



## **PRESIDENT REPORT 2019 – 2020**

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The 2019 -2020 year has been very busy and the Executive have continually worked to provide an organisation which serves its members through the provision of funds, support for major events, promotions, benefits relating to flying freedom and securing flying sites for the future.

The 2019 Council conference saw the introduction of an Executive Council comprising of the Ordinary member Presidents. This initiative was introduced to provide an avenue whereby council decisions could be reviewed and amended if necessary. The Executive Council met on the 7<sup>th</sup> of December 2019 to review the action and projects emanating from the 2019 Conference. The audited financial statements and auditors report were also tabled and accepted. In my view, this conference format was extremely successful; much was achieved and may be the way the MAAA should be managed in the future.

A review of all MOP's is currently underway however this is proving to be more time consuming and difficult than first anticipated. The work is continuing slowly and will be completed when time permits, bearing in mind, the members completing the review are doing so on a voluntary basis.

The MAAA allocated \$50,000 to Club Assistance during the period and nine clubs were successful in receiving funding. This initiative provides an opportunity for the MAAA to support clubs and assist aeromodelling at the grass roots. When originally implemented, council expected the scheme to receive three-way support from clubs, Ordinary Members and the MAAA. Overtime this has proved to be only a two-way partnership between clubs and the MAAA. Very few Ordinary Members provide funds to assist.

The Secretary and I were invited by the New Zealand Model Aircraft association for purpose of forming a closer liaison and promote trans-Tasman competitions, mutual support, and assistance. We did not this year take up the invitation due to other personal issues however, the invitation is still open, and will be progressed in 2020

Covid-19 has forced the MAAA to change formalized processes, some of the changes conflicting with the Constitution but unavoidable. This included postponing the MAAA Council Conference until such time social distancing rules are relaxed. This will not prevent the MAAA from continuing to function and important issues such as insurance renewal, budget, fees, election of the Vice President and other essentials matters will be progressed by the Executive Council.

The Instructor requalification program has been continuing throughout the year and many current Instructors have taken the opportunity to re-qualify. Due to Covid-19 delaying further courses, the re-qualification process has been extended by twelve months to conclude on the 30<sup>th</sup> June 2021.

MAAA Marketing has continued to produce the quarterly Wingspan magazine which seems to get larger each edition. We must remember Wingspan is the MAAA magazine and will only be successful if we all support and contribute to its contents. Marketing has also assisted with the promotion of a many major events and championships. A breakdown of Marketing activities will be reported to the council in a separate paper.

The MAAA Executive continue to work in partnership with CASA's RPA Section in an endeavour to protect members rights to fly safely and compatibly with ever changing circumstances. I take this opportunity to thank both Scott Duffy and Mark Lewis for their cooperation and support. Mark Lewis has proven to be a valuable resource available to assist in the preparation of risk assessments and applications for area approvals. Both the Secretary and Mr. Mark Lewis have a close professional working relationship which benefits both organisations.

The MAAA Secretary has performed admirably in the past 12 months and in my view earns every dollar. The MAAA is fortunate to have an employee who is dedicated to the position and voluntarily puts in more hours than demanded by his contract. The Secretary is frequently distracted from core duties by questions from members which can and should be answered by Ordinary Member secretaries. If the secretary continues to work in excess of contracted areas Council will have to look at the secretary employing a part time person to conduct the "mundane" functions of the position.

2020 – 2021 marks the commencement of my final year as President. As all are aware, I do not intend to stand for re-election. It is now time for the Council to decide who they want to lead the organisation into the future.

What the next twelve months hold for aeromodelling in general is unknown however the running of clubs and events may not be the same. In respect to membership renewal I anticipate this will be slower than usual and will not accelerate until clubs back to full operation. Council will have to decide how they will approach the next membership year in respect to the setting of fees, insurance renewal and other operational processes. we must consider those members who have

lost jobs and may be suffering from financial strain. Council will have to determine how this will be handled. Is it now time for the MAAA to absorb some pain?

