300/600 and A350-900/1000.

Russell Thomas:

Russell joined AN in 1981 flying F27, B737 And A320. Post dispute, he joined MH on the B737 and then in 1990 joined CX. At CX he operated L1011, B744, A330-300, A340-200/300/600 and B777-300/ER. He retired in 2019.

VALE

Captain Brian Mathews 16 August 1933 – 2 October 2024

Brian decided to take up flying having seen an advertisement which read "Learn to Fly in 8 Hours". At the time he was working with P&O Liner Corporation and on his several voyages to Australia he researched the possibilities of working in aviation here.

Having decided upon Australia, he gained a flying scholarship Instructor Rating working in WA. He then joined MMA on the DC3 before moving to PNG where he flew the Caribou and DC3.

Along with several others he was made redundant in 1967 and returned to Ireland where he found employment with Aer Turas who were primarily engaged in ferrying racehorses between France and the UK.



With the period of redundancy over, Brian returned to Ansett Mandated and the F27 eventually joining Ansett Australia after the formation of Air Niugini.

With Ansett he flew the Electra based in Brisbane until the dispute. Post dispute, he flew the F27 and F50 in Denmark and then Malaysia and retired in 1998.

Captain G A (Dick) Glassey



Although Dick Glassey was with Adastra for only a short time in the mid-fifties, it is significant that he served his time with the company in Papua New Guinea for he went on to become a central figure in the development of post-war civil aviation in PNG. Born George Argyle Glassey in Ashburton, New Zealand, Dick acquired his nickname through a childhood fascination with a radio serial about Richard the Lionheart. Thus, he became known as Richard which was inevitably shortened to Dick. After leaving school, he joined the New Zealand Army and served several years with the occupation forces in post-war Japan.

He then moved to Australia where he cut sugarcane before applying to join the Royal Australian Air Force. After pilot training, he was posted to No 87 (PR) Squadron flying Mosquitoes on photo reconnaissance and aerial survey work.

At this time, 87 Squadron was commanded by Ted McKenzie who was later to become Chief Pilot and Operations Manager of Adastra. Ted McKenzie's successor as Operations Manager, Mike Wood, also served in 87 Squadron as did Adastra pilots Graham Holstock and Leon Gordon. Sadly, Graham Holstock lost his life in the crash of Hudson VH-AGO at Horn Island.

Dick Glassey joined Adastra in 1955 flying Hudsons, mainly in PNG. The nomadic lifestyle of a survey pilot did not appeal to Dick as he was then raising a young family, so he joined Mandated Airlines flying DC-3s out of Madang. After Mandated Airlines was taken over by Ansett, Dick managed the light aircraft division of Ansett-MAL.

With the decline in the numbers of the light aircraft fleet, Dick became Chief Pilot for Ansett Airlines of Papua New Guinea (formerly Ansett-MAL). In conjunction with another Ansett pilot, Dick sponsored flying training for PNG's first national pilot, Napoleon Onsem. Dick's ongoing involvement in promoting the training of national pilots was one of his proudest achievements.

With the approaching independence of PNG, Dick was appointed Chief Pilot of the new nation's carrier, Air Niugini. After his subsequent promotion to Operations Manager of Air Niugini, he helped to set up the National Pilot Training Scheme.

Up until his retirement, Dick was flying F28s on domestic and international services. After a distinguished flying career, he retired to Brisbane where he drove a taxi for relaxation!

Dick Glassey passed away in Brisbane on 3 August 1995 after a short illness. The pallbearers at his funeral were Captains Aria Bouraga, Lockly Sabumei, Peter Sharpe and Malcolm Douglas, all wearing Air Niugini uniform, representing three decades of PNG aviation.

Captain W J 'Billy' Johns



Bill Johns was born on 14th February 1928 at Proserpine in North Queensland and the whole family were keen on music. Billy's father played in a band in Proserpine and young Billy inherently got a taste for music. Later he was raised in Hobart, Tasmania and became a Timpanist with the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra playing the Kettle Drums.

