...means "Let the buyer beware." This is good advice for all pilots who are getting to know their newly-acquired aircraft. Our first reporter relied on apparently inaccurate information that contributed to a forced landing.

■ I recently purchased a completed [homebuilt aircraft]. I was told that the wing tanks held approximately 8-10 gallons of fuel when the level reached the first stringer in the tank bottom. Using that info, I planned a 30-minute pleasure flight with estimated fuel on board of 1 hour + 45 minutes. About 25 minutes into the flight, I lost power, and made an uneventful landing on the Interstate highway. When the plane was disassembled for transport, there was less than one pint of fuel remaining in both wing tanks. This will be the last time I take such critical information at face value!

The aircraft manufacturer and the aircraft operating manual are the best sources of information about aircraft specifications and operating parameters. If such documentation is unavailable, a new aircraft owner can drain the fuel tanks and create a dipstick by marking a stick as measured quantities of fuel are put into the tanks. This will ensure the correct amount of fuel for a flight.

Another buyer was caught unawares with the purchase of what was supposed to be an ultralight vehicle. Research into the FARs caused him to question that designation.

■ I recently bought a [two-seat] aircraft that is referred to as an "ultralight" by absolutely everybody except the FAA, which calls it an "ultralight trainer." I had bought it used, and it was already licensed experimental and had an N-number. I...recently put floats on it...and was flying it with a friend.

I have a Commercial ASEL, so flying an experimental with both seats occupied on land is legal. According to FAR Part 103 [Ultralight Aircraft], however, there are no 2-seat ultralights; rather, they are trainers operated by documented instructors under a waiver with strict guidelines. By myself, under Part 103, I can legally fly an ultralight on floats with no seaplane rating or even a license; but with a passenger, I would be flying an experimental using my pilot's license, and I would need a seaplane rating. As it was, I was in violation of Part 103 by taking a passenger, or Part 91 by operating an experimental aircraft on water without a seaplane rating.

I have learned to read the fine print more carefully, and not to simply trust the nice man at the dealership.

This aircraft is not eligible to be operated under 14 CFR (Code of Federal Regulations) Part 103. The previous owner elected to obtain a special airworthiness certificate under 14 CFR Part 21; thus, the reporter purchased an "airplane." To carry passengers, the reporter must therefore meet the requirements of 14 CFR Part 61.

## **Canine Companion Notes**

Animals shipped in an aircraft's cargo hold are sometimes quite unhappy with their traveling accommodations. A ground crew member reports on the case of one very nervous canine flier:

■ At ABC, a dog kennel was loaded in the forward cargo bin. Upon arrival at XYZ, ramp personnel discovered that the dog had escaped inflight. The dog was put back in the kennel and shipped on to ZZZ. ZZZ Operations offload message was "dog [in forward bin] escaped kennel, caution when opening forward bin door."

The dog had escaped again enroute to ZZZ. During the flight, the dog clawed its way through the forward cargo bin ceiling panel. Primary and secondary flight control cables run immediately above this ceiling panel. It was fairly obvious that the dog had made contact with these cables by the dust and dirt that had been disturbed. No damage was noted and no delay was incurred. Had this flight been of longer duration, however, the dog could have jammed these cables, causing possible loss of flight control by the pilot.

In a callback conversation with an ASRS analyst, the reporter stated that a defective kennel door latch allowed the dog to escape. The reporter added that the ceiling panel was not attached tightly enough to prevent the dog from clawing it away from the ceiling. The moral of the story, for ramp personnel and dog owners alike, is to double-check the security of shipping kennels **before** the flight.

In the next report, "man's best friend" apparently performed well, but the human half of the dog/person team failed to finish the job. An air carrier Captain reports:

■ Center called to say that a canine handler-in-training had left a package of explosive material on board the aircraft, in the [passenger seat] magazine holder. We found the package, and, on arrival, I handed it over to the Captain of Security.

At the conclusion of the training session, the canine team had been called away to another mission and had forgotten to take their "training material" with them. The Captain was able to determine that the explosive material was not a hazard (fortunately!) unless it had a detonator.

