



*Reno-Tahoe Aviation Group  
Meeting Minutes  
February 1, 2023*

**I. Call to Order**

Dr. Bob Larkin called to order the General Meeting of the Reno-Tahoe Aviation Group at 5:35pm on February 1, 2023, at CAP Headquarters, 2890 Vassar St., Reno, NV 89502.

**II. Roll Call**

A roll call was not conducted. The following officers and directors were present:

Dr. Bob Larkin – President  
Karen Inda – Secretary  
Michael Cleveland – Director  
Tom Dyer – Director  
Trygve Inda – Director

**III. Board of Director Elections**

Before the meeting, Dr. Bob asked those interested in being on the RTAG Board of Directors to write their names on a sheet of paper. The names listed were:

1. Karen Inda
2. Trygve Inda
3. Jordan West
4. Sue Moon-West
5. Mark Stiving
6. Karla Werninghaus
7. Michael Cleveland
8. Tom Dyer

Dr. Bob asked each candidate to stand. There can be up to nine directors, so Dr. Bob asked for a nomination for the ninth director. Tom Dyer nominated current Vice-President Francisco Magana. Elections were conducted by voice vote. All in favor. None opposed. The new BOD will take office at the Celebration of Aviation Banquet on Saturday, March 4<sup>th</sup>. The new BOD will appoint the officers.

**IV. Announcements**

David Lussier from Stellar Aviation apologized for not having AvGas this week. It was ordered three weeks ago, but a fuel line was broken, the pass was closed, and there is a shortage of truck drivers. He realizes that the T-hangars are full of snow and ice. Snow removal teams are clearing the runways and taxiways as quickly as possible. The GA ramp is done after all the rest of it is finished.



There will be a NE GA Facility Groundbreaking Ceremony on Tuesday, February 21st, at 11am, weather permitting. Stellar Aviation is building a new ramp, run-up area, and two 30,000 square foot hangars in Phase One. Later phases will include T-hangars, meeting rooms, self-serve fuel, and a wash rack.

The new Adopt-a-Spot sign from Keep Truckee Meadows Beautiful has the RTAG logo and the text, "In honor of members who have flown west." Tom will place the sign on an existing signpost near the intersection of Rock Blvd. and Edison Way.

The Celebration of Aviation Banquet is Saturday, March 4<sup>th</sup>, at the Resort at Red Hawk in Wingfield Springs. The flyer and registration form are on the Special Events page of the RTAG website. All attendees are requested to register ASAP, so we know how much food to order.

The next fly-out is scheduled for Saturday, February 18<sup>th</sup>. Meet on the KHTH ramp at 10am. We will take crew cars to El Capitan for brunch. RSVP to Karen.

RTAG dues are \$20 per year, payable in January. We accept cash, checks, PayPal, and Square.

The scholarship deadline has passed. Tom will lead the selection committee. No member of the selection committee may have a financial interest in a flight school.

Larry Cheek of the local FSDO will host a Light Sport Webinar on Monday, February 6<sup>th</sup>.

The Soaring Society of America's annual convention is at the Atlantis Casino Resort and the Reno-Sparks Convention Center, February 21st - 25th. All aviation enthusiasts are invited to attend a free safety seminar, Wednesday, February 22nd, 5:30pm to 9pm. Visit [www.ssa.org/convention](http://www.ssa.org/convention) for information.

The local FSDO will present an all-day GA Safety Seminar on Saturday, May 27<sup>th</sup>, at the Elks Lodge in Reno. The seminar is limited to 100 people.

The AQP seminar that Joe Rajacic presented at the December 7<sup>th</sup> RTAG meeting will be recorded and made available to everyone in three or four weeks.

## **V. Wings Program**

RTAG member Joe Rajacic presented a WINGS Credit Program entitled "Unintentional and Intentional IMC / Spatial Disorientation". These are the second and third most common causes of fatal GA accidents. This seminar is part of the Advanced Qualification Program (AQP) that Joe is developing.

### **How Pilots get Spatial Disorientation**

The **Coriolis illusion** occurs when a pilot has been in a turn long enough for the fluid in the ear canal to stop moving, causing the pilot to think the plane is straight-and-level. When the turn is followed by an abrupt head movement, spatial disorientation can be severe enough to cause the pilot to lose control of the aircraft. Trusting the instruments is crucial in this scenario.



The **Somatogravic illusion** occurs when rapid forward acceleration causes a pilot to feel as though he is pitching up, compelling him to lower the aircraft's nose. This is most likely to occur with no visible horizon.

The **Leans illusion** occurs when a pilot enters a banked turn too slowly. The fluid in his ears doesn't start moving and his brain thinks he is straight-and-level.

Moving your head around while flying in IMC can also induce spatial disorientation. Mount your iPad on the yoke and practice being able to manipulate all flaps, knobs, etc. without moving your head.

