



February 2026

Pilot Aware ADS-L updates.
GASCO are no more.
F.U.N.K.E. ATR833 variants.
Delayed at Beccles.
Accurate landings.



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Welcome

Welcome to the February BRA magazine.

It's a short magazine this month; news has been quiet and Clive is away so no Rubber Side Down. So, unfortunately you have to put up with much more of my drivel than usual.

We start with the couple of news items we do have...

Pilot Aware complete upgrade of their ground network for ADS-L.

GASCO sadly winds up.

And then my personal drivel...

I discover audio differences between the F.U.N.K.E. ATR833 and ATR833-II radios.

I debrief on a trip to Beccles, where unexpected events led to a lengthy delay trying to leave.

And screaming into last place, we have Clive Rose with his always insightful Rubber Side Down. This month he focuses on accurately landing on a given point of the runway.

Finally, a big thank you to everyone who's submitted a cover photo for the magazine. Please keep them coming! And, if you have any interesting gyro related stories to contribute to the magazine, then please let me know.

Cheers until next month,

Chris Rose

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Pilot aware updates to support ADS-L

By Chris Rose, Editor

Pilot Aware have updated their ground stations network to detect and rebroadcast ADS-L transmissions. They are also running limited trials on airborne Pilot Aware devices.

A couple of magazine issues ago we reported that EASA have said ADS-L will be an important factor in helping keep flights of the various general aviation categories safely separated.

For more information see:

<https://www.pilotaware.com/post/ads-l-4-srd860-issue-2-and-the-future-of-european-electronic-conspicuity>

GASCO winds up

By Chris Rose, Editor

We are sad to bring you the news that GASCO has ceased to be. In an email sent out from GASCO, their chairman said:

"Following notification this morning to the Chair of the Civil Aviation Authority, I am writing to inform you that the Board of the General Aviation Safety Council has taken the difficult decision to wind up the organisation in an orderly manner.

This decision has been reached after careful consideration of the Council's financial position and future prospects. While the organisation has stabilised its finances in the short term and has benefited from the continued support of many member bodies, the Board concluded that it does not have a sufficiently secure long-term funding base to sustain its activities at a level that would allow it to continue delivering meaningful public benefit with confidence. The

decision has therefore been taken while the organisation remains solvent and able to manage an orderly transition.

We are acutely conscious that this ends a long period of collaboration between organisations across the general aviation community. Many of you have given sustained support to the Council over many years, and several have recently increased their contributions in an effort to help secure its future. On behalf of the Board, I would like to record our sincere thanks for that commitment and for the constructive and collegiate spirit in which the Council has operated."

The BRA has been a long time supporter of GASCO and are deeply saddened to see their excellent safety work come to an end.

Audio differences between F.U.N.K.E. ATR833 variants

By Chris Rose, Editor

I regularly fly two different gyros that both have F.U.N.K.E. ATR833 radios fitted. The older gyro, a Calidus, has a ATR833 fitted, and the newer gyro, an MTO Sport, has the ATR833-II. Both radios have an external audio input which I connect to my iPad for SkyDemon audio alerts, and for listening to music on long journeys.

Something that has puzzled me for sometime is the difference in quality of the external audio input on both radios. The older ATR833 fitted to the Calidus is better than the newer ATR833-II fitted to the MTO Sport. And no, it's nothing to do with the headsets and background noise: I have Bose A20 adapters fitted to my MTO Sport flying helmet, and I use the Bose A20 in the Calidus. On the ground, with the engine not running, both audio setups "should" be

identical in terms of quality, but they are not! As I've said, the older ATR833 is better than the newer ATR833-II. Don't get me wrong, the ATR833-II functions perfectly, and the audio quality of the radio reception is fine, but the quality of the audio in general is worse, and is most noticeable when listening to music through the external audio input. The older ATR833 is a more balanced sound with reasonable response across all audio frequencies, whereas the ATR833-II just sounds thin, like it's missing some of the frequencies in the normal audio spectrum.

I did wonder if there was a wiring harness difference between the MTO Sport and Calidus, but I've tried swapping radios between the aircraft, and the issue remains with the ATR833-II.

I contacted F.U.N.K.E. and explained my findings asked them is there a difference in audio processing between the two radios. They kindly replied and explained that there was a big difference between the two variants audio processing, but offered no further explanation.

Other differences I have noticed:

- The ATR833-II has the replay option of the last radio transmission received. The older ATR833 does not have this useful feature.
- The ATR833-II is different in the way the control knob steps backwards and forwards through the frequency steps. In the older ATR833, the lower two digits after the decimal point wrap round without affecting the first digit after the decimal point.