Billy got a taste for flying and was trained initially at Archerfield Airport Brisbane on 12 October 1950 at the Royal Queensland Aero Club. In 1951 Bill relocated to Hobart in Tasmania and continued his flying training at Cambridge Airport under CFI Lloyd Jones. From 1951 until 1955 he continued his flying training to Commercial Pilot standard and flew a variety of aircraft such as DH-82 Tiger Moth, DHC-1 Chipmunk, Auster types,

Percival, Wackett and Miles. Other types flown were the American Grumman, British Beagle and Thorp aircraft.

Later in 1955 he made the move to Territory of Papua New Guinea to continue his career in aviation. He joined Territory Airlines of Goroka under the ownership of Ranald Dennis Buchanan and flew the DH-84 Dragon, Beechcraft 58 Baron and 95 Travelair.

Around 1956, Bill commenced flying for Mandated Airlines (MAL) and that started his airline career. In the Territory he flew the Piaggio P-166 and later the DC3 in which he flew almost 9,500 hours on type. Bill also flew almost 300 hours on the DHC-4 Caribou.

Over the subsequent years, the PNG Airline industry expanded and MAL became known as Ansett MAL, later Ansett Airlines of PNG, and eventually incorporated in Air Niugini which launched on 01 November 1973.

With Air Niugini, Bill flew the F-27 (over 7000 hours) also F-28 (some 5400 hours on type) and Boeing 707 some 365 hours. He continued flying in PNG until 1985.

Next stop for Bill was Nuku'alofa in Tonga where he took up an appointment with Friendly Islands Airways until 1988.

Later that year he relocated back to Queensland where he flew for Flight West for a total of seven years where he was working with Dennis Buchanan once more following the cessation of the Talair business back in PNG.

He returned to PNG 1995 and flew with Milne Bay Airlines for three years flying the DHC-8 Dash 8. He also became Chief Flying Instructor (CFI) of the South Pacific Aero Club based at Jackson's Airport Port Moresby. Bill spent some 33 years flying in PNG which is possibly the most distinguished career of any pilot associated with PNG.

During his 47 years in Aviation, he amassed a grand total of 31,055 hours.

Captain Johns passed away in Brisbane on 01 May 2012 aged 84 years.

Squadron Leader Peter Turnbull



The Battle of Milne Bay was a turning point in the Pacific War when Australian forces inflicted the first defeat on the Japanese on land as they swept through Southeast Asia.

It was significant, too, because of the role of the RAAF and the heroism of Squadron Leader Peter Turnbull, commander of 76 Squadron. They called him the flying cowboy: he was 181cm tall, fun-loving — he was known to dance on tabletops in Egyptian bars — as well as an outstanding horseman and sportsman. He grew up on his parents' cattle

property in Glen Innes, northern NSW, and had the name of his favourite camp drafting horse, Autogo, inscribed on his flying suit.

Turnbull served in the 12/24th Light Horse and joined the RAAF nine months before the outbreak of war in 1939. He was posted to 3 Squadron in the Western Desert, where the squadron was equipped with Gloster Gauntlet biplanes in the first Libyan campaign in December 1940, then Gladiators, later Hurricanes and Tomahawks. He flew more than 100 sorties against the Germans and Italians, and against the Vichy French in Syria. He was awarded a Distinguished Flying Cross in 1941 and was credited with destroying three Messerschmitts. The citation praised his "magnificent fighting spirit".



He returned to Australia with the outbreak of the Pacific War and was leading 76 Squadron when 2000 Japanese marines, equipped with two light tanks, landed late at night on Papua's eastern tip on August 25, 1942, intent on capturing three Allied airstrips in their drive for Port Moresby.

Turnbull was diving on a tank at dusk on August 27 when his Kittyhawk flipped on its back 200 feet from the ground, crashing and killing him instantly. It's thought his aircraft may have been hit by small arms fire or hit a tree high on the wall of a ravine.

In a letter to Turnbull's mother, Flight Lieutenant Ron Kerville wrote of his comrade's final moments: "It was just about dusk when we took off together to attack a Japanese tank located on the roadway right on the shore of Milne Bay. Peter was in good spirits as we talked over the method of attack and as we flew out to locate the target, he told me exactly what to do if my engine failed — 'hop out old boy and swim for it.' "He was really happy to be flying again after a few days

on the ground. He told me to keep top cover — watch his attack and then follow him in. As I did so, I saw his aircraft dive from about 600 feet and from about 500 yards out to sea.

