

“Survey Says!” Lobbying, promoting aviation in Canada

By Kevin Psutka

This is the fourth in a series of articles providing feedback on comments made by members in our recent membership survey <http://www.copanational.org/files/2012Survey4Website.pdf>.

Some suggestions for improvement have cost implications and the COPA Board of Director's Strategic Planning Committee will be prioritizing them and providing direction for COPA staff.

We in turn will report on progress or issues that prevent us from fully implementing some changes. Articles will be published as progress is made. If you missed the first three topics of our “Survey Says!” articles go to the following links:

www.copanational.org/FPAug12-2En.cfm

www.copanational.org/FPDec12-1En.cfm and

www.copanational.org/FPMar13-1En.cfm

Promoting COPA, aviation

The survey question was: What two strategies should COPA National pursue to increase its membership? Seventy per cent of COPA members identified that COPA should advertise and promote itself more, followed by keeping costs down and lobby/be more visible.

Survey comments from members suggested attracting youth by providing discounts to new and student pilots or one-time free membership and collaborating more with flight schools and training centers. They also suggested developing programs to encourage students and middle-age people to consider flying as a hobby or career and by advertising outside of the typical market areas.

In response to the survey, COPA National has followed up collaborating with flight schools and training centers by sending annually a COPA package composed of the new COPA brochure, display stand, COPA decals and a letter describing COPA benefits for student pilots who are not already COPA members, having completed their first solo, may apply within 90 days to receive one year of the *COPA Flight* online newspaper and access to COPA's member's only website as our congratulations for their achievement and to introduce them to COPA. For more details go to <http://www.copanational.org/joinrenew.cfm>

In addition to our existing relationship with the Air Cadet League, we are developing a program for cadets who have achieved a flying scholarship and then “aged out” of Cadets. We are developing a mentoring program connecting COPA Flights with those Cadets. Also an Adult “Introduction to Flying” program is in the works, where COPA members will be encouraged to introduce adults to flying.

COPA relies heavily on our Flights to be a recruiting tool for COPA, which is why we permit non-COPA members to participate in Flights. When they are exposed to COPA through Flight meetings and events, it is hoped that they will discover why they too should be members.

One alarming statistic is that while COPA Flights' growth and reactivation has been phenomenal, only 48.5% of Flight members are COPA National members. COPA National embarked on a campaign last fall to encourage COPA Flights to increase membership from within and this resulted in a slight increase to 51.5%.

There remains much work to be done by our Flights to encourage your fellow COPA Flight members to join COPA National.

Lobbying

Lobbying is a big part of COPA National and your association has been registered since 2009 as a lobbying organization with the Office of the Commissioner of Lobbying Canada.

COPA endeavors and uses every opportunity to brief Ministers and other official Public Office Holders on current Personal Aviation issues and concerns. Furthermore, COPA works with Transport Canada to find solutions to problems that prevent our sector from moving forward.

You asked, COPA made it happen!

“Survey Says” upcoming topics:

- Increasing awareness about aviation
- Providing more French translations
- Keeping cost down and providing discounts for members
- Improving education through local COPA Flights
- COPA National promotion at Flight Schools and other newspapers or magazines