



Presidents Report 2024

Being President of an association provides you with an interesting overview of an organisation.

The RAANZ organisation is one with members passionate about aviation of all types but microlights in particular. Even more specifically, the individual's own aircraft of choice.

I have had the opportunity to meet a number of people from around the country and without fail, in almost every encounter, there is debate between individuals on why (or why not) the performance of their 'flying machine' is to be admired. If pilots have the same aircraft – for some reason, there is still a need to review the tiny details of why one machine is better than the other. If there is a lull in a conversation - stories about flying or planes will always stir debate, which is always entertaining. I hope that some of the more outlandish stories have been embellished for effect, but I suspect and am somewhat fearful, they have not been embellished at all - even though the pilot has lived to tell the tale.

This year I have moved from Rangiora to Hokitika. On a good day the Coast is stunning and there is great flying to be had. The move has also given me an appreciation of being part of a club that is smaller with a lot less resources than Rangiora. It great to be part of a club that meet weekly to have a couple of social drinks and talk about their planes and flying.

This year Hokitika was the club that hosted the RAANZ fly-in. For those of you that came to the fly-in it was clear that everyone has a good time. Lots of flying talk – lots of stories shared.

One of the tasks of being President is to award the RAANZ Memorial Cup. Usually, the cup goes to the overall winner of the various flying competitions but this year it went to the Hokitika Club member who was recognised by the club as an outstanding contributor. That was Drew Howat. Sadly, shortly after Drew received the cup he passed away. I hear Drew's name mentioned often in the club house – usually recognising him as the person who would have done a specific task needed. I therefore would like to acknowledge all those members around the country that have passed on this year who will be missed for their contributions and companionship.

Flying is the common ground between the members of this organisation and RAANZ's objective is to continue to support all the membership to protect the individual's right to fly safely and affordably.

I have great respect for the committee I have worked with this year as I have watched the team respond to situations where incidents have involved people they know well, or we have lost members of our community in tragic circumstances. Regardless of whether the people were known or not, I am very aware that both investigating the circumstances and responding to the CAA , always with the aim of ensuring the best for members, takes a significant toll.

The driving force for the RAANZ committee is to raise the bar in terms of safety, training and representation for the Microlighting community. Like all committees, at times, we do not all agree – but fundamentally the reason for the disagreement is to protect the membership and make RAANZ a more robust organisation.

I would like to thank all of the members of the committee for their 100's of voluntary hours of work this year. In particular, I would like to thank Rainer for the time he has been a committee member – I hope he continues to support RAANZ in his Training role as he has without doubt brought the training programme into the 21st Century. Bill who graciously came back as an official in RAANZs to support the required Audit function. Colin, as Technical Officer has been the backbone of support for the organisation as he challenges CAA to ensure they do not overstep their statutory function.

For me, it has felt that we have made some gains in the way we carry out our business and I know we have a long list of improvements going forward.

On that note I would like to hand over to Scott for the CEO Report.

