Newsletter of the Jet Pilot's Organization

Contrails

Winter/Spring 2025

Volume 37, Issue 1

Clay Sherrow captured this PST Reaction on short final at the Tucson Jet Rally.

President's Report

Bob Klenke

As we talked about in the last issue of Contrails, there have been a number of changes to our jet turbine rules, i.e., the AMA Gas Turbine Program (AMA Document 510A). These have been championed by the JPO and the AMA Safety Committee. The last one was the increase of the weight limit for large turbine powered models (LTMA-2) from 100 lbs to 125 lbs, with a corresponding total maximum thrust limit increase to 135 lbs (about 600 N). The corresponding rule in the AMA LMA rules states that the maximum weight for BOTH the LMA-2 and LTMA-2 categories is **"77 pounds, 3 ounces (35 kilograms) to 125 pounds (56.7 kilograms)"**. The corresponding rule for LTMA-2 limits maximum thrust to **"the airplane's weight, ready to fly, plus 5 pounds, or 135 pounds (600 Newtons), whichever is less."**

The new LTMA rule also clarifies issues with respect to the actual weighing of the aircraft during the inspection process. This part of the rule says:

"Maximum aircraft weight must be verified with all fuel tanks full, smoke tanks (if applicable) full, and with all accessories with which the aircraft will fly, mounted for flight. Calibrated scales are highly recommended. For LMA-1 and LTMA-1, the owner must provide the necessary equipment for the observer to verify the maximum aircraft weight before sign-off. For LMA-2 and LTMA-2, the owner and inspector should coordinate whose equipment will be used. If the inspector does not have access to the necessary equipment, it will be the responsibility of the owner to provide the scales."

Note that the rule is clear now that the aircraft must be weighed in its MAXIMUM WEIGHT flight condition and that either the owner or the LMA Inspector must provide the scales.

This is a positive change in the rules that makes some of the larger models being developed by manufacturers able to be built in a "legal" manner and reduces some of the confusion and ambiguity that were present in the old rules regarding maximum weights and configurations.

We all know that there are several private individuals who are building or restoring jet model aircraft (either turbine-powered or EDF) that are above these limits. There is a process with the FAA that owners can go through to legally (i.e., according to actual laws, not AMA rules) fly these aircraft, but the process is lengthy and time consuming. Currently, there is no real appetite within the AMA or the Safety Committee to entertain an AMA sanctioned process to go above these new LTMA limits as the number of individuals who would benefit from them is small compared to the overall AMA membership and the risks to the organization and its members are large. Personally, I think that's a wise position. I'd love to see that turbine-powered C-17 or huge Triple 7 EDF model in flight, but I'm not willing to be on the hook if anything goes wrong...

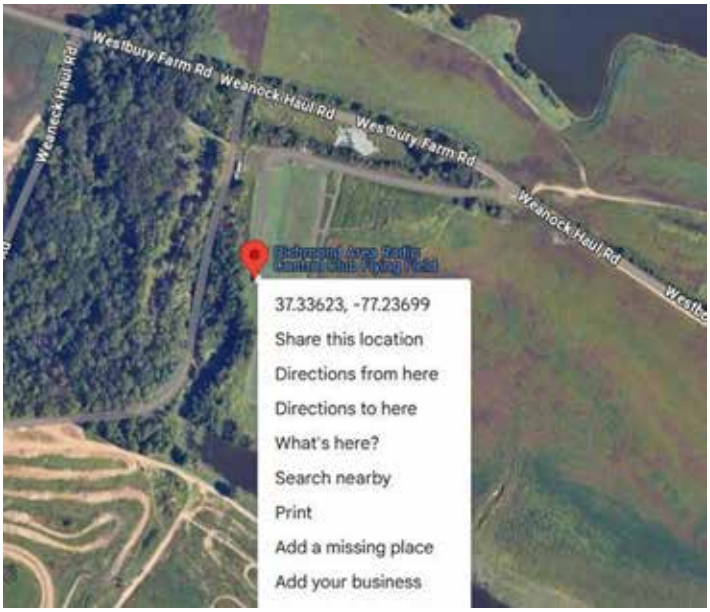
Regardless of that, the AMA continues to champion our cause with the FAA and others, and continues to achieve successes. If you are your AMA club's official point of contact, as I am, you recently received a notice from the AMA that your club has received a "National Authorization" for "operation above 400 feet above ground level (AGL) for routine, day-to-day activities." Depending on where your club is actually located, that might be 700 feet above ground level (AGL) or 1200 feet AGL.