"His guns opened fire in a long burst — tracer could be seen flying in all directions from the tank and I could not tell whether it was return fire or Peter's own fire. He carried the dive very low and his aircraft during the recovery turned over — hit the trees and disappeared into the dense undergrowth. "I called up on the radio in the hope that perhaps he was not badly hurt — but fortunately he was killed instantly for which we were all thankful as the target was 400 yards inside enemy territory. The thought of him being in Japanese hands at that stage of the struggle was not a pleasant one. Although he has passed on, I assure you Peter's spirit still lives in the squadron of which he was so proud — we will never forget him."

Turnbull was 25 when he died. His body was found in the wrecked plane near a mission on September 4. He was credited with 10 enemy aircraft destroyed, including three Zeros, plus one probable and two damaged. The official war history said: "Turnbull had led his squadron faithfully, always willing to take any risk he expected his pilots to take."

With Turnbull's death, leadership of 76 Squadron passed to RAAF ace Squadron Leader Keith "Bluey" Truscott. Six months later he, too, was killed, on a training flight over Exmouth Gulf.

Jimmy Melrose (1913-1935)



Less than a decade after the Wright brothers made history with the world's first powered flight, Jimmy Melrose arrived in the world, and was almost destined for the skies.

Aviation was in his family, with his uncle founding the company that would become known as Supermarine — the manufacturer of the celebrated Spitfire.

It was clear from a young age that Melrose, who was born in Adelaide's eastern suburbs in 1913, would

choose to pursue no other path in life than that of a pilot. "When he was four years old, he made cardboard wings for his cat and tried to make it fly," Gill Rogers, from the Glenelg Historical Society, said.

"His parents gave him a very expensive toy car and when they came home, he'd taken it apart and made it into a toy plane. "His father was horrified, his mother delighted at his creativity."

Melrose's birthplace, in Burnside, was more than 15,000 kilometres from where Orville and Wilbur Wright created aviation history. But Melrose, who grew up at beachside Glenelg on the other side of Adelaide, would soon be writing his own name into the history books, by getting behind the controls of his own aeroplane.

"When he was seven years of age, he wrote in his diary that he wanted to do something no-one had ever done before, so I think he was just always interested in planes," Ms Rogers said. Growing up in a wealthy family of pastoralists, he was able to obtain his pilot license at 19, and then set his sights on exploring Australia and the world.

In 1934, Melrose purchased a de Havilland Puss Moth which he flew around the continent in record time. His flight circumnavigating the continent took 5 days, 10 hours and 57 minutes, shaving nearly two days off the previous record. Not content with holding just one record, Melrose took off from Parafield Airport on the day he turned 21, destined for the UK.

It was there that he would join the Melbourne Centenary Air Race, a competition for pilots to fly from London to Melbourne to celebrate the Victorian capital's 100th birthday.

The South Australian was the youngest pilot to enter the race and the only solo pilot to finish, which he did in third place with a handicap, despite an emergency landing in Darwin.

It was on another flight from England to Australia that Melrose was involved in the search for, Sir Charles Kingsford-Smith. Kingsford-Smith was flying off the coast of Burma when, it is presumed, he crashed into the sea at night.

Melrose was taking part in a trans-continental race at the time and was in Singapore when Kingsford-Smith — whose remains were never found — disappeared. "Jimmy Melrose heard that [Kingsford-Smith] was missing, so he cut off from the race and searched the Bay of Bengal,"

Tragically, Melrose was months away from his own fatal aerial disaster.

On a trip from Melbourne to Darwin his plane broke up mid-flight, and Melrose was killed at the age of 22. His life was celebrated by more than 100,000 people on the streets of Adelaide and to this day suburbs and parks carry his name.

RIP

John Andrews George Freischmidt Brian Mathews Jack MacDonald Barry Mesh Jim Murtha

FLIGHT SAFETY

Jeju Air Flight 2216

According to reports from *Reuters*, investigators have discovered that both the Cockpit Voice Recorder (CVR) and the Flight Data Recorder (FDR) on Jeju Air (7C) Flight 7C2216, stopped recording approximately four minutes before the aircraft's fatal crash at South Korea's Muan International Airport (MWX) on December 29, 2024.

