CEO Report

RAANZ AGM2026

Recreational Aircraft Association of NZ

Introduction

It has been a busy and productive year for the Recreational Aircraft Association of NZ. This report covers the main achievements of the year, the progress we have made on safety, and the priorities ahead.

ATO Seminar

The highlight of the year was the ATO seminar, held in October. Around 35 ATOs attended, and the feedback we received was extremely positive.

The programme covered the full breadth of our sector, from first generation microlights through to training in the new generation of high performance machines. Some of the most valuable exchanges happened outside the formal sessions, in the breaks and over the evening, where ATOs shared experience and worked through common challenges with each other.

The strength of attendance and the quality of discussion show how much the sector values coming together, and we intend to build on this momentum. We will build on this with more workshops for Instructors in the coming year.

Safety and Accident/Incident Reporting

I am pleased to report that reporting in our Accident/Incident system has increased over the past year. A healthy reporting culture is the foundation of a safer recreational aviation community, because we can only learn from and act on what we know about. There is still room to improve, and I encourage all members to report occurrences and near misses, however minor they may seem.

Part 149

I would like to thank the Part 149 team for their work throughout the year. In particular, I thank Stan Hyde for taking up the Audit role.

Regulatory Engagement

During the year, the CAA's Director and Deputy Director met with our President and Operations Officer to gain a better understanding of our sector. Meetings like this help the regulator see how recreational aviation works in practice, and they give us a chance to explain what our members need. I thank Russell and Rodger for representing the Association so well.

We continue to meet directly with the regulator and Sport and Recreational forums in Wellington. These occur about 4 times a year, and are a useful time to engage with CAA and other Recreational Organisations.

Membership

Membership has held steady this year. While stability is welcome, it is not a long-term strategy. The future of recreational aviation in New Zealand depends on attracting new people to the sport, and in

particular younger people. Growing the sport and bringing in the next generation needs to be a priority for RAANZ and for all of us who love flying.

Finances

The Association's finances are in a good state. Full detail is in the Treasurer's report.

Looking Ahead: Strengthening Recreational Aviation

With membership static and the sport needing fresh energy, I believe it is time to consider how the recreational aviation organisations in New Zealand can work more closely together, including through some consolidation. A smaller number of stronger organisations could share resources, reduce duplication, give members a clearer voice, and put more effort into growing participation, particularly among younger people.

Thanks

My thanks to the Committee, our volunteers, and above all our members for their continued support.

Outlook

Looking ahead, my priorities for the coming year are to affect some rules changes while we wait for the Rules Update Programme to catch up to Part 103/149

Scott James

Chief Executive Officer

Recreational Aircraft Association of NZ