Major Events such as the Alice Springs Masters Games, West Wyalong Nationals, Casino Scale Fly-In and South Hummocks CUB Guinness book of record attempt to name a few are being planned however all is dependent upon the progress of Covid-19 restrictions.

In closing I thank the Executive and Secretary for their support over the past twelve months. The Vice President, Bruce Hoffman, has provide input into all issues and deputized for me when I have not been available. The Treasurer, Gary Pope, has provided outstanding financial support and I have full confidence in in his ability and reports generated. I also thank all the Council members for their support through these difficult times.

## **INTRODUCTION**

It is with pleasure that I present my annual report for the 2019 to 2020 membership year and what a year it has been. Whenever I think we are getting on top of things another curved ball comes along and again we go into a tailspin. At the beginning of the year, May 2019, I was hobbling around with a fractured ankle and at the end May 2020, confined to quarters due to the Covid-19 virus.

Notwithstanding all of this, the year has been very busy and the Executive have continually worked to providing an organisation that serves its members through the provision of funds, support for major events, promotions, benefits relating to flying freedom and securing flying sites for the future.

## **YEAR IN REVIEW**

The 2019 Council conference saw the introduction of an Executive Council comprising of the Ordinary Member Presidents. This initiative was introduced to allow the Executive to more efficiently manage the organisation on a day to day basis and at the same time provide an avenue where council decisions could be reviewed and amended if necessary. The Executive Council met on the 7<sup>th</sup> of December 2019 to review the action and projects emanating from the 2019 Conference. The audited financial statements and auditors report were also tabled and accepted. During this conference, the audited financial statements and auditors report was presented and accepted. Actions arising from this conference included a proposal to develop an Application for heavy model permits, wings and instructor requalification, Strategic Plan review, the advantages and disadvantages of CASA Part 149, the cancellation of the 2020 Nationals and the removal of membership cards and introduction of an AMA style card. The Executive Council also considered a proposition from OMP to participate in a membership drive utilising Horizon Hobby products, like a scheme being run by the AMA and Horizon Hobbies. The Executive Council approved a pilot project to be run in South Australia, New South Wales, and Queensland, to assess the viability of the proposal. In my view, this conference format was extremely successful; much was achieved and may be the way the MAAA should be managed in the future.

A review of all MOP's is currently being conducted however this is proving to be more time consuming and difficult than first anticipated. The work is continuing slowly however and will be completed when time permits, bearing in mind those members completing the review are doing so on a voluntary basis.

A fee increase was implemented for the 2019 to 2020 year and although some considered there would be a backlash from members, I am pleased to say that most accepted (although reluctantly) the increase and the number who did not re-join as a result of the increase was small.

One reason for the increase was the substantial increase in insurance costs. Shortly before paying the quoted fee, the broker reported the increase was less than originally quoted. Subsequently it was resolved by the Executive that any saving caused by the lessening of the insurance premium would be matched by additional funding for Club Assistance and event funding.

The MAAA allocated \$50,000 to Club Assistance during the period and nine clubs were successful in receiving funding. At the time of preparing this report, not all clubs have taken up the offer. The reasons for this are not known however clubs need to be reminded that the projects must be completed and paid for prior to the end of each financial year, funding is not carried over. This initiative provides an opportunity for the MAAA to support clubs and assist aeromodelling at the grass roots. When originally implemented, council expected the scheme to receive three-way support from clubs, Ordinary Members and the MAAA. Overtime this has proved to be only a two-way partnership between clubs and the MAAA. Very few Ordinary Members provide funds to assist.

The Secretary and I were invited by the New Zealand Model Aircraft association for purpose of forming a closer liaison and promote trans-Tasman competitions, mutual support, and assistance. We did not this year take up the invitation due to other personal issues however, the invitation is still open, and will be progressed in 2020.