This from PPRuNe (so accuracy cannot be confirmed)

The B-737-800 pre 2010 build had both the CVR and FDR wired to the L & R AC electrical buses.....not the Battery or Emergency Battery bus which was incorporated on later 2010 and subsequent models.

So, if the bird strike caused the right engine to compressor stall and flame out or only produce partial power AND in the overshoot, it's possible the crew shut down the wrong engine, this would assume the right engine wasn't producing any electrical output (a wild possibility if the engine was still running even at idle) then all AC power would have been stopped.

The crew did not start the APU and the aircraft from what I gather was not equipped with a RAT. So, a double engine failure requiring an immediate return to land (quicker on the opposite end) and failure to manually drop the gear (and) slats/flaps may have been inop due to complete engine/electrical failures or not attempted due to glide distance required to make the runway.

India's Aviation Safety Body Meets Airline CEOs After 70 Bomb Threats in 6 Days



In response to an unprecedented 70 bomb threats targeting Indian airlines within six days, officials from the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS) held an urgent meeting with airline CEOs in New Delhi on Saturday. The meeting, held at the civil aviation ministry's office, focused on enforcing standard operating procedures (SOPs) to tackle the ongoing threats, which have caused significant passenger inconvenience and operational disruptions.

On one day alone, more than 30 bomb threats were made against various airlines. Vistara, IndiGo, Air India, Akasa Air, and other airlines reported receiving security-related alerts, leading to flight delays and diversions. Several of these threats were traced to IP addresses in countries like London, Germany, Canada, and the US, though officials suspect the use of VPNs to mask actual locations.

The BCAS and DGCA (Directorate General of Civil Aviation) are expected to release fresh guidelines for dealing with bomb threats, as the civil aviation ministry continues to work with airlines and security agencies. Investigations so far have not revealed a larger conspiracy, with officials noting that many threats appear to be from minors and pranksters.

A 17-year-old in Mumbai was recently taken into custody for making threats in an attempt to frame a friend. Civil Aviation Minister Ram Mohan Naidu reassured the public, stating that steps are being taken to curb these pranks and strengthen aviation security.

AUTOMATIC TAKEOFFS ARE COMING FOR PASSENGER JETS AND THEY'RE GOING TO REDRAW THE MAP OF THE SKY

In late 1965, at what's now London Heathrow airport, a commercial flight coming from Paris made history by being the first to land automatically.

The plane – A Trident 1C operated by BEA, which would later become British Airways – was equipped with a newly developed extension of the autopilot (a system to help guide the plane's path without manual control) known as "Autoland."

Today, automatic landing systems are installed on most commercial aircraft and improve the safety of landings in difficult weather or poor visibility.

Now, nearly 60 years later, the world's third largest aircraft manufacturer, Brazil's Embraer, is introducing a similar technology, but for takeoffs.

Called "E2 Enhanced Take Off System," after the family of aircraft it's designed for, the technology would not only improve safety by reducing pilot workload, but it would also improve range and takeoff weight, allowing the planes that use it to travel farther, according to Embraer.

"The system is better than the pilots," says Patrice London, principal performance engineer at Embraer, who has worked on the project for over a decade. "That's because it performs in the same way all the time. If you do 1,000 takeoffs, you will get 1,000 of exactly the same takeoff."

Embraer, London adds, has already started flight testing, with the aim to get it approved by aviation authorities in 2025, before introducing it from select airports.



The cockpit of an Embraer E195-E2. The automated takeoff procedure is largely the same as a regular one, with the exception that the pilot doesn't pull back on the controls, as the plane does so automatically.

Just like Airbus, Embraer has been taking advantage of Boeing's recent troubles and has been gaining market share, and is now the leading manufacturer of commercial jets with up to 150 seats. It has delivered almost 1,700

aircraft from its popular E-Jet family, introduced in 2004. Earlier this year, American Airlines announced an order for 90 E175 planes – a regional jet with a capacity of about 80 passengers – with the intent to convert its entire regional fleet to Embraer aircraft by 2030.