### **How to Prevent VFR into IMC**

**Weather Briefings:** Look at the forecast along your entire route and take it seriously. Call Flight Services and request a weather briefing. Look at the temperature / dew point spread. 12 / 03 is good, but 06 / 03 is soup. Personal minimums vary according to familiarity with the area. Trygve added that, if you are IFR rated and plan to fly in IMC, know the ceilings along your route. If your engine quits, you don't want a 300-foot ceiling. A 1000-foot ceiling gives you more options.

**Aeronautical Decision Making:** Poor ADM got you into the situation, but good ADM can get you out. Be physiologically ready: the right mindset, no fatigue, and no problems at home. When the little voice in your head says, "This is not looking good," do a 180-degree turn (at a standard rate or less) and get out of there. If you are talking with ATC, ask them whether a different turn or a different altitude on the same heading would be better than a 180-degree turn. The key is to get back into VMC as quickly as possible.

**Oxygen:** If you are flying at night, your need for oxygen is greater. The FAA recommends using oxygen when flying at or above 5000 feet density altitude at night.

**Tools:** Use Foreflight in Attitude & Map mode as a backup.

Ninety percent of VFR into IMC crashes are fatal. In that situation, you will need to pay extreme attention to the instruments, with no distractions. **Potential Distractions** include the **startle effect**, in which it takes the pilot a few seconds to realize what has happened and then react appropriately, as well as looking outside, ATC calls, passengers, and system failures. There are two things to do if you fly VFR into IMC:

1. Fly using the instruments only. Do NOT look out the windows.
2. Call ATC and confess. They want to save your life and they will guide you to VMC.

If the controller tells you to "maintain VFR", don't look outside. Say that you're in the clouds, you're a VFR pilot, and you need help. When you declare your emergency as "VFR into IMC", you have an instant instrument rating under 14 CFR 91.36. Ideally, you are already on Flight Following, but if you have no radio contact, use 121.5.

Putting on foggles will force you to look at the instruments. Confirm that your airplane's systems (such as vacuum, electrical, etc.) are working.



Joe asked whether anyone knew the difference between a Turn Coordinator and a Turn & Slip Indicator. Trygve replied that a Turn Coordinator works on two axes and provides both a bank rate and a turn rate, while a Turn & Slip Indicator works on one axis and only provides a turn rate. Knowing whether your plane has a Turn Coordinator or a Turn & Slip Indicator, and how to read them, can save your life.

### **Why Pilots Fly VFR into IMC**

According to Rod Machado, the most common reason is the “Mission Mindset”. Attempting to reach your destination to avoid disappointing others is a recipe for disaster. Be aware of what you value more. Say to yourself, for example, “I want my wife to continue having a husband,” and let that be your goal.

Involve your passengers in the safety of flight. Ask them ahead of time if they will be willing to turn back or divert if necessary. If they say no, then don’t take them. Never go flying if you don’t have a Plan B.

### **How to Train for Spatial Disorientation with a CFI**

With the autopilot off, put on foggles, close your eyes, and fly straight-and-level.

**VFR pilots:** Get more instrument training.

**IFR pilots:** One-third of all pilots caught in VFR into IMC have instruments ratings, but they are either not proficient or have little or no actual IMC. To stay proficient, file instruments on nearly every flight and get actual some IMC with a CFI.

Most problems occur right after take-off in high workload environments in IMC. Some solutions:

1. Reduce your workload by having an autopilot and/or co-pilot, and a pre-flight briefing. Say what you’re going to do aloud before every flight, even if you are talking to yourself.
2. Announce “Single Pilot IFR” to Ground controllers and ask for a simpler departure, no turns below 1000 feet, and more time before a handoff or any new instructions.
3. Don’t be in a rush to talk to ATC. If you told ATC not to call you until you get to 1000 feet, then don’t answer any calls until you get to 1000 feet.

Trygve mentioned that it’s very important to be on instruments at least five seconds before entering clouds. The light changes in clouds and it’s hard to transition if you don’t plan for it. Joe said that IFR rated pilots should go on instruments as soon as they have no usable runway left.

### **Final Notes**

Think of ATC as “Air Traffic Coordinators” instead of “Controllers”. They want you to get where you’re going safely. Remember that they are sitting in an office; you are flying the airplane. Don’t be afraid to ask ATC for what you need. If they say no, tell them you’re declaring an emergency.

Under pressure, you don’t rise to the occasion; you sink to the level of your training. The longer you wait, the fewer options you have. Fly the airplane.



### **Next AQP Seminar**

Joe's next AQP seminar will be held Wednesday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>, from 5:30pm, at Civil Air Patrol. The topics will be "The Go / No Go Decision" and "What is a Stabilized Approach?" WINGS Credit will be available.

### **VI. Adjournment**

Karen adjourned the meeting at 7:20pm.  
Minutes submitted by Karen Inda.