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RAANZ Operations Report 2021/2022

It is my pleasure to present the Operations Report for the 2021/2022 period.

I would like to thank all our recreational aviators who have participated in the sport over the past year in whatever capacity and presented a fine face to the rest of the aviation community. Without active participation by many dedicated aviators we would have nothing.

I have said this many times but we still do have the best legislative operating framework for our type of aircraft anywhere in the world. It is a framework that has taken many years to develop and will always be in a state of change as we encounter new aircraft, new technology and new people in our environment.

Our operating framework is a privilege, not a right and must always be treated with immense respect.

Over the past year we have avoided the worst case scenario, accident wise, but have had some occurrences that avoided serious injury or worse by good luck. While we will take the good luck if it is offered in my book achieving by good luck is a non achievement. There is only so much good luck in the tank and one day it will be empty.

It is essential that we have a true picture of how healthy our sport is. In this regard it is vital that all Accidents and incidences are reported. This way we are able to identify trends and act before the worst case scenario occurs. Not reporting is a selfish act. Your lucky escape today could well be fatal for the next person in the same situation.

Recently members of the RAANZ Executive held a face to face meeting in Wellington with the new Director of Civil Aviation and those responsible for monitoring our sport. It was refreshing and we left in a positive mood with the view that the Director did listen to our views.

One of the items discussed was the sharing of information such as accident data. We have had occasions in the past where Accident details involving Microlights were not passed onto us leaving us with the false view where we thought things were ok. The sharing of information will now be the subject of a working group which will ultimately allow us to operate in a more proactive manner.

Any very serious accident will be the culmination of many smaller events quite often over a long period of time. Only by having an open and honest reporting culture are we able to stop the serious event from happening.

As a result of previous accidents we have introduced a few more checks in the processing of new instructor applications. This involves a temporary measure of gathering a little more paperwork before the Certificate is issued.

Another area of concern over the past year has been the presentation of data by some applicants that is not correct. This has also introduced another few steps in the processing of Certificates from people who are new to our organisation and who are claiming other aviation experience. This also will result gathering some additional information before processing a Fit and Proper person application.

It essential that any new entrant into the aviation community has the ability to promote a positive image of the sport. Sometimes there is a rush to sign up a new member or student and this must be tempered to some degree.

We have had a good working relationship with CAA over the past year with assistance been given by RAANZ into the investigation of some Microlight occurrences. It is satisfying for the organisation to have the respect of the regulator to perform this task.

Some incidents have had lack of currency or a rush to complete a task as factor. It is essential that all are brutally honest with their skill and or currency levels. Remember generally we are single pilot operators and as such you are it with no one to help when the heat comes on. Do what you can to control the heat. This may mean grabbing an Instructor for some revision or saying no to your mates when they are off to some whizzy strip out in the back of beyond.

More focus for pilot training will be the acquisition and maintenance of very basic skills. Yes the new technology appears to be very clever but we do have to have complete confidence in our ability to operate the aircraft with the clever stuff not working. It is an old fashioned thing called Airmanship. This is the overarching skill that is the sum total of many skills and should be treated with immense respect.

I wish you all well and safe flying for the next year.

Regards,
Rodger Ward.
RAANZ Operations.