

6 Months in 6(ish) Minutes



It's hard to believe that it has been nearly 6 months since our last Prayer Letter. A lot has happened since February - too much to share in one email - so I have tried my best to summarise the key moments below, although this email is still a little longer than normal (sorry!). You can always follow us on Instagram for more regular updates.



1. ATPL Theory Update

Since returning home from Teuge in February, a significant amount of my time has been spent preparing for the next batch of ATPL (Airline Transport Pilot Licence) exams. The second module, which includes 5 of the 13 total ATPL exams, was among the most difficult content I have encountered so far, taking a total of 5 months to complete. This was largely due to the detailed technical knowledge required on subjects such as radio navigation, aircraft systems and engines. I sat these exams in the UK at the end of June and passed 4 out of 5, leaving me 1 resit to complete at a later date. It is a relief to now be more than 50% of the way through the ATPL theory - the largest hurdle in becoming a commercial pilot.

2. Guided Experience Building (GEB)

At the beginning of May, I returned to Teuge in the Netherlands to complete my Guided Experience Building (GEB). The purpose of GEB is to encourage future MAF pilots to continue building their total uninstructed (solo) flight hours in a way that safely challenges them to step outside their comfort zone through exposure to unfamiliar terrain, weather conditions and locations, thus developing vital skills that are essential for an MAF pilot.

This phase required me to plan and execute a range of flights that met key learning objectives. The routes I flew included:

- **A 10-hour round trip across 2 days to Linz in Austria**, my longest journey to date. These flights were complicated by a series of technical issues, which included:
 - The engine taking considerably more fuel from the right wing fuel tank compared to the left, and;
 - The aircraft tending to roll to the left following an adjustment made to the flaps the day before my departure.

Thankfully, neither defect posed a significant safety issue, but it did increase my workload throughout the trip. I also had to completely alter the route on my return journey to avoid a large area of thunderstorms converging on my planned refuelling stop in Germany. These issues were a very valuable learning experience, especially as they occurred far from the in-person support of the instructors at MATC (Mission Aviation Training Centre).

An overnight trip to Copenhagen. Another 'pinch me' moment as I was fortunate enough to have the opportunity to fly myself to a short grass airstrip just outside the Danish capital, a city I have always wanted to visit. I was able to spend a few hours exploring the city before returning (with freshly baked Danish pastries in hand) to Teuge the next day, where Bekah and the girls were waiting. The return trip was once again made significantly more complicated by the weather, as I was forced to manoeuvre between an intense band of rain showers that were lingering along the Dutch/German border, which almost caused me to divert to another airfield. I was later informed by German Air Traffic Control that another light aircraft about 15-20 miles to the south of me was forced to declare an emergency due to the weather. Thankfully, they were able to fly clear safely, but it was a sobering reminder of the risks that weather poses to aviation and why, as pilots, we are required to study forecasts so carefully before and during every flight.



Above - on top of the clouds over southern Germany and the main square in Linz, Austria.



Above - enroute to Denmark. Below - Nyhavn waterfront, Copenhagen.



3. Passenger Exposure

My time in Teuge over May and June also proved to be an excellent opportunity to gain crucial experience flying with passengers and the potential distractions that this brings - something that I never got to experience during my PPL training. My parents, brother, and a close friend were able to travel out for a short period to visit MATC, meet some of the instructors, and join me for sightseeing flights around the local area.

I also took part in the MAF Netherlands Business Club Day where corporate sponsors of MAF Netherlands are invited to Teuge alongside some of their clients for a flight experience. This was my first time wearing an MAF uniform with pilot's epaulettes as I flew 9 short sightseeing flights with various groups of MAF supporters and was able to answer their questions about MAF and the training process.



Above - transporting some VIPs.

4. Flight Camps

Whilst at MATC, I also participated in 2 flight camps. The camps, which are a mandatory part of the training, are designed to expose and train future MAF pilots in skills and techniques that are specific to the MAF context. The flight camps I attended were:

- **Short Field Operations Camp** - which, as the name suggests, has a focus upon short field take-offs and landings, usually on grass. This involved flying slow approaches close to the stall speed of the aircraft, dealing with obstacles on the final approach and climb out path, and landing and departing on rough, uneven and sloping airstrips that left little room for error.

Airstrip Evaluation Camp - which has a focus upon evaluating airstrips against 6 key criteria to ensure that it

- is possible to both land and then take off again in a safe manner. This is a vital skill for MAF pilots as many of the airstrips used in programmes are located in remote locations with little infrastructure, support and ongoing maintenance. MAF pilots may, therefore, need to make high (500ft above ground level), medium (50ft above ground level), and low (5ft above ground level) passes to assess conditions before landing.

These flight camps are the highlight of my training so far. Although challenging, it was immensely rewarding to be flying around small, difficult airstrips as part of a group of 4 MATC aircraft, learning advanced skills that I will one day be using in the field for an MAF programme. It was also great to have an opportunity to get to know some of the other students and instructors whilst camping through shared meals, times of fellowship, and the obligatory instructor vs student football game (the instructors won, but only due to several very questionable tackles!)



