

RAANZ Ops report 2014.

This year has seen some new additions to the RAANZ executive which has given some renewed stimulation and energy to review how we can improve our membership and the benefits for all. We have met with the new echelon of CAA and our relationship continues to flourish with maybe some future positives.

It has been reiterated before but is always worth mentioning again that in a voluntary organisation like ours it is often not really understood the effort that our instructors and ATOs put into making the success microlighting is today. This year there have been a number of new aviation savvy instructors indoctrinated into the RAANZ umbrella as the realisation that our industry is continuing to grow. The benefits these people bring will assist markedly with the continuing advent of new aircraft types being introduced into NZ. We have to be more conscious that these new aircraft require upgraded skills to operate and navigate safely throughout the country. It is often a big step up from what some may be used to flying. We have to be ever mindful that the aircraft we fly are still very light aircraft with high drag low inertia characteristics often now with high power to weight ratios as well.

The running of RAANZ does have its unsavoury moments when dealing with unfortunate accidents and the subsequent authority's recommendations and outcomes. Often these occurrences should not have eventuated and could have been easily prevented. Unfortunately it seems that human nature is such that even though there are numerous accounts of others experiences, it is often not until a situation is experienced first-hand that a pilot becomes experienced, and that may be too late. How often have we seen and individual do something that is outside everyone's comfort zone and nothing is done about it? Had we done something maybe we could have prevented a disaster. We do not have to be policemen to ensure the integrity and enjoyment of our fantastic pastime and sport.

Better late than never but we have kicked off our North Island road shows. Waipukurau and Wanganui venues were well attended and the two way feedback was positive and very encouraging. Look out for early December venues in Matamata, Whangarei and Parakai.

This year the RAANZ national fly-in was held at Feilding combined with the Manawatu Clubs' 30th anniversary. We certainly have come a long way since the early 80s when it all started. The Met gods allowed all to have an amazing well timed break in the recent bad weather that saw a great mix of aircraft arrive from all over NZ. All the competitions and exercises went off well with great airmanship shown by all. The camaraderie and enthusiasm in attendance was a great highlight.

A number of clubs throughout the country are encouraging young enthusiastic 'wannabe' pilots into having 'a go'. This is fantastic as the aviation industry is often an expensive hobby and as we all know that microlighting is so much more affordable and a great amount of fun. Keep it up.

Fly safe

Bill Penman