It's a shame that the newer ATR833-II audio is worse, you would have thought being the newer radio things would only have been improved. It feels like a step backwards. If you never fly listening to music, or you never switch regularly between aircraft with different ATR833 variants, you would perhaps never notice. I

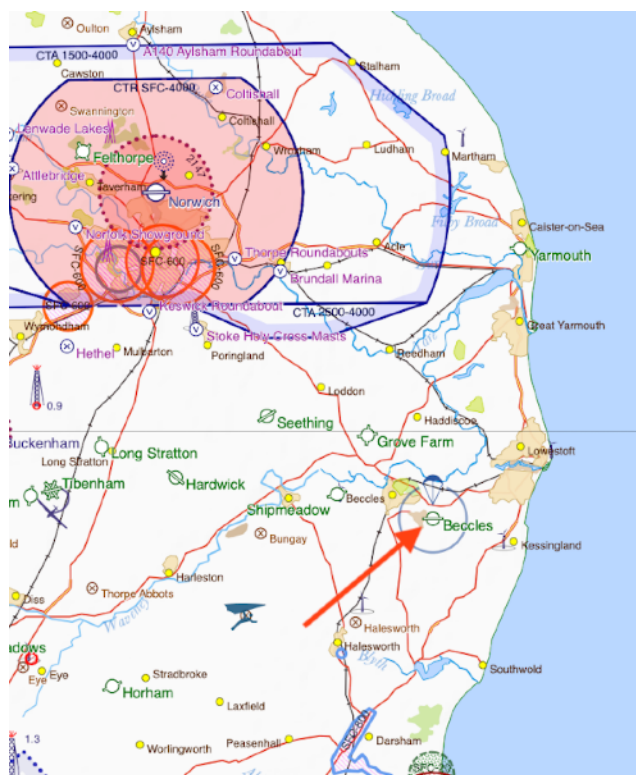
admit, I'm a very niche case, but I just found it interesting from an engineering point of view.

Beccles visit

By Chris Rose, Editor

On one of the few flyable Saturdays recently I flew to Beccles with a couple of fellow gyros pilots.

Beccles is on the Suffolk coast and has one of the best cafes that I've found at an airfield, so it's well worth a visit. The staff are very friendly and the only thing you need to be aware of is that they do parachute jumping there.



The parachuting plays an important role in this debrief. You can't land, take off, have your rotors turning, or do ground manoeuvring whilst they have parachutes in the air, so it's vital that you listen to the radio and time your arrival / departures to fit in around the parachute radio calls that are made.

We all PPR'd for 12:00 and the flight there was pretty uneventful up to about 10 miles out when I switched over from London Information to Beccles radio. There were two other Beccles based aircraft on frequency in the local area and I was just in time to hear a radio call that the parachutes had 5 minutes before dropping. With not enough time to get in and land before the parachutes would be in the air, I made my initial radio call to Beccles and said I'd orbit out to the west, close to a local town, until all the parachutes were down. I also heard the two local aircraft report that they'd also remain outside.

I fly with a SkyEcho device, so I get to see other aircraft also equipped with ADS-B. With SkyEcho I could see one of my fellow gyro buddies approaching from the west, still some 10 miles away, but I could not see the two local aircraft. This meant there would now be 4 aircraft joining the circuit, 5 if you include the jump plane, and three of these weren't showing on ADS-B (I don't remember seeing the jump plane on ADS-B either). I know ADS-B devices like SkyEcho aren't perfect, but in busy airspace they can really help with traffic awareness, and I wished more aircraft would use them.

Jump planes at any airfield are normally pretty quick to get back into the circuit, and often don't conform to general circuit pattern expectations. Generally, it's a good idea to give way to them and keep out of their way, after all, they are trying to run a business where fast turn-round times are important, and they don't like shutting down their turbine engines between sorties, not to mention their high fuel burn.

After about 10 minutes of orbiting I heard the radio call that all parachutes were on the ground, the jump plane had landed, and so I readied to make my approach into the circuit. The two local aircraft also called rejoining.

The last of the two local aircraft called downwind just before I was also about to call the same. I frantically scanned the sky around me but couldn't see any other aircraft. I called downwind and added I wasn't visual with either of the two aircraft ahead of me in the circuit.

I didn't spot the other two aircraft until one called final and the other called base. I was just coming to the end of my downwind leg, so I called that I was now visual with the other two aircraft and extending my downwind for spacing. With nothing behind me in the circuit I slowed the gyro up - you're got to love the gyro in situations like this! - and watched as the two local aircraft were now both on final and it was clear the second one was too close and would have to go around. It did so just as I turned base and I relaxed as I could now comfortably turn final with plenty of time for the aircraft which had just landed to backtrack and park. There is no taxi way either side of the runway at Beccles, so aircraft need to backtrack.

