

The Birth of IFA - 1975 - 1979

The people who attended the formation meeting of IFA in 1975 could all see the benefit of worldwide communication (at a time when communication technology was very basic) and of the gathering of information and like minds and could see the aim of improving air safety through improvements in engineering standards and of sharing 'good practices'. At that time these individuals were very modern in their thinking and can be commended for their beliefs in the future of air travel.

1975

Mr Harry Payne then decided that a meeting of IFATE should be called to determine if it was viable to re-organise as per the New Zealand proposals or that consideration be given to disbanding the IFATE organisation. This meeting subsequently took place on 24 March 1975, at The Royal Air Force Club in London; and it was attended by representatives from the following IFATE members:

SLAET (UK) - Mr P. E. Chorley (as Chairman)
Mr Harry Payne
Mr Stewart M. John
Mr Kenneth J. Anderson
Mr Donald K. Smith
Mr W. E. Mortimer
Mr M. J. Wilkinson
Mr C. H. Coldry
Mr T. F. Barnet-Higgin
Mr R. W. Cockram

SLAET (NZ) Mr Wally Keen
Mr Barry Geddes
Mr A Fry

SLAET (Aust) Mr Barry A. J. Green
Mr Alexander Campbell
Mr D. Young

SAE (Pakistan) Mr Nazir Kehar

PAMA (Canada) Mr P. Frank Rider

Mr Wally Keen and Mr Barry Geddes then presented their proposals and a lively debate ensued which resulted in a significant number of the SLAET (NZ) proposals being agreed together with proposals from the other Members such that it was finally resolved that:

1. IFATE should be revised and re-organised so as to be independent of the SLAET (UK) and financially sound.
2. The name of the organisation be changed to: 'THE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF AIRWORTHINESS' (IFA).
3. The new IFA would need a revised constitution which would permit the membership base to be expanded to include applicants from all sectors of the Aerospace Industry.
4. The new membership annual fee would be 100 UK pounds.
5. IFA would be administered by a 'Secretary General' and that an experienced Licensed Aircraft Engineer be sought to fill this position for an initial period of two years; that SLAET (UK) would provide an office and other support facilities for a maximum period of two years.

Mr Don Smith was appointed as Secretary General.

6. IFA would appoint a 'Patron, President and Global Vice Presidents' as members of a twelve person IFA Executive Council, elected by the Members and that regular meetings of this Executive Council would be held during the year.

Mr Stewart M. John was appointed Executive Vice President and as Global VP's Mr John F. McDonald (USA) and Mr Gordon Patterson (Australia).

7. IFA would organise a 'sponsored' Annual International Conference in conjunction with its Annual General Meeting, and that these Conferences should be held in different geographical locations.

8. IFA would need to improve communication with its members and it was thus agreed to publish Newsletters, similar to those edited by Mr Maurice Wilkinson on behalf of the IFATE Overseas Liaison Committee.

Thus on the 24th MARCH 1975, THE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF AIRWORTHINESS was begun.

Later, following a visit to Karachi by Mr Stewart John, Mr. Syed Ajaz Ali (see photo) (Director of Maintenance & Engineering, Pakistan International Airways) accepted the invitation to be IFA's first President for a two-year period.

One of the new Secretary General's first tasks was to produce publicity material and send it out to prospective new members and the international aeronautical press. Altogether over 200 sets of publicity material were sent out world-wide, using every opportunity to publicise IFA,

Having established contact during earlier visits to the IATA headquarters in Montreal, Mr Don Smith was invited to attend the IATA AGM in Oslo, during September/October. He was also invited to represent IFA at the Opening Ceremony of the 3rd

Airport Construction and Equipment Exhibition in Brussels which took place on 15th September.

1976

In January Mr Don Smith embarked on a publicity tour of Australasia and the Far East. He visited Karachi, Singapore, Sydney, Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch, Hong Kong and Bangkok with successful results as four new members can be attributed to the visits. During his stay in Karachi, plans were laid for IFA's first International Conference to be held there in November 1976.

Gradually, month by month the membership numbers built up as IFA gathered momentum, increasing to twenty.

IFA's first International Conference, (the 7th, since IFATE was formed), was held in Karachi on 1-3 November. The Theme was 'International Airworthiness'. The Opening Address was given by Air Marshall M. Kur Khan, Chairman and CEO, Pakistan Intl Airways, and was attended by one hundred and fifty delegates.

Papers were presented by Sir Geoffrey Roberts, Mr TD Guilbert, Chief Surveyor UKCAA and Mr John McDonald, V.P. Engineering and maintenance, Flying Tiger Airline and IFA V.P. North America.

Following the Conference, the IFA Executive Vice President and Secretary-General attended the IATA Annual General Meeting in Singapore on 8-10 November 1976, again making useful contacts and spreading the news of the existence of IFA.

1977

In January 1977, the IFA Select Committee (formed at the 1976 conference) held their first meeting in Singapore - to study the possibility of establishing an International Standardisation of Basic Qualifications for Aircraft Engineer Licenses. Following the meeting, SLAET (UK) led the study by forming a Committee which gathered information from the UK/Europe region.

