

## **2023 RAANZ Operational Report.**

2022/23 has been a period of consolidation operationally for RAANZ after the acquisition of the assets of SAC, the aftermath of Covid protocols and the impact high inflation. Membership has remained relatively static and activity a little subdued at times. However those that have continued to participate have done so generally in an appropriate manner.

We have tragically been reminded of the worst case scenario of our sport with two fatal accidents. Our sympathy and condolences go to all those associated with these events.

We have also had one accident that through good luck resulted in minor injury only rather than two fatalities. While we are thankful of the good luck it in reality must be treated as a fail.

We are also aware that CAA are concerned by some non compliant activity within the GA sector. This includes; Non reporting of aircraft accidents, Removal of damaged aircraft before approval to do so is obtained, Non reading of NOTAM eg landing on runways that are Notamed closed, Use of opposite direction circuit patterns. None of this is acceptable in any manner.

While the operation of all aircraft can produce enjoyment they are all subject to rules and procedures that have been developed over many years generally as a result of adverse events. It is essential that these procedures are adhered to no matter how inconvenient they may appear to be at the time. Disregard for any procedure is a selfish act that may result in restrictions for the vast majority of responsible members.

I am a bit of a stuck record on this but we do have one of the best legislative operating frameworks for our wide range of aircraft anywhere in the world. Lets make sure we respect that framework and are prepared to individually challenge anyone who doesn't.

One of the most important tools we have to ensure standards are trained for and maintained is our pool of Instructors who do an amazing job out on the field and I thank them on your behalf for that. Throughout the year a series, seven in total, of Instructor refresh seminars were held nationwide. The intent was to help all be on the same and right page.

Instructors being on the same page means that the BFR process will firm up. Moving around the airfield or out of town to get an easy check ride will not happen. You are free to move but there will a discussion between the Instructors involved to ensure the easy ride does not happen. Always consider the BFR as an opportunity to learn. Like the Fire engine down the road you may never be called upon to do some of the things you have been trained to do but why take the risk in not keeping up to speed with them.

121 of our pool of Instructors attended the seminars which was a very good capture. A snapshot of our last three seminars gave some amazing figures, ie an average of 32 years and an average of 8500 hours aviation experience. This is an incredible resource of which any organisation should be justifiably proud of.

We are fortunate to have the support of CAA during these seminars. Each Instructor is to be issued a copy of the new CAA Flight Instructor Guide which is being heavily subsidised by CAA and we certainly thank them for that.

During these seminars we discussed the accident and incident data that has been collected over many years. A significant factor emerged. An accident does not take into account how experienced you are but it does take significant account of how current you are. Accidents can bite extremely hard on those that are not really current.

Real currency depends on a myriad of factors not just the legal minimums. Real currency amongst other things means ensuring the Take Off Checks or Drills of Vital Action are done completely, methodically, uninterrupted, competently and with a plan of action in mind if the engine goes quiet shortly after airborne. There is no excuse for taking off with the fuel selected off.

We all must be brutally honest of our real currency, not what we used to be like a while ago but what we are like now, today.

Before we get anywhere near an aircraft we must ask ourselves “ am I really current to do what I am planning to do today”. This applies to everyone no matter your station in life or years or lack of on the planet. Please ask yourself that question each time before you get near the aircraft and be prepared to downsize the flight if you are remotely unsure. I’m quite sure, and the data confirms, that if that question had been asked numerous accidents would not have occurred.

This assessment needs to be instilled from lesson two in basic training. To assist with this a new series of Instructor seminars will be conducted starting early next year that will focus on all the early basic lessons that are the fundamental building blocks of our aviation career.

Also to assist with building a very good aviation foundation our exam system is in the process of change. Considerable work has been done in upgrading our material and exam process and I thank Rainer for the significant work that he has done in bringing the process up to best practice.

The operation of our organisation needs to be healthy. For this to happen we need honesty. We need to be able to freely put our hand up without hesitation if we see dumb stuff happening or if we have a question we don’t know the answer to.

It is too late at the Coroner’s inquest to say you thought something was not right.

We need a healthy system and I’m sure we can achieve that.

Regards,

Rodger Ward

RAANZ Ops.