

GNZ News September 2016

Flying matters. Firstly, congratulations to Terry Delore whose newest world record has just been confirmed. This is for a 15 metre glider over a 500 kilometre triangle, at 185.10 km/hr. That's fast flying!

New Zealand was represented at the World Club Class Champs in Lithuania by Nicholas Oakley and Alex McCaw. The weather sounds to have been untypical, and Alex in particular had lots of local experience in the Lithuanian paddocks. We are pleased that they came through incident free, especially after two other pilots landed more awkwardly, one in a lake and the other on the roof of a house. Well done to both of the team and all of their helpers for being good representatives.

The team for Benalla in January 2017 is looking pretty organised now, and team leader Julian Elder has matters under control. The full team is Brett Hunter, Mark Tingey, John Coutts, Tim Bromhead, Alan Belworthy and Steve Wallace, covering Open, 18m and 15m classes. You will be able to follow progress on GNZ's Facebook site easily, and the daily results will be on the international website 'Soaring Spot'. You can expect some good video coverage too.

Many of the team are competing in Queensland this spring, where they can also support Steve Foreman who is representing us in the Tasman Trophy.

AGM events. The AGM was pretty amazing this year. We wanted more than 'same old', so jiggled things around and the tone was pretty positive, with some amazing presentations. If you weren't there, please consider coming next year. This is not just where dry decisions are made and jobs are handed out – this is also about the future of YOUR sport. Also, there is some great socialising!

Speaking of decisions, two were of note. The funding change of introducing a glider fee passed quite overwhelmingly after a long discussion. One consequence has been greater analysis of the CAA database, and we have found that nearly 10% of gliders are owned by people who are no longer members of a GNZ club – and who therefore are not reading this article. We are keen to get these gliders flying again, either with their current owners, or passed onto other members. Some 'retired' owners have taken the challenge and sold their gliders at a good price to juniors, which is good for the juniors, the gliders and the sport.

The Youth Glide people also restructured their funding to support all Juniors under 26, not just those under 19, and this has freed the rules on clubs so that you can support the Juniors in your own way without restrictions from us. For me, this is the year of the Juniors, so please get behind them in your clubs.

The premier awards given at the AGM are the Friendship Cup, and the Angus Rose Bowl. This year the Friendship Cup was awarded to Grae Harrison for his significant efforts towards the formation of the Greytown Soaring Centre and the Wellington Gliding Club's move to Greytown. The Angus Rose Bowl was awarded to Martyn Cook for outstanding effort over many years in areas as diverse as the GNZ engineer system, teaching cross country soaring, the training syllabus and the innovative design of the new hangar at Greytown. Congratulations to you both.

Coaching is here. The latest updates to the Manual of Approved Procedures (MOAP, see the GNZ website) include the introduction of the coaching programme. This is part of the Executive's goal to encourage cross-country flying to further the aim of retaining members in this sport for longer. We are pleased to advise that G Dale is the new national coach for New Zealand, and he will be putting together the coaching manual this spring. The next step is the training of coaches and the appointment of Regional Head Coaches this summer. There will be coaching courses held at Matamata, Greytown and Springfield in November, December and March respectively, where the concept will be more clearly explained and training on how to coach will be given. If you are interested or want to find out more, please contact Steve Wallace or G Dale (contacts on the GNZ website).

'Voice of the Participant' survey. Another step towards improving the marketing of gliding to prospective members will occur in March 2017. We are joining with Sport NZ on a professional survey of all our current members. We don't know what it is that we don't know, so this is a chance to find out what's really happening at club levels. Brian Sharpe our voluntary publicity person is leading this exercise, and we understand that the survey will be in the form of an email with a link. It would help if all members ensured that their email addresses were correct in the GNZ database, so please could club officials updating the database in the next couple of months check this detail too.

Jobs. We are still looking for one or two people to take charge of the content of the webpage and facebook page. Our webmaster Tim Bromhead is looking after the IT side of things and has some great innovations underway, but he can't do that and find the content as well. If you are tech savvy or get out gliding a lot, please contact Tim at info@gliding.co.nz to find out about the jobs.