<b>ASRS</b>	Recently	Issued	<b>Alerts</b>	On
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Anomalous VOR indications attributed to a passenger's pager

False GPWS alerts due to a faulty radio altimeter connector

Inflight separation of a B-757 over-wing emergency escape slide

False TCAS II traffic and resolution advisories in an A-320

Inflight separation of a B-727-200 emergency exit foldout step

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A Monthly Safety Bulletin from
The Office of the NASA

Aviation Safety Reporting System, P.O. Box 189,

June 1998 Report Intake	
Air Carrier Pilots General Aviation Pilots Controllers Cabin/Mechanics/Military/Other	2118 796 55 72
TOTAL	3041

## **Overseas Oversights**

Air carrier pilots have company dispatchers and other resources available to them for planning and executing flights outside the U.S. For General Aviation pilots, however, definitive information may not be right at hand. Or, pilots may simply be unaware of the differences between U.S. and foreign flight requirements, as was this reporter:

■ While on a ferry flight from the U.S. to France, I landed in Reykjavik, Iceland. Upon departure, I was greeted by the CAA [Civil Aviation Authority]—a ramp check. Come to find out I need an overflight and landing permit for Iceland, I must carry a copy of the aircraft's insurance, and overweight takeoffs are not permitted in Reykjavik, even with a special ferry permit. I was unaware of these factors and did not have the correct paperwork. After receiving the paperwork via fax and draining some fuel, I went on my way.

Careful research is necessary to determine each countrys requirements for which overflight or landing is expected. The Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA) in Frederick, Maryland, is a good place to start. Other aviation organizations may also provide overseas flight planning services to their members. The nearest foreign consulate offices may be able to provide useful information, as well.

A widebody jet's crew was carrying all the right paperwork, including airport taxi charts, when they got stuck—literally—at an overseas airport. The Captain reports:

Taxi clearance was hard to understand, and we had to get a repeat. We were still not certain of the taxi route due to unfamiliar terms and heavy accent. It was only the second time at this airport for the whole crew. I missed a turn...and decided to go straight ahead and turn left on Taxiway XX to rejoin [the correct taxi route]. This turn is deceptively sharp... I did not make the turn wide enough and the left main gear exited the taxiway and sank into the soft earth.

A tug pulled the jet back onto the taxiway, and, after an inspection to determine that the aircraft was undamaged, the flight departed—two-and-a-half hours late. The Captain offers some thoughts on why this incident occurred:

- Company taxi charts are not clear-diagrams are too small, directional arrows are hard to see, and very difficult to interpret while taxiing the aircraft.
- The local controllers are hard to understand-they use unfamiliar terminology and procedures.
- International ground school by company did not prepare me for the reality of operations at this airport.

Although the reporter's points may be valid, a flight crew still needs to ensure that they fully understand the taxi route, even if they have to ask ATC to repeat the instructions. Tying up the frequency for a few extra seconds is preferable to tying up the taxiway for a much longer time.

## **ASRS** Database Reports on the Web

In January 1998, ASRS introduced a new feature on its Web site—ASRS Database Report Sets. We provided 20 sets of reports for downloading on topics commonly requested from ASRS. Each report set consists of 50 screened ASRS database records in Microsoft's Rich Text Format (RTF). Access to the ASRS Database Report Sets feature has been high—18,662 report sets have been downloaded since January 15, 1998. Following are the number of report sets downloaded from January 15 through June 30, 1998:

Report Set Topic To	tal Downloaded
<ul> <li>Cabin Attendant Reports</li> </ul>	1,855
• Pilot / Controller Communications	1,523
• CRM Issues	1,410
<ul> <li>Controlled Flight Toward Terrain</li> </ul>	1,385
Checklist Incidents	1,369
Mechanic Reports	951
<ul> <li>Parachutist / Aircraft Conflicts</li> </ul>	942
<ul> <li>Automated Weather Systems</li> </ul>	914
Inflight Weather Encounters	848
<ul> <li>Commuter and GA Icing Incidents</li> </ul>	839
Runway Incursions	815
Commuter and Corporate Flight Crev	v Fatigue 761

• Non-Tower Airport Incidents	709
TCAS II Incidents	701
• Turbojet Aircraft Upsets Incidents	683
<ul> <li>Land and Hold Short Operations</li> </ul>	650
Wake Turbulence Encounters	649
<ul> <li>Fuel Management Issues</li> </ul>	648
<ul> <li>Passenger Electronic Devices</li> </ul>	595
• Rotary Wing Aircraft Flight Crew Reports	415
Grand Total	18,662

In response to requests from users, ASRS is expanding the list of report set subjects. In addition to the 20 topics listed above, ASRS will be adding the following additional report sets:

- GPS Issues
- ATC Controller Reports
- Airspace Penetration Reports
- GA Training Issues
- Ultralight Reports
- Altitude Deviations
- Air Carrier (Part 121) Fatigue Reports

Your comments and suggestions are appreciated. **ASRS Web Site:** http://olias.arc.nasa.gov/asrs\_/