The Impact of ACMA

As I read the feature report from Erwin Schaerz (see page 2) highlighting his ministry with Helimission in Papua, I was impressed again by the strategic nature of mission aviation, and by the privilege we have to make an impact.

It’s a humbling experience – and a very necessary one – to continually acknowledge that the impact which ACMA makes in training men and women for the unique ministry of mission aviation is the result of 2 things:

• God’s goodness, and
• the response of His people

In a beautiful letter received very recently, a lady said:

“...My husband has retired, and this gift is in thanks for the many years God has blessed him in his work...”

What a wonderful way to celebrate the goodness of God!

We at ACMA continue to be honoured, and humbled, by the ministry of our Graduates and the grace of all of our Supporters.

Thank You!
The winds are calm and the sky is clear – perfect conditions for my first flight of the day, bringing two radio communication specialists to one of the highest peaks around Wamena.

The task is quite strategic – an upgrade to the station would eventually enable many remote villages and Missionaries to have access to better, potentially life saving, communication.

As the specialists work on this project, I take off to do a supply run to a missionary team that is currently in the middle of language and culture training in hopes of bringing the Good News to a people group that has never before heard about Jesus.

I always love to fly to Ngginginem. It’s not just because of my American friends there who I cherish and admire for their effort and commitment in this overwhelming task. It’s also the relationships that form over time with the locals, most of whom are illiterate and can only speak their tribal language. Are they going to be as welcoming to the gospel as they are when the sound of the helicopter penetrates their otherwise calm jungle environment?

It’s now 9am and time to get the helicopter loaded for my next trip.

My route follows the mighty Baliem river as it winds its way through a narrow gorge, eroding the majestic mountain range, finding its way from a high plateau down to the jungle covered southern lowlands of West Papua. As I pilot my comparatively tiny helicopter through this awesome narrow valley to my destination – the Senggaup tribe – I have to be careful to maintain a healthy distance between the steep slopes and the clouds that limit my altitude.

The so called “South Gap” is often the only way out to the southern lowlands. An hour later I arrive at the small airstrip of Awimbon. Two PC-6 aircraft from Yajasi (JAARS/SIL) are already on the ground.

It’s a special day for an adventurous SIL Missionary Family. They plan to do a survey in a little village west of our current position. On a previous attempt to hike in to the tribe, the missionary had to turn around after 3 days. He was about half way. By air it takes 5 minutes!

Accompanied by the looks of a big crowd of Papuans, I prepare the first load – sweat drops and skin burns.

After a few minutes I’m air borne again. This scenario is repeated another two times until the family and some wood cutters are all safely in their new place. For them the work will now begin. The Senggaup tribe are a people who have never heard the good news yet. With happy faces and lots of cheers they welcome their guests – will they soon receive the Creator’s talk?

On my way home a request via HF radio rounds my flying day off. A church leader from Danowage has been waiting for transportation by floatplane that can’t land at the moment due to low water levels. Since my fuel allows for a little detour, I am glad to help him out.

There are days when there is very little flying and lots of paperwork, scheduling, and other tasks.

But today, my energy was expended on many take offs and landings, between 200 feet and 13,000 feet above sea level.

My continued prayer is that my ministry through aviation may produce everlasting fruit for HIM who called me.

Erwin Schaerz came from Switzerland to train at ACMA, and graduated in 2004. He and his family are ministering with Helimission in Papua.
ACMA Staff in Retreat

On Thursday February 23, 27 ACMA Staff gathered at the Yarra Valley Conference Centre in Dixons Creek for our first ever ACMA Staff Retreat. It was a beautiful drive out through the Yarra Valley, and the hospitality extended to us by the YVCC was exceptional (as was the coffee and the muffins).

We were privileged to be addressed by Rev Tim Meyers, the new Principal of MST. He greatly encouraged us in our mission to provide pilots and engineers to assist the work of Mission Agencies throughout the world.

He also encouraged us personally from the Word of God, and strengthened again the relationship between ACMA and MST.

It was exciting to hear of Tim’s interest in and commitment to mission aviation as he talked about his upbringing as a Missionary Kid in Papua New Guinea.

After morning tea and some more encouraging team building, we returned to ACMA even more convinced of our mission. We are also convinced that we must do this on a regular basis.

You can help us...

Funding Opportunities at ACMA

As you can imagine, aviation training demands continual upgrading of facilities in order to provide effective and efficient training. Additionally, the facilities at ACMA need expansion to cope with growth.

The following projects are needing funding. All of these are in addition to ACMA’s annual operating budget.

- Helicopter (not airworthy) for Helicopter Maintenance Training ($35,000) [Priority – URGENT]
- Engineering Machinery & Equipment ($15,000)
- Reverse Cycle Air Conditioner for Classroom & Office Area ($6,000) [Priority – URGENT]
- Construction of Mezzanine Area in Hangar – Additional Classroom & Office ($15,000) [Priority – URGENT]
- Aircraft Parking Area ($10,000)
- Short Term Accommodation Unit for Students/Staff ($100,000)
- Hazardous Goods Storage Facility ($15,000) [Priority – URGENT]
- Visual Aids for Classrooms ($15,000)
- Upgrade Telephone System ($5,000) [Priority – URGENT]
- Installation of Solar Power ($25,000)
- Observation Deck ($10,000)

Looking for a Challenge?

Australian Centre for Mission Aviation Camp
2-6 July 2012

Coldstream Airport, 96 Kilara Rd, Coldstream
Cost $335 — includes accommodation, meals, familiarisation flight, excursions, and all activities. Camp can be a work experience option.

ACMA
For Year 10, 11, 12 students
Ph: (03) 9739 0612
Email camps@acma.vic.edu.au
www.acma.vic.edu.au
For more information on:
• How you can be a partner with us in the Mission Aviation Course.
• How you can support Mission Aviation Training through bequests.
• How you can support Mission Aviation Trainees.
Contact Jennifer Barton
P: (03) 9739 0612
E: jennifer@acma.vic.edu.au
• How you can train for Mission Aviation...
Contact Delyse Searle
P: (03) 9739 0612
E: delyse@acma.vic.edu.au

How is Mission Aviation Training at ACMA Funded?

Mission Aviation organisations are in desperate need of aircraft engineers. If you feel you could train to meet this need contact ACMA.

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