## Free MetFlight GA

A Budget 2015 announcement is regarded as a big boost to general aviation safety.

he General Aviation sector has greeted with delight, the announcement in the May Budget of extra funding to MetService, allowing pilots no-cost access to professional aviation weather information.

After four years of user-pays, lobbying from industry, and behind-the-scenes work by the CAA, MetService, and the Ministry of Transport, MetFlight GA became free on 1 July 2015.

Paul Kearney, from Massey's School of Aviation, says it's an amazing development.

"My gut feeling is that people were flying without decent weather reports. But pilots will be back into it and getting proper information before they go flying, which is a huge step forward in safety."

The Government says the service being free of charge will put private GA pilots on the same footing as other outdoor recreational users, such as boaties and trampers.

Long-time GA pilot, Nigel Griffith, says the no-cost access will make life much easier.

"If you're going to Queenstown from Wellington, for instance, you'll be able to quickly access proper current information before takeoff, and monitor it once you're on your way. Assuming you have someone else looking out the window, of course!"

Access to MetFlight GA will continue to be restricted to those who hold a CAA Pilot Licence (PPL, RPL etc), and those who hold a flying certificate or similar with a Part 149 Aviation Recreation Organisation.

## metflight.metra.co.nz

## How to Log In

Part 61 pilots will need to enter their CAA licence number, and the password is the 'initial grant date' of the licence (which is found lower right hand side).

You enter the initial grant date in this form: d/mm/yyyy, ie, with no leading zero on the day, but with a leading zero on the month – for instance, 5/02/2003.

The MetFlight system will recognise the most recent initial grant date where a pilot holds more than one licence type – for instance, rotary and fixed wing. The same applies to those pilots moving between different levels of licence – for instance from PPL to CPL.

For Part 149 pilots, the password will differ between organisations. Some will use issue or birth dates, while other organisations will generate passwords specifically for MetFlight GA. Part 149 Aviation Recreation Organisations will notify members of their username and password.

MetService advises that pilots who've paid a sub covering the 1 July date will get a refund. Email metflight@metservice.com. ■

## SIGMETs Now Graphical

At the time *Vector* went to print, MetService was to release a new product, the Graphical SIGMET Monitor (GSM), by 31 July 2015. The GSM will be available through MetService aviation web services, including MetFlight GA, and is expected to provide easily understandable information on the presence of severe weather phenomena (turbulence, icing, etc).

The GSM is a graphical representation of the standard SIGMET and will update automatically, each time a SIGMET is issued or cancelled. The New Zealand Flight Information Region and the Auckland Oceanic Flight Information Region will be covered in separate issues.

The standard alpha-numeric SIGMETs will continue to be issued as the primary SIGMET product.



By selecting the Straits (ST) area, for instance, and clicking "Get Weather Briefing", you can access the corresponding area weather forecast, aerodrome forecasts, and current weather reports.



The MetFlight GA web site gives you access to a range of observations, forecasts, and satellite and radar products.