Next, three changes have come from our mates at CAA.

Weak-links for aero tow ropes have been sorted out. In July, CAA granted an exemption to Part 91 that has the practical effect of allowing a 300 kg weak-link. This is important for microlight tugs, where their low mass puts them at risk when using the traditionally much stronger weak-links. A 300kg weak-link is commonly used in Europe.

We are leading the world in getting this issue sorted out, but we rely on your guys at the clubs to put this correctly into effect. Check out GNZ AC 3-02 Aero Tow Ropes for full details – this is a chance to check that your tow ropes conform. It is not OK to have a rope without a weak link.

Ageing tow pilots can now carry on **towing with a Recreational Pilots Licence (RPL)**. A change to CAR Part 61 in April means that our older tow pilots, who in many cases have given years of service to their clubs but are finding it too expensive or difficult to maintain their Class 2 medicals, can now drop to an RPL and still tow gliders. Again this is something that we have worked on for a long time, so it's more good news.

New rules for glider aerobatics. For the past 20 years the CAA's one-size-fits-all rules for aerobatics have not been practical for gliders. GNZ has been trying for years to get this fixed – and we've finally succeeded just last month, with CAA granting exemptions to Parts 61 and 91 that allow reduced height limits for aerobatics in gliders. There are of course strings attached! *Existing holders of aerobatic ratings and also aerobatic instructors must get their ratings converted to the new system before they can enjoy the new privileges – you have*

until 30 June 2018 to do this. Full details are contained in GNZ AC 2-06 Aerobatic Flight in Gliders dated July 2016, so have a look on our website and get your ratings in place.

The new lower height limits will avoid the need for those expensive high tows, so training and currency should be facilitated. Thanks to Southern ROO Graham Erikson for pushing this, and all his hard work helping to make it happen. Graham and Arthur Gatland have collaborated in combining and updating their respective aerobatic course notes, and Graham has already run an instructors ground course at Canterbury. Hopefully, we should see a revival of interest in glider aerobatics.

Now, some thoughts on safety. With the new season upon us, now is the time to reflect on your personal arrangements for flight following. Carrying a SPOT tracker or similar linked to tracking.gliding.co.nz is highly recommended, wherever you fly, but especially if you regularly fly in remote areas or mountainous terrain. Please make sure that your tracking subscription is up to date, and your tracker actually works on the tracking site! Don't risk other people's lives to find you.

Emergency plans. Has your club got one, and is it up to date? Take a look at GNZ AC 1-05. The search & rescue bits have recently been updated in the light of last summer's experience.

Currency – take a check flight if you have hibernated this winter, and don't fly cross-country until you are sure that your glider/trailer/parachute/mental preparedness for anything are OK. Be careful.

We are working on the impact that the new **Health and Safety** legislation may have on our sport and how you operate at your club, and we will release some supportive resources to you as soon as they are ready.

Finally, is your club ready to receive visitors, including **prospective members**? Are you going to offer the sort of experience that makes any stranger coming to your site want to join you? Have you got helpful signs to tell them where to drive/park/walk? Are you (all) friendly? Have you got adequate facilities? Have your parachutes been repacked this winter? Do you have safe gliding equipment suitable for all sizes of visitors?

Recently I have been to some clubs here and in a couple of other countries, and no club is perfect all of the time. My personal difficulty is finding sufficient ballast and safe cushioning to make it possible for smaller/younger people to fly safely in club gliders. If your club is one where members hunt around the caravan or hangar and find some lovely soft cushions, please chuck all of these out this spring and invest in a good range of high density foam pads. The risks to smaller pilots of soft cushioning was well known twenty years ago (cushions squash back and leave pilots unable to release or control the aircraft, and they increase the chance of injuries in a heavy landing). If you don't have ballast weights for your training aircraft, see your engineers.

Have a great time gliding this season!

Karen Morgan
GNZ President