

30 April 2007

The countdown has begun:

CASA has advised us that, on the 14th of May 2007, it will withdraw the general exemption (Instrument number: CASA 475/04) that to date, has allowed Limited Category aircraft to operate without either an approved self-admin organisation or a specific approval from CASA. The previous deadline of 1st May has been extended only to allow for the formal acceptance of manuals and the issue of necessary approvals.

So, from the 14th of May, no pilot will be permitted to operate a Limited Category aircraft unless it is registered with AWAL and is operated in accordance with approved AWAL procedures, except where CASA has specifically authorised otherwise.

Self-administration does not mean self-regulation, and AWAL will employ Aviation Safety Regulations to oversee the operation of Limited Category aircraft.

For example, the regulations require that suitable operating limitations and conditions be imposed by attaching them to the aircraft's Certificate of Airworthiness (C of A); so AWAL's first task under self-admin will be to ensure that each aircraft in the fleet has a C of A and attached operating limitations that conform to the regulations.

After the fleet has been 'base-lined', AWAL will require registered operators and pilots to ensure that their aircraft are also operated in accordance with AWAL policies that are under development for the purpose of promoting safe and responsible practices.

(AWAL has given CASA a commitment that it will prioritise its efforts toward conforming those aircraft that are operated in 'Adventure-Style Operations' under CASR 21.189(3)(a)).

'Limited Category Operations' is a sweeping term that encompasses a broad range of issues. Achieving complete oversight is complex and cannot occur overnight, and CASA has agreed that AWAL may introduce controls and processes gradually. With this aim, AWAL is preparing a timetable for the phased introduction of additional tasks and responsibilities.

The Australian Warbirds Association Limited is about to become an approved self-admin organisation under CAR 262AN. This is an important and historic event for Australian aviation and for the Historic and Ex-Military aircraft industry in particular. Let's continue to pull together to make self-admin a success, so as to "*keep 'em flying, safely*".

Thanks for your support.

Stephen Dines, for your AWAL self-admin team.