

RAANZ AGM 2017

Presidents Report

It is my pleasure to present the President's report for 2017.

Recreational aviation continues its upward march. RAANZ membership has climbed to around 700 and there are around 1150 microlights on the CAA register. This is a significant percentage of total GA numbers.

Like previous years some of those who have looked sideways at us and our operation now realise that they may have dropped the ball and are rushing to catch up. We must be continually aware that our activity is under the watchful eyes of many and our guard must not drop with regard to maintaining a professional and risk averse culture.

In this rush to catch up many new participants fail to grasp or do not appreciate the work and effort that has gone on to get us to where we are today. I am a bit of a stuck record on this but make no apologies, we do have one of the best if not the best microlight operating frameworks in the world. We are treated as respected partners in the aviation community.

The framework we have is a privilege not a right and must be treated with respect. Maintaining and incrementally improving this framework must remain the main focus for this organisation for many years to come.

Tragically the sport has lost four participants during the year. Whilst three were not members of our association it does not take away the harsh reality of the worst case scenario that is connected with our sport. Any bad news does reflect upon us all. Our sympathy and condolences go to those connected with these events.

We continue to have a very good working relationship with the regulator.

Recently at a Part103 workshop in Wellington CAA expressed the view that peer pressure was one of the best ways to maintain and improve flight safety. The club based structure of RAANZ is ideal in performing this task with local operators keeping their finger on the pulse and intervening early when counter-productive behaviour or attitude is detected.

Selfish action on the part of one or two could well have the undesired outcome of placing restrictions on the vast number of responsible recreational aviators. It is imperative that any new members into the recreational aviation environment are well screened and well briefed on what their responsibilities are.

We are also working with CAA to ensure any data used in comparisons with other participants in the aviation environment is meaningful and accurate.

We are also working on an in-house Instructional Techniques course. This will be around 75% computer based study at-home with a one day hands-on package. It is envisioned that all instructors will complete the at-home study package as a refresher and all new Instructors complete the whole course prior to the Instructor rating being issued.

Another successful annual fly-in was held in Rangiora. The weather man cooperated and around 35 aircraft had a fine time. The turnout reflected quite a range of different types and it is amazing to see what is available. Again thanks to all the locals that were involved in this event.

Next years Fly-in is to be hosted by the Stratford club. Mark 17,18 and 19 of February in your diaries and start planning the trip now.

Again thanks to all the people out in the field who have done the hard work at a local level to make the sport run as smoothly as it does. Without the support and generous donation of time and effort at local level the sport would be quite different.

Thanks also the exec team who have participated in lots of discussion throughout the year to ensure the membership have retained the privileges they have and are able to continue to participate in recreational aviation in a cost effective and safe manner.

Thanks also to those on the exec team that have special delegations issued to them by CAA. Without these guys putting their butts on the line the sport would be quite a bit different. The delegations are quite powerful and the holders effectively become an integral part of CAA. The work they do by issuing a flight certificate or approving a modification relies on a great deal of trust between various parties. CAA trust our delegation holders to do what CAA require of them. Our delegation holders trust members out on the field to do what is required of them.

Overall the sport and RAANZ are healthy. There will be challenges ahead with new players entering the Recreational Aviation environment. With cooperation between all members and a strong club based focus I am confident RAANZ will continue to be a major player in New Zealand Recreational Aviation.

Regards,

Rodger Ward