

C'MON GUYS BE KIND!

Discourtesy in radio calls
appears to be increasing.



Maybe it's the effect of COVID-19. We're all a bit, or a lot, more stressed than a few years ago – it is a tumultuous time. But scathing radio calls don't help.

The Good Aviation Practice booklet, *Plane talking*, says, "The key to flying at uncontrolled aerodromes is to show as much courtesy to others as you would like them to show you". That applies anywhere.

No one wants to be chastised 'in public' over the radio, and since the pilot who's never made a mistake hasn't been born yet, maybe it's time to cut our fellow pilots a bit of slack.

CAA Aviation Safety Advisor Carlton Campbell says that during recent visits to South Island operators, he's increasingly heard of instances of 'air rage'.

"Nasty finger-pointing over the radio is absolutely inappropriate and achieves nothing in terms of aviation safety. In fact, it increases risk.

"It invites an emotional reaction from the 'accused' pilot that could lead them to make poor decisions.

"Not to mention the pilot doing the berating has just increased their personal risk by potentially letting their emotional energy and anxiety divert their attention from their own pilot responsibilities of appropriate aviating, navigating, and communicating."

Carlton says some pilots have been particularly – and vocally – judgemental of students.

"It's the worst-case scenario. The student is perhaps in unfamiliar territory, maybe with English as a second language, flying solo, and trying to comply with their supervising instructor's briefing. An explosion of swearing and accusations over the radio will simply make them more stressed than they already are, with a potentially adverse outcome."

Carlton says pilots need to hold their frustration in check, breathe, and leave their talk with the other pilot until they're both on the ground.

"Chill out, hold, yield, pause, accept the situation, and determine how to make it better.

"Don't make a less than ideal situation worse. On the ground, without emotion, is the best way to educate about mistakes.

"We're all human and therefore prone to error. In the interest of safety, we all deserve a bit of latitude." 🙏

Comments or queries?

Email carlton.campbell@caa.govt.nz