Now that IFA was becoming known around the world, an invitation was made for Mr. Don Smith to speak at the 5th Orient Airline Association (OAA) Air Safety Seminar in Hong Kong in May. His subject was 'Airworthiness Directives', which generated considerable discussion among the air safety experts gathered there from around the world.

The 8th IFA AGM/Conference was held in Sydney on 9-12 November. Sponsored by SLAET (Australia) and the General Aviation Industry in Australia. Sir Geoffrey Roberts, C.B.E, presented the Opening Address. Seventy five delegates attended and the following papers were presented and well received:

1. Airworthiness Control of Maintenance in Australia ,by Mr. N.H. O'Neill, Chief Airworthiness, Dept of Transport (Air Transport Group) - Australia
2. The Nomad Aircraft -Maintenance and Operation by, Mr. Barry C.A. Lagden, Government Aircraft Factory (GAF).
3. General Aviation in Australia, by Mr. D. Crompton, General Manager B.S. Stillwell Aviation Group

At the conference, IFA set up the Select Committee, on International Standardisation of Basic Qualifications for Aircraft Engineering. The terms of reference of the committee were as follows:

“The International Federation of Airworthiness should establish a select working committee to determine the existing education, training and practical experience requirements in each of the member States of ICAO, for certifying engineers as applied in aviation companies, airlines and industrial aviation organisations. This select Committee would be charged with the compilation of a comprehensive document, to be submitted to the Executive Council of the International Federation of Airworthiness for establishing the areas of technical compatibility that exists within the member States. This information is then to be used to form a basis for the future establishment of an International Basic qualification in Aircraft Engineering.

1978

The Secretary General, still endeavouring to spread IFA's name throughout the world of aviation, accepted an invitation to speak about IFA and 'International Airworthiness', at the Conference of the Aviation Technical Education Council (ATEC), in April in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

New Zealand was the venue for the 9th IFA Conference/AGM. Hosted by Air New Zealand the meeting was held in Auckland on 30 October to 2 November with approximately 100 delegates attending. During the meeting, having completed his two-year term of office, Mr. Ajaz Ali handed over the Presidency to Dr.Yoshi Funatsu (Senior Vice President, Engineering & Maintenance, All Nippon Airways) for the period 1978-1980. Sir Geoffrey Roberts was appointed Patron of the IFA.

The IFA Scholarship Administrator (designate) Mr. Len Gore gave an introductory paper on a proposed IFA Scholarship Award Scheme. It was hoped to make the first selection at the 1979 AGM in Tokyo

1979

In February Mr Don Smith accepted an invitation from the organisers of AIRMEC '79 (a UK based conference organisation), which was held in Zurich. He acted as Chairman of one of the sessions and later in the programme, presented a paper entitled, 'Maintenance-Airworthiness- Economics'. Accompanied by Mr Jack Finnimore (Executive Director, SLAET (UK)) they were given the opportunity of organising a dinner for delegates where the IFA Patron, Sir Geoffrey Roberts was guest of Honour, an excellent opportunity to publicise IFA.

The 10th IFA Conference/AGM were held in Tokyo on 15-17 October. The theme was 'Maintenance & Economics' and with over one hundred and thirty delegates was a very successful event. The Opening Address was given by Mr. C. Noda (President Japan Aircraft Engineers Association (JAEA) and V.P. Japan Airlines).

There were three sessions chaired by:

1. Mr. John McDonald with papers by All Nippon Airways
2. Mr H.I. Millar with papers by Lockheed California
3. Mr Stewart M. John with papers by, Rolls Royce, General Electric and Pratt & Whitney.

During the AGM the following decisions were made:

- a) The title 'Secretary General' would be replaced by 'Executive Director' effective March 1980,
- b) Mr. Ian Millar Chief Engineer, Maintenance & Overhaul, Trans Australia Airways was appointed V.P. Australia.
- c) Mr. Wally Keen President SLAET (NZ) was appointed IFA Executive V.P.
- d) Mr. Ken Anderson, President, SLAET-UK and Economics & Systems Manager, British Caledonian Airways, was appointed IFA V.P. Europe.

It was further announced at the AGM that due to rising administration costs IFA found it necessary to increase the Annual Fees to \$300 for Corporate Members and \$200 for Professional Societies.

The following Resolution was proposed, "That a Working Party is formed to look into the International Aspects of AME Licensing and Aircraft Maintenance and Certification": the resolution was finally accepted:

"IFA undertakes to review the international acceptance of Aircraft Maintenance Certification with regard to Continuing Airworthiness. Also to review the acceptability of aeronautical spares and repair release procedures with the objective of increasing international airworthiness co-operation leading, to the more efficient use of available resources without jeopardising national airworthiness standards or responsibilities".

The Working Party, under the Chairmanship of Mr. Roy Rowden (Airworthiness Surveyor, UK-CAA in Hong Kong) was set up as a result of the above resolution and consisted of five members. They represented Airworthiness Authorities, Airline Operators, Manufacturers, and Vendors. Their first meeting was held in Hong Kong and the results of their recommendations were to be presented at the 1980 IFA AGM and conference planned to be held in London, England.

In November, Mr. Don Smith together with the President, Mr. Yoshi Funatsu, attended the 35th IATA AGM in Manila.