

RAANZ President's Report 2015/16

It is again my pleasure to present the Annual Presidents report.

The year has seen a growth in affordable and practical recreational aviation. New light aircraft appear to be arriving at a steady rate and being made available to an increasing number of aviators. These aviators are quite a mix. Many are new to the sport but quite a few are ex GA who have been out of the scene for a while. We are also seeing quite a few younger members which is encouraging for the future of our sport.

RAANZ membership has increased from 578 at the beginning of the year to today's total of 656. We are obviously doing something right. I firmly believe the club based structure of RAANZ is the ideal platform to oversee the sport. Monitoring activity at a local level certainly reduces the need for national executive intervention or intervention by the regulator.

The past year has been devoid of serious incidents. This is something we all can be proud of. Having said that we cannot afford to relax or take our finger off the trigger. Aviation is extremely unforgiving to any acts of carelessness. We may be operating aircraft in the lighter end of the spectrum but they are still aircraft and subject to the same laws of physics as any other aircraft.

Thanks again to all those out in the field who have instructed, inspected, administrated and mentored. Without the support of you people out at the airfields giving your time our sport would not be where it is today. The local club is the entry point for new people into the aviation environment. It is quite important that people entering this door are made aware of their obligations, are aware of the rules and are suitable for entry.

We do have one of the best Recreational Aviation regulatory frameworks in the world. Our aim is to keep the rules as simple and straightforward as possible and this does rely on local action to nip things in the bud before they become bigger problems.

We continue to have a good working relationship with the regulator and are in continual contact to ensure your operations are carried out in a safe and affordable manner.

Our fleet is quickly morphing and merging into something that on the surface appears to be very conventional. The original rag and tube aircraft are becoming less but quite a few are being kept alive and lovingly flown on those really nice days. These aircraft are becoming somewhat a special field with limited numbers of the membership having any expertise in them. I certainly encourage the restoration and preservation of this type. I would also advise anyone wishing to hop into this type to tread very slowly and seek as much advice and conversion training as they can get.

The National Flyin was held in Hokitika. I have said before that I am always amazed the way locals band together to make these events special. Hokitika was quite special for lots of reasons. The weather window was great with the tranz alpine high level point to point being done with zero wind both ways. Thanks to Ray, Drew and the team for all their work. A quick analysis of the participants showed an incredible number of flight hours and years of aviation experience. We do have an extreme wealth of experience within our organisation

Next years event is planned for Rangiora 31 March to 2 April and I would encourage as many as possible to attend.

I would like to thank the executive for all their work and active participation throughout the year. Again those with delegation from CAA deserve a special mention. Without them putting their credentials on the line on your behalf our sport would not be where it is today.

We have dedicated a lot of time over the years to ensure our procedures are as simple as possible ensuring compliance and facilitating safe and affordable operations. It is essential all participants are aware of our requirements and do not attempt to take any shortcuts. If you are not sure about any procedure do not be afraid to put your hand up and seek advice. We do need feedback on how our systems are working.

Looking ahead I foresee recreational aviation continuing its growth phase for some time. This will require all participants to continue to act in a responsible manner.

It is certainly our intention to keep participation costs to a minimum. The club based structure of RAANZ is an excellent way to do this but does rely on the ready donation of time and skills by the membership.

Rodger Ward.