



ZENAIR™ NEWS

Issue #175 November-December 2009

Copyright 2009

Zenair News, the official source of news and updates for enthusiasts, builders, owners and pilots of Chris Heintz's homebuilt aircraft designs.

Guest Memo from Chris

I just spent the Thanksgiving weekend in Midland, Ontario, where for the last few weeks I have been working with my sons Mathieu and Nick on the many design issues that needed to be resolved prior to release of the new Upgrade Package for the Zodiac XL. The wonderful news is that I believe we are mostly done! The complex issues have been sorted out and dealt-with head-on: there is no longer any doubt that the upgraded aircraft will be very significantly tougher in a comprehensive, balanced and meaningful way. Now, the Zenair factory "just" needs to verify the parts, write the step-by-step manuals, and make and ship out the parts...



pilot education and training as well as a thorough and ongoing airworthiness/maintenance program.

Only with such an all-encompassing approach will we minimize mishaps and accidents. As with so many things that are truly worthwhile, there is also a risk involved in flying. We all know this, but we also know that there is much we can do to manage this risk. Designers, builders, pilots, aviation authorities... all have a role to play, and when we all do our part, we get to experience this unique thrill which is flying, and in particular, the joy of flying an aircraft that you have built yourself.

I want to take this opportunity (and opportune time) to **thank** all of you in the Zenair builder/owner community who in some way contributed to the solutions we are now proposing. Many have contributed to the final outcome. Thank you. It has been a long and arduous road, with difficult decisions and challenging moments (and still, a lot of work remains for owners who now need to upgrade their aircraft), but I believe that the times of biggest doubts and uncertainty about the design are finally behind us. With the latest drawings released just a few days ago, I hope all of us will recognize and be grateful that we have at last turned an important corner on this unusual journey...

The CH 601 XL/CH 650 aircraft is a very capable and fun light sport aircraft. I know that just as we at Zenair take our responsibilities to heart, the great majority of you also take yours as builders and pilots seriously. When all of us do this, I am confident that the aircraft's reputation will soon be restored and many more will get to enjoy it. I thank you for your past support, your ongoing patience, and continued good will. The future of the Zodiac is very encouraging!

Overwhelmingly, builders and owners have been very supportive of the comprehensive solutions proposed by the Upgrade Package – and I am very thankful to you for that. I am also very pleased that the FAA is recommending it to all owners and operators. Since past accidents could not be attributed to a common cause, a "single fix" approach was also not possible. By now, all of us realize that the airframe upgrades are only a part of the solution: they have to be accompanied with continuing

Chris Heintz

Inside This issue

FAA SAIB
Q&A with Chris Heintz
AMD Safety Alert
Matco Wheel Rim Warning
DVD video incl. with this issue