

President's Report – May 2026

This year has seen a number of major issues resurface, and some be resolved. We continue to show positive operating financial results despite the reduction in membership fees last year, predominantly through a combination of tight operating cost management, and a positive return from interest bearing cash deposits.

The issues we have managed;

- Successful resolution of the formal 2023 bullying complaint from the then MAAA Safety officer against the MAAA Vice President. This was closed out just prior to the conference last year with no legal spend or cost to the organisation
- The continued costs and administration of the SSME public liability claim in 2022 following the rejection of the claim by the then insurer. The MAAA Vice President has been working on an application since last year to AFCA (Australian Financial Complaints Authority) to challenge the technical rejection of the claim by the insurer. At present, that application has not been reviewed or lodged, so the outcome is unknown. The Council authorised a provision of approx. \$90,000 to cover the loss in last year's financials, however at this time, the cash has not been paid to SSME. It appears SSME are undergoing a period of leadership change as they transition to their new facility, however I would expect this matter should close out in the coming financial year. I have had some preliminary discussions with our Insurance Broker who has offered to contribute financially to offset this cost if in fact the MAAA is ultimately required to make the payment to SSME.
- Council approved the abandonment of the Membership Jungle project that commenced in 2022, with a cost to members of approx. \$85,000. This project has been covered many times in previous correspondence, however it is sad to see both the financial cost to the organisation, as well as the loss of many hours of volunteer time to progress the project.
- The continued issue with the previous Federal Secretary and the circumstances surrounding the cessation of his employment with the MAAA in 2021. This is being managed with the hope of preventing a claim for Constructive Dismissal or Termination of his employment at the time, or any other claim. This matter is now well in the past and it is my hope to have it finally resolved this coming calendar year.

On a more positive front, we continue to engage with CASA at both the operational level, and at senior leadership. We remain in close contact on matters relevant to recreational aeromodelling, and upcoming legislative agendas that may have associated impacts on our members.

It is very pleasing to see the organic growth in membership numbers. Whilst there has been much discussion over many years on the silver bullet to address our historically declining membership, it remains pretty clear that membership retention is a big issue, and the majority of that initiative is up to the club environment. Marketing will always be an important part of membership attraction, however it is critical that retention strategies are implemented at clubs to hold onto and motivate new members to continue with the hobby / sport.

I would also like to acknowledge the various members of the association who have performed on the world stage at international competition. We now have a number of World Champions in our membership – something we should be very proud of.

This year, our current Vice President Michael Hobson has not renominated. I'd like to acknowledge his contribution to the administration of the Association during his 5 year tenure on the MAAA Executive.

Carl Bizon

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