Of course, the first question is, why is there still an upper limit and what's the reason for 700 feet or 1200 feet? Well, it has to do with uncontrolled airspace vs. controlled airspace. In uncontrolled airspace (Class G airspace), pilots are responsible for their own navigation and collision avoidance using "see and avoid" Visual Flight Rules (VFR). Thus, full-scale aircraft pilots operating in Class G airspace are required to be looking out the window for other traffic and are more likely able to spot our models and we are more likely to spot them, and we can avoid a collision.

In controlled airspace (Class E, and D through A) full-scale aircraft may be flying using Instrument Flight Rules (IFR) and relying on Air Traffic Control (ATC) to provide separation services to keep them away from other aircraft. Therefore, they are likely to not be as involved in looking out the window for other traffic and busier with flying on instruments and not as likely to see our models.

The lowest level of controlled airspace that is above Class G, is Class E, which is airspace that begins at a maximum of 1200 feet AGL except in certain areas where it may start at only 700 feet AGL. There are places where Class E airspace actually comes all the way to the ground, but that is around airports that are fairly busy (i.e., have charter or small commercial flights), but don't have an FAA-staffed control tower.

So how do you know where Class E airspace starts over your flying field? It's actually pretty easy. First, use a map application to find your flying field. Many clubs have their location pinned on Google Maps, like ours is.



President's Report (cont'd) Bob Klenke

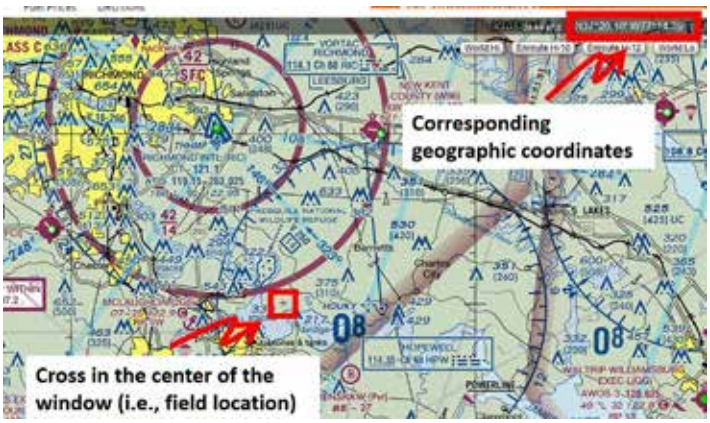
Use the map application to get the field's geographic coordinates. Those coordinates may be given to you in decimal degrees, and you might need to convert them to degrees and decimal minutes, or degrees, minutes, and seconds, depending on what sectional charts you use. There are several conversion sites that you can find on the web with a Google search. I found one at:

https://latlongdata.com/lat-long-converter,

that converted those decimal degree coordinates to 37°20.1738' N, 77° 14.2194'W.

Next go to an official FAA sectional chart and plot those coordinates on it. That's fairly straight forward if you've done that before, but if not, or you want an easier way, you can go to the *skyvector.com* website.

Skyvector has a nation-wide (actually world-wide) sectional chart view. You can zoom into a specific geographic area and there is a cross in the center of the Skyvector window to which corresponding geographic coordinates are listed in the upper right-hand corner of the window. You can carefully move the sectional chart around until the geographic coordinates are close to those that you converted as above (you won't be able to get them to match exactly) and that will be the location of your flying field. Our field location is shown below.



