

RAANZ 2019 OPS REPORT

Rodger Ward

It is my pleasure to present the RAANZ Ops Officer report for 2019

I must first thank my predecessor, Bill Penman, for the superb work he has done over many years, a great deal of which has been done behind the scenes.

I must also thank those of you out in the field who carry on the day to day operational work. Without commitment at a local level nationally we are nothing.

Special thanks must also go to Stuart our Administrator for his tireless work ensuring we are meeting our legal requirements, answering numerous questions and providing a friendly RAANZ face in front of many audiences.

The experience level in our ranks is something we can be very proud of. The last ATO seminar gave totals within that group of 849 years and 97920 hours.

Our instructors are not hour building towards an airline job but have a genuine desire to pass on significant life and aviation experience to future recreational aviators.

The biggest thanks go to our flying members who present themselves very well to the ever watchful eye of the aviation community and the more ever watchful eye of the media.

I am quite proud sitting in front of my radar screen when a colleague says “a Tecnam, what’s that? seems to know what they’re doing”

This year has been tempered by a series of fatal accidents and my condolences go to those affected by these tragic events.

While investigations into these events are continuing one area where I do have a concern is that of circuit procedures and integration of arriving aircraft with those already established in the circuit. It is perhaps time to review how we do things in this area and combine the best from a wide range of alternatives.

We have very soon the 40th anniversary of the tragic Erebus event. A very stark reminder of the reality of our passion and what a close knit group of people we are.

Our relationship with the regulator has been tested at times over the year but it is fair to say we have a good working relationship with them.

A RAANZ team met face to face with CAA in early September to productively discuss areas of mutual interest. From an operational perspective this included clarification that we have no legal ability to issue any endorsements onto a Part 61 Certificate. Parts of our exposition have been amended to reflect this.

I still believe that we have one of the best regulatory frameworks in the world for the operation of our type of aircraft. This framework has been a result of a lot of time and effort by many people. It is a privilege not a right and deserves utmost respect.

Please do not try and cut any corners. Inappropriate actions in one part of the country or by an individual generally will have an adverse flow on effect on us all.

During the year we have set in place an online Instructional Skills programme for new and not so new instructors and commenced work on reviewing our written exam pool and reference material.

We face some challenges ahead.

One is the proliferation of drone activity. I believe there will be a push to have every aircraft fitted with the very latest identification and collision avoidance systems so that Fedex or Uber can “safely” deliver their driverless payloads. This would be akin to banning Model T Fords from the road and is something I am not sure we want.

Another is the effect of technology in eroding basic pilot skills. Boeing and Airbus have now realised the extreme importance of basic pilot skills before introducing wizzy technology.

First and foremost we must be instilling basic skills and airmanship into the present and future aviators.

I am confident that we can face the challenges ahead utilising the fine club based “ let’s look after each other” network we have in place and by being prepared to continually refine our procedures with a view keeping ahead of the game.

Remember we are Recreational aviators and do not need to push any boundaries unnecessarily.

Thank you,
Rodger Ward