

THE FLIGHT SIMULATION GROUP

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The Flight Simulation Group of the Royal Aeronautical Society serves as a focus on behalf of the Society for simulation matters which are related in a broad sense to aviation. The aim of the group is to study, publicise and encourage the development and use of simulators, synthetic training devices and environments and associated technologies including virtual reality, both civil and military. The Flight Simulation Group of the Royal Aeronautical Society serves as a focus on behalf of the Society for simulation matters which are related in a broad sense to aviation. The aim of the group is to study, publicise and encourage the development and use of simulators, synthetic training devices and environments and associated technologies including virtual reality, both civil and military.



Left: Hawk synthetic training facility at RAF Valley

Flight Simulation Group committee

The Flight Simulation Group committee meets four times a year and organises two conferences, in May and November. These are regularly well-attended and produce a good income and profit for the Society.

The AGM takes place on the penultimate day of the May conference. The Chairman serves for two years, with the vice-chairman being the immediate past chairman for the first year, and chairman elect for the second.

The committee has 15 full voting members, with four additional members co-opted for their particular expertise. Reflecting the global nature of the simulation business, committee members come from Canada, Germany, Sweden and France as well as the UK.

Conferences

Conferences are organised and run by sub-groups from within the committee who put in a lot of work between meetings, with the invaluable support of the Society's Conference Department, to ensure their success. As well as good attendance figures, and the quality of papers presented, a measure of the status of our conferences in the simulation community is the success we have had in obtaining industrial sponsorship for conference dinners and receptions.

The May 2001 conference was titled 'Aircrew training - time to take stock'. The theme of the conference was to examine the role of the simulator as a specific training device for aircrew to ensure that simulator development has and will continue to meet the needs of the training community. Future conference titles are 'Challenge of realistic rotorcraft simulation' (November 2001), 'Developments in simulator systems - integration and effectiveness' (May 2002), and 'Data issues' (November 2002).

Right: Simulators at Flight Safety Boeing



A wide range of activities

The group considers, and endorses where appropriate, academic and industrial ideas and initiatives to promote the development of simulation technology, both nationally and internationally. We also encourage links with academic institutions and work closely with regulatory bodies.

Some years ago the FSG committee was pivotal in developing the International Qualification Test Guide, setting international standards for simulator acceptability. The document is now being revised and brought up to date and the Group is involved in this process through its representatives on the revision working groups, and looks forward to being able to endorse the new version in due course.

Last year Cranfield University, together with the Boeing Company, came to the group with a non-profit making proposal to encourage the wider use of simulation in teaching and research in universities by making available a range of real time flight models, displays and flight-test software. They sought the endorsement of the Society, and specifically the Flight Simulation Group, to promote this initiative in academic circles. After full consideration by the Group this was given and it is hoped the initiative will be in place very soon.

The Group already supports the annual Cranfield University Flight Simulation Course and, indeed, provides a good number of the guest lecturers for the course from its membership.

We are also represented at regular meetings of the IATA Flight Simulator Working group, have a marketing sub-group to help ensure maximum awareness of our conferences and other activities, and an internet team to ensure full and up to date coverage of the work of the Group and other simulator activities on our web site. We hope this will really be effective when the new site is up and fully running with access which will enable us to put material directly on to our Group's own web pages.

The work of the FSG committee is supported by many people throughout the Society and particularly by individuals from within the Conference Department. With their help and the ongoing active and creative involvement of all members of the Flight Simulator Group Committee, there is no reason why the FSG should not stay ahead of changes and developments in our industry and continue to be one of the Society's most effective and successful groups.

Capt David Rowland FRAeS, MRIN
Chairman, Flight Simulation Group