If we zoom out to the longer view, we can see that our AMA field is just outside the upper tier of the Class C airspace for Richmond International Airport (solid magenta circles) – which isn't a problem, because the upper tier that far out only extends down to 1400 feet MSL. However, we can see that there is a Class E transition area that is over our field (the shaded magenta lines) that extends down to 700 feet AGL. This is controlled airspace that ATC uses to vector traffic into Richmond on IFR flight plans. Thus, our default maximum altitude for day-to-day operations is 700 feet AGL. If our field was located about 5 miles to the East, we'd be out from under that Class E airspace and we would have gotten permission to go to 1200 feet AGL. If we go 15 miles to the East, we're now under the Class E airspace that is around airports like Felker Army Airfield, Hampton Road, and Langley Airforce Base.

There is a possibility that an AMA club or event can get access to altitudes that are inside controlled airspace, i.e., over 700 or 1200 feet AGL, but that requires working with the AMA and the FAA to conduct an FAA Safety Risk Management (SRM) process and usually requires additional operating restrictions, such as notifying ATC when using the higher altitudes, having a dedicated spotter for the model pilot, etc.

All in all, we are in a MUCH better place, rules and regulations wise, then we definitely were 3 or 4 years ago, and in some senses, better than we were 10 or 15 years ago. At least now, with these new airspace allowances, FRIAs, etc., we know what the limits truly are and what we need to do to stay within them.

Anyway, that's all for now. I really need to get on the stick to get ready for the Carolina Jet Fest in about a month! Back to it....

Bob

Vice President's Report — Mark McCracken

Some of you have already known I have taken over as the Vice President of the Jet pilot's Organization. I have a few goals I will be working hard on in the future.

The first one will be trying to increase the membership. How will I accomplish this? I am not sure just yet. But I will. I will try to post past and future upcoming events.

Second on my agenda is to find the right person who would be willing to represent the JPO as a District Rep, as we are a few short in four of our districts. Until we find someone, I will fill in and help in any way that I can. The four districts are:

District I: Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Vermont

District II: New York and New Jersey.

District VI: Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky and Missouri.

District IX: Colorado, Kansas, Nebraska, Wyoming, North and South Dakota.

District XI: Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Washington.

If there is anyone that would like to help out and fill one of these positions, please contact myself or Bob Klenke.

With the flying season here, and if you are in one of these 4 districts, and if you would like coverage in the JPO's ***Contrails*** for one of your events, a project you or a group of you are building, or even a few photos of your jet aircraft, send me all the info.

'The last thing I have is getting one of the JPO"s Top Gun Trophies for your event.

Rules are you fill out the form, which can be found on the JPO website, and send it to your District Rep. Since Districts I, II, VI, IX and XI are without a Rep at this time, please send the JPO Top Gun Trophy form to me. The following is a short list of the general criteria needed to obtain a sharp looking award.

-The event CD must be a current member of the JPO.
-There is a limited annual budget for JPO Top Gun Trophies. Trophies will be sent out on a first come first serve basis.
-All trophies must be requested through the District Representative of the district where the event is being held. If the Representative position is vacant for the event District, the request should be sent to the JPO Vice President.
-A sixty (60) day notice is required to receive a trophy.
-Trophies will be given to events in existence for 2 or more years with an average attendance of 20 or more fliers.
-For new events a one-year free membership to JPO for the CD will be available.

CDs may decide how to give the trophy, but the award must not be given to manufacturers or for such things as "Best Crash." The award should be given for some positive aspect of participation in the jet hobby demonstrated at the event.

If you have any questions please email your District Representative or the JPO Vice President.

Best of flying.

Mark McCracken jpnepa@hotmail.com

JPO website: jetpilots.org

Treasurer's Report — Marty Gurewitz

Beginning Checking Account Balance 7/31/2024	$6,447.36		
Beginning Paypal Balance 7/31/2024	$0.00		
Total Cash on Hand 7/31/2024			$6,447.36
Income			
Member Dues	$2,043.99		
Total Income		$2,043.99	
Expenses			
Smith Petty Trophies	$586.50		
PIP Printing-Contrails	$485.86		
Total Expenses		$1,072.36	
Ending Checking Account Balance 3/31/2025			$7,418.99
Current Pay Pal Account Balance 3/31/2025		$0.00	
Total Cash on Hand 3/31/2025			$7,418.99

District III Report — Erik Rudjord

Ohio
Pennsylvania
West Virginia

Greetings District III pilots. We recently purchased a home in Florida, and are spending our winters in the south now. One of the perks down here is being able to fly jets in the winter! I brought my 2M *Picaro* down with me, and have been able to get out once a week or so. I'm grateful to be out of the cold!