In 2018, Embraer revamped some of the models in the family with new engines, wings and avionics, calling them E2. Two variants are now in service, the E-190-E2 and the slightly larger E-195-E2, seating up to about 140 passengers, which puts them in direct competition with the Airbus A220.

Just over 120 E2 aircraft have been delivered so far, with Canada's Porter Airlines, Brazil's Azul and The Netherland's KLM Cityhopper currently the largest operators. Embraer has orders for about 200 more. It's on these planes that the company is going to introduce its new automated takeoff system. "I had the pleasure of flying the system on the real airplane a week ago, and it's amazing," says Luís Carlos Affonso, senior vice president of engineering and technological development at Embraer. "We believe that the training for pilots will be very limited, because you don't really change the procedure."

During an automated takeoff, Affonso says, there is only one key deviation from current procedures. "You do not rotate yourself. You have your hands on the yoke, and the airplane rotates itself," "In the auto landing, you also have to keep your hands on the controls, and the airplane lands itself. It's the same here. All the rest remains identical and when the airplane crosses 200 feet in altitude, the system reverts to the normal autopilot and autothrottle, so life goes back to usual."

Before reaching that altitude, however, the system would have made it possible for the plane to take off earlier and use less of the runway. As a result, the takeoff distance – which is calculated from the release of the brakes until the plane reaches 35 feet of altitude – is reduced compared to a manual takeoff.

An Embraer E195-E2 at London City Airport. The Brazilian plane maker plans to introduce a new automated takeoff system on this aircraft in 2025.



No tail strikes

Crucially, the system allows the plane to take off as early as possible and more steeply, but without ever incurring a tail strike — a dangerous situation in which the tail of the plane touches the runway or an obstacle as the aircraft lifts off, sometimes as a result of pilot error.

"If you're a pilot, you have to give some room for error," says Affonso. "But because this system is so precise and consistent, you don't need the same margins and you can operate closer to the optimum in the initial rotation, as if you were closer to touching with the tail. Except you will not."

Embraer says this optimization allows for an increase in takeoff weight, which means either more passengers or more range — up to 350 nautical miles. This opens up destinations that are precluded with the same combination of airport and aircraft, but without the automated takeoff system.

For now, Embraer plans to introduce the system at three airports: London City in England, Florence in Italy and Santos Dumont in Brazil, but the company says it's receiving interest for more.

What happens in case of an emergency? The system reacts in the same way as the normal autopilot, sounding an alarm and giving controls back to the pilots. "I tested the system in failure cases, especially when you lose an engine," Affonso says. "It is amazing how you get a workload reduction, especially during a failure. Whenever you reduce the workloads, you make for a safer operation." However, Affonso adds, this is not a first step towards total automation, or even getting rid of one of the pilots. "We are just adding one phase, which is the takeoff phase, where you now can have the autopilot engaged," he says, "but it's far from autonomous, because the pilot is there, and if there is a failure, the pilot is the one that will take control."

According to Gary Crichlow, an aviation analyst at Aviation News Limited, at this stage it's too early to tell how the benefits touted by Embraer for the system will translate into real- world operation. "In principle, allowing the system to select and perform the optimal takeoff profile automatically seems like an extension of what has become standard practice in other parts of the flight envelope, rather than a radical step towards a fully autonomous aircraft," he says. But as with every other system enhancement ever created, he adds, it all comes down to the implementation" "Whether the system is as readily retrofittable as expected, whether it proves to need no additional training, how well it handles real-world operation, and of course, whether it actually results in a significant improvement in operational efficiency – only time will tell."

"FAREWELL" TO LONG HUGGING



Dunedin Airport in New Zealand posted a photo on Facebook of a newly erected sign, reading "Max hug time 3 minutes. For fonder farewells, please use the car park".

Many online users have expressed mixed reactions about the signage, with strong opinions both being for and against the new rule in question.

Marysia Vluggen commented, "You can't put a time limit on hugs! @ that's inhumane @".

Kelly Gunner added, "I can see the airport worker now .2:56,2:57,2:58,2:59 OK time to break it up!".

