

GLIDING NEW ZEALAND NEWS

This column is intended to give readers an ongoing insight into the activities of the GNZ Executive and its Committees. Rather than a detailed report on matters currently under consideration, here are some recent items of significance.

NEW WEB SITE George Wills of Media Suite has done a magnificent job on our new web site, now live for all to share. There are some great new features, such as the ability for you to securely update your membership details yourself and post classified ads directly. Clubs can add their own news and update their contacts etc.

Much of the available information has been imported from our old site and over the coming months we will be updating it as necessary. Meanwhile, George would love to have more photographs from clubs – you can send these to him at george@mediasuite.co.nz

MOAP AMENDMENT The GNZ Manual of Approved Procedures has been amended with effect 23 August 2008. In addition to the routine updates to personnel, CAA rule references etc, the airworthiness section has been extensively revised; there are changes to the selection process for international representatives; C cat instructor privileges are clarified; provision is made to accept microlight and commercial driver medicals; and medical validity periods for instructor and passenger ratings have been extended to align with CAR 67 (now 5 years if you're under 40 and 2 years if older).

Members will also be pleased to learn that the previous user-unfriendly page numbering system has gone and you can now navigate your way around the MOAP by ordinary page numbers.

This new version of the MOAP can be downloaded from the GNZ web site, along with a detailed list of the changes. A hard copy has been mailed to every club president and CFI, plus GNZ committee members and officers. Further hard copies can be ordered from John Roake.

MAINTENANCE OF 0800 GLIDING If you need to change your club's terminating contact number(s) for the 0800 GLIDING free-phone, please contact me.

AIRSPACE POLICY At a meeting with CAA senior managers in late August, the GNZ Executive told CAA that we had great difficulty in understanding why CAA had acceded to the Airways request for much greater airspace in the Bay Sector. No rational case for it had been advanced by Airways, and GNZ's strong objections had fallen on deaf ears. Airspace is a national resource and it appears that a lack of high level policy regarding its designation is part of the problem. Other national resources are well covered by government policy, but airspace is not.

The Director acknowledged that there is a lack of strategic direction regarding airspace and the CAA has taken steps to address this, with the acquisition of specific new government funding for the establishment of an airspace and environmental unit, with one of its objectives being to develop an Air Traffic Management Plan for New Zealand. Development of the plan will involve extensive consultation with stakeholders – so watch this space.

PETITIONS FOR CAA RULE CHANGES At the aforementioned meeting with CAA, we stirred a few other issues that have been bubbling away behind the scenes mostly unbeknown to members. One of these is the CPL(G), where we are pushing CAA to honour a long standing formal agreement to accept the FAI Gold C as crediting the CPL(G) flight test in addition to the written exam credits already allowed. But a recent change to the ICAO standard has given us hope that we might see the abolition of both the CPL(G) and PPL(G) in favour of just a GPL. The ICAO GPL flying experience requirements are quite basic, and the licence requires only a Class 2 medical yet allows pilots to fly gliders commercially. In the light of this we have formally petitioned CAA to abolish the CPL(G) and to re-designate the PPL(G) as simply GPL with privileges extended to allow the holder to act as pilot-in-command of a glider for hire and reward.

In addition to all that, we are ever hopeful of a rule change to allow CAR Part 149 instructors to be remunerated – CAA is still promising this, as it has for about seven years now, so we are upping the pressure for action.

Another formal petition we have made to CAA relates to glider towing with the new Recreational Pilot Licence (RPL). We originally supported the RPL proposals except for the bit about RPL holders not being allowed to tow gliders. We said it was not appropriate to limit the RPL privileges to exclude glider towing because the consequences of medical incapacitation would be less significant than in situations where an RPL holder is carrying a passenger, which is allowed. There is also an anomaly

in that a Part 149 microlight pilot certificate holder can qualify for glider towing with a suitable microlight. CAA acknowledged the validity of our position and invited us to formally petition for a rule change, which we have since done. Again, watch this space!

DOC CONSERVATION PARKS While on matters bureaucratic, I should mention that recent proposals by the Department of Conservation to establish conservation parks have given the Executive cause for concern about access for glider retrieves from park out-landings, both by vehicle and aero-tow. The two conservation park proposals that sparked our concern are "Hawea", which includes part of the Hunter River flats; and "Oteake", which includes some landable terrain near Falls Dam at the foot of the Hawkdun Range. There are other proposals and some parks already exist. Fortunately, park terrain by its very nature is generally unsuitable for out-landing so we don't envisage a huge problem. Nevertheless, we have written to DOC in general terms, seeking to ensure that retrieve access is not inhibited.

LAUNCH ACTIVITY DOWN A BIT With only 11,687 launches from January to June this year, we are down 18% on the same period last year. However, the first half last year was the best we've had for a long time, so this may not be a fair comparison. This year's first half is actually only 3% down on the average for the previous five years. Roll on spring and a better second half year!

Max Stevens GNZ Executive Officer