It's no secret that most mishaps with our jets occur in the approach/landing phase of our flights. I'm sharing my insight on one aspect of this since there appears to be some confusion about it. Many of us run gyros in our jets, and they are wonderful in many ways, but there are pitfalls and limitations.

I prefer my gyro gain to be on a 3-position switch, providing off, low, and high settings, as is a common practice. I use high for approach and landing, and it stabilizes the jets incredibly well.

One thing to consider though, is that with high rate selected in pitch (elevator), the gyro will inhibit or mask the jets tendency to pitch nose down when power is reduced. If this isn't addressed, it's easy to get slow or stall the jet, as the gyro is increasing up elevator input to try to hold the nose in the same position. The pilot must either add power, or push the nose down, to maintain airspeed. We do this intuitively, but need to remember that the gyro can mask some of the aircraft behaviors that give us clues about its energy state, like pitching down, wing rocking, etc.

Please share your insights on technical aspects, flying tips, or pics of your jets or projects.

I plan to fly, and attend events as much as I'm able this year, and I hope to meet or see you at the field. I wish you all a safe, great flying season!

Blue skies, and God bless.

Erik

Eric Fagan's L-39 project.

Kevin Rostkowski and two *Falcons*.

Enzo Grasso's Aerojet F-100, build by Ed Martino.

Me with my 2M *Picaro* at Cape Coral R/Seahawks.

District III Report (cont'd) — Erik Rudjord

EA BDX smokin!

Matt Balazs' Carf SU-30.

Ryan Schurman's and my 1/5th BVM F-16's.

Jay Foehr's BD-5.

Jay Foehr's BVM 1/5 F-16, build by Paul Swiderski.

Paul Swiderski and me formation flying with our Carf F-100's.

District VII Report

Tim Toutant

Iowa
Michigan
Minnesota
Wisconsin

Hi everyone, it looks like another fantastic year ahead for JPO and the jet community.

It's been a busy winter, to say the least, for those in the building process of their new airframes. The industry itself is putting out new or improved versions of the jets already in circulation. It would be great to hear what's going on in District VII besides my own state of Michigan.

The Lake County Modelers and Flyers Association is gearing up for another season starting with the Midwest Jet Pilots Spring Fling, June 9th-14th, then onto the Midwest Jet Pilots Boondoggle August 11th-16th.

These events bring in our friends from Canada and many other parts of the country. It's always a great time at the Baldwin Airport with plenty of open sky and lots of runway. As a reminder, Jets Over Kentucky is on the horizon, July 12th -19th.

The projects I've been working on are the AF F-22 turbine version with the SWIWIN 80 and the AF T-45 - and I'm hoping to maiden it this year.

My A-10 at the Oakland County Airport Airshow.

My F22 "in the build".

Formation lights being added on the F-22 from STEMWING.

JetRuler F-18 Blue Angels compliments of Jeremy Solt, new from Banana Hobby.

Stay Safe

Tim

District VIII Report

Ron Schwarzkopf

Arkansas
Louisiana
New Mexico
Oklahoma
Texas

Hello District VIII'ers.... We are already in full swing for the initial batch of 2025 jet events, and I'm trying my best to attend some of them!

I visited Tucson Jets in March, which was well attended and had great weather. Unfortunately, I got back late and missed the Bomber Field event. The Cajun Jets event was rescheduled to June, and I just got back from The Mississippi Afterburner, in order to sit down and write this column. I'm also trying to finish up another classic *Rebel* from Composite ARF. Test flight is coming up soon, when my schedule matches up with nice weather!

Until then, here are some events coming up in District VIII...