I called final and watched the aircraft backtrack, but just as it cleared the runway to park I heard the jump plane called lining up! So much for a "relaxed" final! Again, the versatility of the gyro proved itself and I slowed up once more and prepared myself to go around if required. It's amazing how fast the jump planes can get airborne, and I needn't have worried as it was comfortably up and away before my go around decision point.

I do wonder how much extra fuel it would have cost the jump plane to wait the extra couple of minutes. Maybe it didn't hear me call final? Anyway, it wasn't a drama, and it just goes to show that you need to be prepared with commercial jump planes operating at the same airfield as yourself.

Beccles had us gyros park on the concrete path that led from one of the hangers to the apron, this was because the grass was too soft for us to

park on. This was confirmed by one of the fixed wing aircraft that just landed getting bogged down as it turned off the apron on to the grass, and had to get pushed back onto hard ground.



Photo credit: Mark Hull

Did I mention Beccles has an excellent cafe? I know I seem to be fixated on food whenever I do and airfield debrief, but there are so few airfields with decent cafes! It's a £10 landing fee for a gyro, but that gives you 10% off in the cafe, which makes the £10.95 for a full English breakfast seem even more reasonable. And they do more than just your typical cafe fodder; I mean, where else can you get a mixed seafood platter at an airfield?

After the excellent food, and equally excellent gyro bollox (banter), we all headed out to our aircraft. I went to the caravan which acts as the radio office and explained what we intended to do in regards pushing the gyros into a position to start our engines and keep out of the way of the jump plane that was making use of the apron area to pick up and drop off. It was also doing refuelling whilst keeping its turbine engine running in the same area, an interesting sight to see with ground crew scurrying around to get the ladder platform in place so they could put the fuel into the wing tanks from above. The radio operator didn't have any issues with our plans, but suggested we'd have

to be quick and squeeze in between the jump plane sorties.

With that, we all got our engines started just as the jump plane left on its next sortie. This meant we'd have time to get our engines warmed up and get out after it next landed, or so we thought...

With the jump plane's return came the inevitable halt of ground manoeuvring and landings whilst the newly deposited parachutes were in the air. The jump plane announced it would be quick turn around as it only had two passengers to pick up (no refuelling required) and this would be its last run of the day. So we didn't manage to get away and had to sit there engines running, blocked by either the jump plane, local aircraft landing, or parachutes in the air!

We had now been sat there for pretty much 10 minutes waiting, ready to go, engines warm. There's a dilemma about shutting down your engine: it might save petrol, but you have to leave the radio on, a drain on the battery made painfully obvious by the low voltage warning light coming on if you do so. Plus, without the engine running and strobes on, no one can see that you're actually waiting to go. With air/ground radio, it's a bit of a free for all with everyone watching all the other aircraft looking for a slot.

During this time, the wind had moved round and was no favouring the opposite runway direction to the one being used, but this didn't seem to bother the fixed wing guys.

The return of the jump plane after its last run heralded the next problem as it promptly shut down right in front of my gyro and the pilot got out and walked away! I called on the radio to ask for some advice as to what to do in regards being blocked by the jump plane, and to say I was going to use the opposite runway so I didn't have a tail wind. I was asked politely to

be a patient as the radio operator didn't know what was happening either, and couldn't see past the jump plane which was also parked in front of their caravan. I had hoped that perhaps my radio call would also be picked up by one of the ground crew who were milling about.

Finally, one of the ground crew appeared in front of me a marshaller me to taxi forward and indicated I could sneak past the jump plane and around the front of it. Gingerly, watching the ground crew, my rotor blade, the fuel bowser, and the jump plane, I slowly made my way to what I thought would be a clear run to the edge of the runway...

Now there was a local plane just shutting down blocking everyone in (including the jump plane if it wanted to move). Again, I watched as the pilot jumped out and walked away! However, there was still someone in the cockpit, and after a couple of minutes they got the plane turned around and to my amazement taxied it back up the runway to park it in at a hanger at the far end of the airfield!

Finally, with nothing in the way, I could taxi to the hold and line up.

I've just checked my logs: I started my engine at 14:35, and SkyDemon said I was airborne at 15:05. So, I was 30 minutes on the ground waiting to get away. Ok, let's call it 20 minutes as the first 10 minutes were for the engine to warm up, but that's still 20 minutes longer than expected! It's something to bare in mind: your fuel reserve, not to mention your day light hours reserve in these short winter days, can quickly be eaten into by the most unexpected things!

