Recreational Aircraft Association of New Zealand (Inc)

RAANZ AGM 2026

OPERATIONS REPORT

It is my pleasure to present the Ops Report for AGM 2026.

First up my thanks go to all those recreational aviators out in the field enjoying the sport and also to the many Instructors who have done a fine job.

Thanks also must go to our Administrator, Stuart, who has done a superb dealing with the continuous stream of paperwork, emails and phone calls ensuring that we remain compliant.

Also in the loop is the RAANZ Executive whose support and guidance has helped very much throughout the year.

We do have one of if not the best framework in the world for operating recreational aircraft. We are recreational aviators and not on a war footing and must not put ourselves under any pressure to ‘ get the job done ‘

An essential part of our operation is honesty. We must put our hand up whenever something out of the ordinary occurs. Our Online reporting system gets regular reports and I thank those that have put pen to paper or fingers to keyboard. If we do not get reports we are unable to identify trends and institute the education strategies that are necessary to stop the big events happening. Not reporting is effectively a selfish act and the sport would suffer in the long run.

From the Data we have received over a period of time we have identified several focus areas.

- **Startle.** This is where a unusual event has had a very negative effect on the pilot and led them to act very quickly, quite often incorrectly, or led them to become frozen at the wheel. Either way an aircraft will take you very quickly to the scene of the accident if it is allowed to, quite often with negative consequences. The Startle effect can be reduced through proper and complete planning eg the personal preflight before flying, IMSAFER, and complete, methodical and unrushed pre Take Off checks. The Take Off Checklist must always conclude with an Emergency briefing or reminder of what you will do if something adverse occurs during the Take Off.
- **Task Fixation.** This is where the pilot is totally fixated on one task to the point where they ignore good information coming in.
- **Go Arounds.** There have several occurrences where for some reason the Go Around has not been commenced or commenced late resulting in Aircraft damage. There is is no shame in Going Around. If you are remotely unsure about anything close to the ground Go Around and do it early.
- **Circuit Integration.** Before you integrate with the circuit you must have a complete picture of what is happening. Look and Listen. ADSB can be a useful aid but must not be relied upon. Remember that traffic established in the circuit have priority but are still required to lookout and do what they need to avoid a collision.

- **Modern Technology.** Yes there is some fairly fancy equipment out there but whatever you are using you must have a complete and competent understanding of how it works. More importantly is being competent of what to do if the fancy stuff does not work.

There will be a very strong focus in upcoming BFRs and Flight Tests on all the above.

A major event for our ATO group was a recent two day gathering in Christchurch. We had 34 attendees with very good interaction and discussion around topical issues.

The ATO group has an average of over 9000 hours / 48 years of aviation experience. There are not many aviation groups that can claim that. We are very fortunate.

However it was noticed that there was a significant amount of grey hair in the room. A big challenge for RAANZ is to ensure that there is flow on of new blood. Without this flow through the organisation could be poorly placed in the not too distant future.

The future of recreational aviation in NZ could well pose some questions for RAANZ. Whilst Part 103 and Part 149 look stable in the short to medium term we must ensure that we are keeping up with the game. We must always be proactive, ie looking ahead and acting before there is an adverse event rather than reacting to the adverse event. A lot of what we do looks like same old same old but rest assured it is not. There is always continuous albeit sometimes incremental upskilling occurring.

Safe recreational flying,

Rodger Ward