Doğan Ar joked, "that's why so snobby people :)No emotions! We give hug forever and longer. I am Turkish \bigcirc I can give a kiss 1 hour under the rain \bigcirc ".

John Anderson wrote, "This got me thinking.... Who are the people I would hug for 3 minutes? There are a very few, mostly family, and a dear long-time friend. But in spite of the humour of this sign, it's something to think about. Life is short."

Carolyn Munro-Swett stated, "OMG school drop off lines need a similar sign (Max hug time 10 sec) ©".

Ronnie Allegro retorted, "Nah...I think most can finish their 'fonder farewells' in under 3 minutes... Leave it out front for all to see."

Another sign at the airport reportedly reads "It's hard to say goodbye so make it quick. 3 minutes max."

Dunedin's Defence

Dunedin Airport enforced this rule last month, with an FAQ page on the airport's website explaining the changes to airport drop-offs and why they are taking effect.



The airport has also moved the drop-off zone location back to its original location after the completion of an expansion project a couple of years ago. This location is meant to reduce the need for passengers to step in front of oncoming traffic.

"We've relocated the drop-off zone to improve traffic flow and safety around the terminal. By shifting it, we reduce congestion and make it easier for passengers to be dropped off safely."

Dunedin Airport General Manager Business Development Megan Crawford gave comments to Stuff Travel, explaining how the signage is both encouraging and "on-brand" with the airport:

"This area is to allow passengers to be dropped off by their friends, whānau or colleagues at the airport. To ensure all our customers are able to do this we try to encourage the drop off to be as efficient as possible. The signage is in line with our branding which is to be a little bit quirky and fun in how we deliver a message."

Dunedin Air CEO Daniel De Bono spoke with Radio New Zealand about the controversial signage. While he acknowledges that drop-off locations are common locations for farewells, prolonged hugs can also hold up traffic and also pose a risk for pedestrians. He also explains how airports are often "hotbeds of emotion", but referenced a study that suggested a 20-second hug is all people need to release "the love hormone" oxytocin.

De Bono reiterates that travellers are free to hug loved ones at the car park for 15 minutes, as that's how long drop-off parking is free until a fee is imposed.

These new changes to the airport are in line with returns of international flights, as more travellers are expected to enter and leave the country via Dunedin for the foreseeable future.

COULD THE AIRSHIP BE THE ANSWER TO SUSTAINABLE AIR TRAVEL – OR IS IT ALL A LOAD OF HOT AIR?

Amid talk of sustainable aviation fuel and electric flights, there's another form of air travel currently being mooted as a green alternative to flying: the airship.

Technically, the airship is all a load of hot air: a typically cigar-shaped, self-propelled aircraft made of a vast balloon filled with nearly weightless lifting gases, featuring an attached car or gondola for carrying passengers, crew and cargo. If it conjures up a black-and-white image of the past, you're right – airships were popular at the beginning of the 20th Century before the rise of aviation as we know it. And now, they're making a comeback.

Modern technological advances, paired with a need to develop the aviation industry as it struggles slowly towards net zero, have led aeronautical engineers to re-examine the airship. New materials – including new forms of ultralight nylon – developed since its heyday have made a new type of aircraft possible. Replacing flammable hydrogen with helium has allowed for safer development and aims to avoid a repeat of the Hindenburg disaster, the luxury German airship that exploded live on film in 1937. The new advances and stronger aviation standards mean that really the only thing these new airships have in common with the Hindenburg is their shape and the fact that they're using a gas lighter than air.

Though an airship, which typically flies at around 100-130km/h, won't ever reach the speeds of a jet plane, they are being talked about as forms of slow travel like cruise ships and night trains, where the experience makes up for the speed. Airships fly at a lower altitude than a plane, with unpressurised cabins where you can open and look out of the window, making it more comfortable for passengers. The large balloon also takes far less energy to power – and potentially could operate with electric engines powering lift-off and steering, making them a zero-carbon emitting form of air transport.