It sounds like I'm complaining about or blaming Beccles, I'm not, I'm just relating a story about how unexpected things can affect your flight. I think the crux of the issue was that us gyros were parked where no one expected aircraft to be waiting to taxi. And no other aircraft, unless

they had been listening the whole time, would have known we were waiting and for how long we had waited already. Being air/ground radio, the operator has no authority to instruct an aircraft on the ground or in the air, so they can't sequence aircraft either. It is all just part of flying, but don't let it put you off from visiting this fabulous airfield and its cafe.

Rubber side down

By Clive Rose, BRA Safety And Training

Following on from last month's musings on Going Around, this article is about Accurate Landings. If ever there was a perfect excuse for requesting a Training Hour, this is it.

The most valuable lesson I learned about landings was from Crusher, who'd spent a large part of his career setting up big jets from 10 (or more) miles out to land on what must look like a very small runway when you're trying to return hundreds of tons of aircraft and passengers safely to terra firma.

He reminded me it's much easier to extend a short landing than to shorten a long one.

During our training, we spend endless hours pounding the circuit and landing "somewhere on the runway". The more we practice the more accurate our landings become, so eventually, we can land "in the first half of the runway", "adjacent to that fire extinguisher" or "just short of the taxiway" on command. But like emergency landings, we stop practicing when we qualify PPL(G) and, without constant practice, these skills diminish.

Spot landings are over-hyped. We should aspire only to accurate (and safe!) landings, which start with a basic reminder of the landing process.

We reduce power at an Initial Descent Point. This is the start of our Approach. While you're juggling yaw and drift, talking on the radio and politely requesting your passenger to Zip It! pick a part of the runway you'd like to land on and note its position on the windscreen, relative to the flies you've accumulated en route. This is your Aiming Point. Check your speed.

If your Aiming Point is migrating up the windscreen, you will land short of it. If your Aiming Point is moving down the windscreen, you will land beyond it. Above 300', adjust power to extend or shorten your approach. The only imperative is that you maintain the correct approach speed for a safe landing.

If it becomes obvious you're going to land in the hedge, Go Around. From a stable approach, the aircraft chooses where it's going to land. If you're not happy about it, Go Around. Otherwise, below 300' check your speed and maintain that stable Approach. As you round out, you will inevitably Float past your Aiming Point to Land. For reference, my Aiming Point is usually 50-100m short of the taxiway I plan to vacate from.

At every fly-in we see pilots fixating on a particular spot and landing either with zero airspeed and from 2' up, or smacking into the ground when they should still be floating. Please remember every Approach is a Go Around unless the stars align to deliver a safe landing. The flight doesn't end until prop and rotors are stationary and the aircraft is safely parked.

There are no marching bands and dancing girls when you make a perfect landing, unless I'm just landing at the wrong places! But there's immense satisfaction in safely landing Rubber Side Down on the section of runway you were aiming for.

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Upcoming events:

You can find the BRA calendar which details all our events, and many others you might be interested on our website. You can find it in the [Events](#) section of our website. Click on the Events Calendar button.

If you have any events you'd like added to our calendar, then please feel free to send an email to: events@britishrotorcraftassociation.co.uk

Keep checking back as we'll soon be adding new official BRA events for 2026!

Record-Breaker 2026

13th June, 2026, Old Warden

Get this date in your diary now for the 2026 gyro record-breaker where we attempt to beat our previous record.

We hope the Aston Martin owners club will be in attendance, the connection being James Bond and Little Nellie. Last time I think we had 300 Astons show up. We are also working on having some of Ken Wallis's other gyros on show.

More details to come.



For Sale:

Got a gyro to sell? Or maybe a gyro related item? Please contact:

events@britishrotorcraftassociation.co.uk

They will put your items on the BRA website For Sale area until you tell us it's sold. It will also appear in this magazine for one issue.

Advertise your gyro or gyro related stuff for sale here for free!

Rotorsport Digital ASI and Altimeter



ASI: working fine.

Altimeter: reads wrong altitude - it's always some fixed amount out.

These were fitted to my 2016 Calidus. I removed them in 2021 as the altimeter started to read wrong altitude which couldn't be corrected with setting correct pressure. I replaced both ASI and Altimeter as I prefer the old fashioned type, and the ASI annoyed me that it always showed 10mph when stationary (this is normal for the Rotorsport ASI).

The ASI can be configured for the different Rotorsport aircraft: Calidus / MTO / Cavalon etc.

Comes with manuals and wiring harness.

£50 for both.

skinnyc.rose@gmail.com

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