Rolls-Royce employee wins CAA safety award

Rolls-Royce employee Rory Clarkson has received a Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) safety award for his ground-breaking work undertaken in the UK to safely reduce the disruption volcanic ash can cause the aviation industry

When the Eyjafjallajökull volcano erupted in 2010, Europe's aviation system was severely disrupted. One of the prime reasons for this was the lack of data on the level of volcanic ash that modern jet engines could safely fly in. Since then Clarkson has been researching and developing a new set of higher levels for the UK manufacturer's engines that will influence how the world deals with volcanic ash.

For the first time, the industry now has a set of data and a model to use during any ash event. This will ensure aircraft engines don't become damaged by volcanic ash while at the same time allowing airlines to fly as much as possible, safely reducing the disruption to passengers.

Commenting on the presentation of the award Dame Deirdre Hutton, chair of the UK Civil Aviation Authority, said: “We are delighted to name Rory as the recipient of our Flight Safety Award 2018. He has made a major contribution to the industry understanding of the volcanic ash risk, which will greatly enhance our collective ability to deal with any future ash cloud event.

About the award

The inaugural award was presented at a ceremony on 6 February 2018 at the Houses of Parliament, attended by aviation industry leaders and politicians. His Royal Highness Prince Michael of Kent GCVO, alongside Aviation Minister, Baroness Sugg made the presentation to Clarkson. The new flight safety award aims to recognise an individual or organisation's significant contribution to aviation safety.

The CAA had previously presented an annual safety award to a member of the general aviation community for a one-off, o sustained contribution to private flying safety standards.

The new award is said to broaden the scope of the prize to include any individual or organisation that has made a significa and tangible safety impact - in any area of aviation.