

RAANZ Operational Report 2025

It is my pleasure to provide the RAANZ Operational report 2025.

First as always is my thanks to those Instructors out in the field who do an amazing job of training, mentoring and reviewing the performance of our many keen recreational aviators. This group set the example that we expect from all our pilots. Without this group of dedicated volunteers our organisation would have little value.

The overall experience level both in hours flown and years in the aviation business of our Instructor base is something we can be justifiably be very proud of.

Many thanks also to the members who are enjoying and promoting the sport. Some actively transiting up and down the country, others just going round the circuit plus a little bit on those great days. All are valuable members and add to the organisation in their own way.

The range of aircraft we can operate is simply amazing and it is a privilege to be able to do so. All have their own idiosyncrasies that must be mastered and competency maintained. Some are more complex than others but all are quite capable inflicting significant damage if not respected.

This range of aircraft will become more diverse in the coming years with personal e VTOL aircraft on the horizon and the ever increasing performance of Plastic Fantastics. It will be a challenge to cater for the expanded range but I am confident we have the experience within our group to do so competently.

Please do not forget the number one rule in aviation. **Fly the Aircraft.** There have been numerous accidents over the years where a serviceable aircraft has basically flown itself to the scene of the accident while the pilot has been preoccupied dealing with a matter that was perceived to be more important than maintaining control of the aircraft. Gravity will always win if you give it a chance. We must ensure that when we make contact with the hard stuff at the conclusion of our flight it is done in a manner and at a place of our choice.

During the year there have been some incidents where serious damage has been averted by good luck alone. While we accept the good luck it is in effect a 'Fail'. An area of concern has been the integration into the circuit of joining aircraft conflicting with aircraft established in the downwind leg. Situational awareness is critical especially with the integration process and will be a focus during upcoming BFRs .

It is vitally important to remember that we are recreational aviators and not on a war footing. Take offs are optional, landings are not. If we do head towards the Airfield with the intention to fly or even work on critical parts of our aircraft we must preflight ourselves. The **IMSAFE** checklist must be completed with brutal honesty and must include an **R** at the end. This is for **Recency** ie how current am I really for what I intend to do today. The accident files are full of examples where if this question had been answered honestly the event probably would not have occurred.

Any Take Off checklist must be done methodically, completely, unhurried and always conclude with **E. Emergencies or Eventualities.** ie What is our plan if something significant occurs shortly after take off. Being startled by something you could have prepared for can certainly reduce your effectiveness in dealing with it.

To continue to operate effectively one must keep up to speed on procedures and aircraft operating parameters. To help this revision process a series of questions has been formulated that will need to be completed before every BFR. This is an open book exercise effectively replicating the steps you

would go through when you are preparing for a cross country flight. Please treat this as a valuable learning or refresh opportunity.

Our CAA Part 149 Operating certificate went through it's 5 yearly renewal during the year. This involved considerable liaison with the Civil Aviation Authority. The renewal also involved significant time and effort within the Executive, reviewing and re writing our Exposition. There have been quite a few changes in the document and everyone will need to have good knowledge of it.

Most will have noticed that the document mirrors procedures that apply to Part 61 , ie PPL. This has come about because of the fact that the light aircraft fleet has become very similar and procedures must be very much the same. Just take a look at the flightline of most clubs and you will notice very few aircraft looking like the classic definition of a Microlight.

It is also essential that record keeping is maintained legibly in the prescribed manner. Recent Audit action has highlighted that is not being done completely by some. The records you keep may end up in court one day. If you have any questions about what applies to you please ask. There are no dumb questions and it could well eliminate unnecessary work and angst later.

I must thank our Administrator, Stuart, for the tireless work that is done, quite often in the background, ensuring compliance is maintained and participants kept happy. Filing of complete and legible documentation certainly reduces the workload.

Regards,

Rodger Ward.

RAANZ Ops.