June 5-7: 3rd Annual Cajun Jet Rally, Aeromodelers of Acadiana, Breaux Bridge LA, Darwin Hector CD.

September 4-6: 43rd Greater Southwest Jet Rally, HOTMAC Field, Waco TX, Steven Ellzey CD

Oct 2-5: Turbines and Tumbleweeds, Avenger Field Airport, Sweetwater TX

Houston Jet Rally (Monaville, TX), April 28-29, 2025

Terry Monroe CD'd this event at Bomber Field, which has a 700 x 50 foot paved runway, and a ton of covered pitting areas. Evidently the early part of the event had some wet weather. I was not able to make this event, but I was informed that on Friday the weather improved, and Saturday's weather was great. Even with the weather issues, the club still brought in 36 pilots to this event. Thanks to Paul Bloxham and Dawn Ellzey for taking a few pics for this column.

One of the neat airplanes that attended the event, is Chris Thompson's EDF P-8 *Poseidon*.

Paul Bloxham's Blackburn *Buccaneer,* and a truckload of Elite Aerosport jets.

Dawn was able to get a nice photo of pilots Mike and Luke Burey, with their Rebel Max and J-10 EDF.

District VIII Report (cont'd) Ron Schwarzkopf

Paul captured this large and gorgeous *Hawk.*

Dawn photographed this beautiful Tomahawk F86.

I'm sorry I missed the event – I'll try to make the next one in October!

34 th Annual Mississippi Afterburner (Raymond, MS).

I normally only review events within District VIII, but Mississippi Afterburner has been a large, ongoing District V event for decades, and I decided it needed some *Contrails* coverage. Our District V rep Marvin Alvarez is from Miami, and it is a long haul for him. So I'll give you some highlights.

Vernon Montgomery was the event CD, and he runs this jet fly at the John Bell Williams Airport, a bit West of Jackson, MS. Dennis Lott organizes the flightline, along with a team of aviation students from Hinds Community College. In turn, much of the entrant fees and raffles go toward funding aviation-related scholarships for students at the college.

The three days of great weather brought in around 100 pilots, and **LOTS** of flying from the 6000-foot runway. This event successfully uses a flag system and radio communication (along with posted NOTAMs) to work with the full-scale traffic, which was minimal during model flying hours.

Some of the neat stuff attending this years event included: Elite Aerosports new project in the works, the *Firebird* – a successful model developed originally by Tom Cook of Jet Model Products. This new EA version has been scaled up a bit to be a 2.6 meter jet, and incorporates a few design changes in the prototype.

Additionally, a Comp ARF B-2 bomber made it to the event and was flown very well by Chris Gleason.

When the Chris wasn't flying the B-2, he was flying his Ultimate Jets SR-71!

A nice F-18F.

District VIII Report (cont'd) Ron Schwarzkopf

Another impressive flying project was a large red Me-163 ***Komet*** – which appeared to fly like a pattern plane.

And talking about detail, Seth Brown had his BVM F-18 in attendance, and had some really nice stores, racks, and sensors on his model.

I was happy to also see the BVM F-4 *Phantom* prototype make several flights. It looks lightly wing loaded, and was expertly flown by Rob Lynch. The model is undergoing a few tweaks, and production might start later this year.

I really liked the detail of the fixed slats on the horizontal tail.

Paul Bloxham's *Buccaneer* also made it to this event, and Paul flew it very consistently, like a sport model!

That's it for now. I hope to see you at the next District VIII jet fly!

Ron

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IT'S TIME TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP!

Membership/Renewal Application

Please add/renew my JPO membership!

Name:_____ AMA Number*: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Email Address: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

*AMA membership is required for U.S. Residents. JPO Annual Membership Fee is $25.
Renewal can be online at: www.jetpilots.org via PayPal or credit card; or you can fill out and send with check or money order made out to: "The Jet Pilot's Organization" to: Marty Gurewitz, JPO Secretary/Treasurer, 40 Cragmere Oval, New City, NY, 10956

Erik Rudjord captured Mike Casey's BDX low and slow.