"It's good that we are testing different ideas and innovations, as exploring various solutions is key to improving aviation and making it more sustainable in the future," said leading aviation expert Thomas Thessen, adjunct professor at the University of Aalborg and chief analyst at Scandinavian Airlines. "The biggest advantage I can see is that they can stay in the air for a long time, and their ability to fly vertically up."

Airships have an attached car or gondola for carrying passengers, crew and cargo

Airships do not require a runway to take off, meaning they can take off and land anywhere that has a flat space large enough for them, which could be somewhere as simple as a field, providing there is something to tether it to. This also means that they can help rescue people in the event of natural disasters, where internet and telephony may be knocked out.

The world's largest aircraft, the LTA Pathfinder 1, is currently being tested in Silicon Valley, California. The 124.5m by 20m new age zeppelin is equivalent in size to four Goodyear blimps and longer than three Boeing 737s. LTA – which stands for "Lighter Than Air" – is one of a handful of airship manufacturers around the world currently poised to enter the aviation market. Founded by Sergey Brin, former president of Alphabet, Google's parent company, the company believes that next-generation airships can reduce the carbon footprint of aviation by using the helium inside the balloon to do the lifting, rather than a carbon-emitting jet engine, and using far smaller engines for thrust. Applications for their airship include more efficient cargo transport from point to point (rather than port to port); and humanitarian aid, where the airship can support relief efforts by delivering supplies even if runways, roads and ports are damaged.

They are not alone: French company Flying Whales is also currently developing airships for cargo use, aiming to reduce the environmental impact of cargo transport; while British firm Hybrid Air Vehicles (HAV) are focused on how a hybrid airship – using electric engines as well as helium – can unlock a zero-emission form of air travel.

While sustainable aviation has a long way to go to be a mass travel solution, it all adds up to a mini revolution in the skies. Along with sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) and electric planes, the new generation of airships are offering an alternative to our carbon intensive status quo of flying.

"We say that the Airlander connects the unconnected," said Hannah Cunningham, head of marketing at HAV. The Airlander 10 is their first production aircraft, a helium- filled, curvaceously shaped vehicle that wouldn't look out of place in a comic book. It has some distinct use cases: one of them is connecting remote islands where it isn't economical to build airports.



"You don't need masses of infrastructure like an airport or train line with an aircraft like this – all you need is a flat surface for landing," she said. "It opens up lots of opportunities to connect places that aren't currently connected, for example communities in places like the Highlands and Islands in Scotland." You don't need masses of infrastructure like an airport or train line with an aircraft like this – all you need is a flat surface for landing."

Airlander 10 will have four kerosene engines, but due to the helium-filled hull, it emits 90% less CO2 than a typical aircraft. (By 2030, HAV intends to have a hydrogen fuel cell-powered electric engine and offer flights with zero emissions.) It travels at a top speed of 130 km/h and can operate as a mass passenger transport vehicle for up to 90 people.



It's nowhere near as fast as a plane – a typical commercial passenger jet flies at 770-930km/h – but it's not trying to replace them either. The great benefit is how it can connect places where infrastructure is too costly or passenger numbers are too few, said Cunningham.

Plans are moving forward at pace: last year, HAV signed an agreement with Spanish airline Air Nostrum to double their reservation of Airlander aircraft to 20 for passenger use from 2028, with the idea of using them to connect Spanish islands with the mainland. With a site in place to build hybrid aircraft and certification underway with the Civil Aviation Authority, they could be certified as safe to fly and going into production in four years' time.

Airships fly at a lower altitude than a plane with unpressurised cabins and scenic views.

For Thessen, the idea that airships could fill the skies like planes is not a realistic one. "The main thing about aviation is speed," he said. "When you compare aviation with airships, airships travel closer to the speed of a car. In my view, airships cannot replace aircraft but might have a niche role to play, like cruise ships, on slower journeys." He can however see a role for it for anyone who is excited by slow travel. "If you can put your head out of the window and get a view as you travel slowly over the landscape, I could see it having a small role as a special experience."



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Low Flying ...

And the result ...

(somewhere in Oman)



I gave my handyman a to-do list, but he only did jobs 1, 3, and 5.

Turns out he only does odd jobs.



"Male, 38, still living with his parents. They asked us to keep him overnight, so they could change the locks."



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