



Clean 100 UAT-ARC Telecon Briefing, 8 Dec 2011

During a 45 minute teleconference held on 8 December Robert Ragar, Clean 100 representative to the FAA's UAT-ARC, provided an ARC status update. Robert and I had considered making the teleconference recording available for those not in attendance, but decided against doing so, deferring to the committee's rules governing information releases. Instead, below are listed the primary messages from the briefing which we are allowed to share.

First, I want to once again thank Everts Air for their generous support of this undertaking. The company is underwriting Robert's travel expense, and the considerable time he is investing in the effort. They are doing this with the understanding that travel reimbursement from the Clean 100 membership will cover only a small – really a token – part of the expense. And I wish to also thank those members of the Clean 100 who are contributing to help offset Everts' expense. It is the right thing to do, and is tremendously appreciated.

As a reminder, Robert is a Clean 100 representative from the Alaska Air Carriers Association and is an executive with Everts Air, the largest consumer of avgas in the country. Since becoming our representative, Robert has attended three ARC meetings in Washington D.C. with one remaining. He is a member of the Impact & Economics committee which meets via teleconference between the Washington sessions. Here are the briefing high points:

1. The ARC is on schedule to issue its report to the FAA and the GA community no later than 31 January 2012.
2. The report defines a detailed, specific pathway for candidate fuel developers to qualify their fuels, and to achieve certification.
3. The report's recommendations do not address alternate pathways which may be pursued by candidate developers.
4. The ARC contemplates a formally organized body of experts to assist the FAA with implementation.
5. Robert and the other committee members are very optimistic that the pathway being defined substantially increases the odds for successfully certifying a replacement fuel, but there is no assurance that a successful fuel will be identified.

6. There is confusion over the term “drop-in” fuel. It means one thing to the ARC, and another to pilots. The ARC definition means nothing changes in the production and distribution chains, as well as in the operating environment. Nothing. Pilots think of “drop-in” in purely an operating sense, without consideration for other matters. From the ARC point-of-view there will not be a “drop-in” fuel. From the pilot’s point-of-view there may be – for some, perhaps most, aircraft.
7. There may be some aircraft, or engines, for which the replacement fuel is inadequate. How this is handled depends upon the nature of the replacement fuel.
8. Robert reminds us that the Clean 100 is the only voice exclusively representing the interests of those operators requiring a high octane solution. This is an important matter, as Robert has reminded the group during each ARC meeting.

As a side matter, those in attendance discussed the Center for Environmental Health litigation against avgas distributors in California. It was agreed that this matter probably represents a larger, and more immediate threat, to General Aviation than anything else currently at play and that far too little information has been shared from AOPA, EAA and others. I offered to inquire of NATA to get a better understanding of the issue and to see if there is anything the Clean 100 can contribute.

Respectfully,

Lee Buechler/Clean 100