Above - highlights from flight camp.



5. Post PPL Assessment

I am pleased to report that just before returning to the UK in June to sit my ATPL exams, I successfully passed my Post PPL (Private Pilot Licence) Assessment at MATC. This is a must-pass/gateway MAF assessment that is flown by students who have acquired a PPL and completed their GEB at MATC. It is conducted with 2 assessors who review the assessment flight itself in addition to the student's personality and overall performance to date to ensure that they are suitable to continue their training and join MAF as a pilot.

The scenario-based flight takes around 2 hours and involves a mixture of new/difficult airstrips, simulated emergencies and drills, and a student-led briefing and review of the assessment flight. The day was not without incident, as immediately after departing one airfield, a mayday call was made over the radio by another aircraft in the circuit that suffered a complete engine failure on approach to landing. The 2 assessors and I watched in silence as the aircraft in question dropped below the treeline into the only clearing in the forest above which they had been flying. Thankfully, the pilot and 2 passengers walked away uninjured after making a successful forced landing in a field. We were able to continue our flight safely with this incident serving as a stark reminder as to why we spend so much of our training preparing for scenarios just like this.

Family Life

Rebekah and the girls were able to join me in the Netherlands for part of my training, and they enjoyed various outings during their visit, including a trip to Palace Het Loo, a former residence of the Dutch Royal Family.

'A', our youngest daughter, is close to crawling and has recently said her first words. She absolutely adores watching her older sister. Unfortunately for us, however, her sleep is still a little unpredictable with some night wake-ups and very early mornings often resulting in some very tired parents.

'T', our eldest, has thoroughly enjoyed being able to play in the garden again now that winter has been and gone and has developed a new love of playmobil and swimming/water play. She recently moved into a new room at her Nursery and settled in well after a slightly wobbly start. Her favorite activity is a family trip to our local Ikea for "chippys and meatballs", which usually ends in her getting the children's pasta after seeing the options for herself.

Rebekah is now in the final few months of her maternity leave and is currently preparing to complete some KIT (Keeping In Touch) days at work before her return towards the end of this year. She has also volunteered to run our church's Tuesday morning playgroup over the summer in a local park. Rebekah has been busy harvesting a variety of vegetables from our garden, which she planted and grew with more success this year compared to last.

As a family, we were fortunate enough to take a month off in July for a much-needed rest and holiday. We spent nearly 2 weeks exploring a very hot and sunny Cyprus to celebrate both me and Bekah reaching a milestone age this year (we'll let you guess which). We then returned home to make progress on the DIY/house front and enjoy the best that the South West of the UK has to offer.



Above - enjoying life in the Netherlands.



Above - photos from our family holiday in Cyprus.

What's Next?

I am about to start the 3rd and final ATPL theory module, which I hope to complete by the end of this year. I am also planning to return to Teuge at the end of the summer/early autumn to keep on top of my practical skills, make a start on my Instrument Rating, and complete my Night Rating. Rebekah and I are also speaking at an MAF event in Oxford in October, and we hope to make a visit as a family to the Folkestone office sometime soon.

Praise Points

We are hugely grateful to God and to you, our family and friends, for the following answered prayers since our last Prayer Letter:

1. For the progress Jordan has made over the past 6 months, the most intense period of training yet.
2. For the amazing holiday and time off we were able to have as a family in July.
3. For God's provision as we build support, both in prayer and financially. We have had such an encouraging response in this area, including from many people whom we've never even met before.

Prayer Requests

Please pray:

1. For Jordan as he begins studying for his Module 3 ATPL exams.
2. For Rebekah as she completes her Keeping In Touch days and starts looking ahead to finishing maternity leave and returning to work.
3. For more rest as we continue to battle disturbed nights and early mornings.
4. For the MAF Legacy event we are attending in Oxford in October. Please pray for the preparations for the event and all those involved and attending.
3. For God's provision as we look to forge partnerships with new individuals and churches as part of our support fundraising.

Support Us

All MAF overseas staff are asked to build a team of partners who will accompany them in the work God has called them to do through prayer and financial giving. This is based on the Biblical example of people combining their different individual callings (to go, to give, and to pray) to serve isolated communities. Would you consider supporting us in this way?

Please do get in contact with us if this is something that you would like to do. Alternatively, you can also set up a regular or one-off donation via our Staff Support page on the MAF UK website.

www.maf-uk.org/overton-cox

All donations go directly to MAF UK and are used to offset the costs of the training and help MAF achieve its mission of bringing help, hope, and healing through aviation.

And Finally...

And finally, we want to say a big thank you to all of you for your continued support to us as a family as we continue on this journey together. It really would not be possible without you all.

It has been really encouraging to know that so many people are praying for us. Do let us know how we can be praying for you too!

If you have any questions about MAF or the Future Pilots Programme (FPP) you can contact us at any time by clicking the 'Email Us' button above, or by reaching out to us directly.

With love