Covid-19 has forced the MAAA to change formalized processes, some of the changes conflicting with the Constitution but unavoidable. Changes included postponing the MAAA Council Conference until such time social distancing rules are relaxed.

From an administrative perspective, the MAAA Executive postponed the annual council conference until sometime in the future, when restrictions are lifted. This will not prevent the MAAA from continuing to function and important issues such as insurance renewal, budget, fees, election of the Vice President and other essentials matters will be progressed by the Executive Council via an internet meeting. Other reporting issues, motions etc. will be addressed by the full council when social distancing rules permit.

Operationally, the Executive provided advice to Ordinary Members. The MAAA cannot direct Ordinary members or clubs to take a certain course of action unless in accordance with MAAA MOPs. There is no MOP relating to the current health crisis and accordingly the MAAA cannot give directions to clubs. The MAAA will continue to provide recommendations based on the current available advice. Each State or Territory have enacted legislation and Ordinary Members and clubs must take this into account in their decision-making process. The current health crisis does not impact on current insurance policies. I congratulate all clubs for taking a responsible approach and leading members through this crisis.

The Instructor requalification program has continued throughout the year and many current Instructors have taken the opportunity to re-qualify. As stated on many occasions the re-qualification is not imposed for the purpose of testing an instructor's flying ability. The course

focus is upon instruction on current legislation, flying restrictions and area approvals to name a few. All information that instructors must be imparting to students. Originally the requalification period was set to expire on the 30<sup>th</sup> of June 2020, however due to the Covid-9 situation, this period has been extended to the 30<sup>th</sup> of June 2021. By that time, I hope an online requalification process will be in place. An SFI Conference planned to be held in earlier this year was also postponed.

MAAA Marketing has continued to produce the quarterly Wingspan magazine which seems to get larger each edition. A great deal of time has been spent by the Secretary and President in the preparation of articles and ensuring each edition is current and informative to members. Many calls have gone out to Ordinary members and clubs for contributions, some have responded on a regular basis some have not. We must remember Wingspan is the MAAA magazine and will only be successful if we all support and contribute to its contents. Time has also been expended on writing President Updates. Marketing has also assisted with the promotion of a many major events and championships. A break down of Marketing activities will be reported to the council in a separate discussion paper.

The MAAA Executive continue to work in partnership with CASA's RPA Section in an endeavour to protect members rights to fly safely and compatibly with ever changing circumstances. I take this opportunity to thank both Mr. Scott Duffy and Mr. Mark Lewis for their cooperation and support. Mark Lewis has proven to be a valuable resource available to assist in the preparation of risk assessments and applications for area approvals. Both the MAAA Secretary and Mr. Mark Lewis have a close professional working relationship which benefits both organisations.

I am aware that between the Secretary and Mark Lewis, many perceived problems have been overcome to the satisfaction of all. Area approvals have taken a considerable amount of time and effort by both organisations. The introduction of more stringent requirements and risk assessments for applications have cause angst for many club secretaries however in today's world are necessary. Some members still refuse to accept that CASA or the Government can dictate where and how high they can fly model aircraft, however unfortunately like many other activities, times change, and we must adapt. Part 149 is still "bubbling" along with little progress. As mentioned, the MAAA is waiting and assessing how Part 149 effects other sport aviation participants. Model aircraft registration and licensing of pilots' requirements for non-MAAA members is still a long way off, anticipated now to be introduced in 2021 or 2022.

The MAAA Secretary has performed admirably in the past 12 months and in my view earns every dollar. The MAAA is fortunate to have an employee who is dedicated to the position and voluntarily puts in more time than demanded by his contract. Over the past year the Secretary has been the subject of criticism by members for not attending to their personal issues in a time frame expected by them. I remind all that the Secretary is an employee of the MAAA and is subject to employee protection legislation. The secretary is employed by the MAAA to run the

day to day affairs of the association and not the day to day whims of members. If members do have an issue with the Secretaries performance, I am available to discuss this with them.

Although affiliate members may consider their issue important, in the Secretary's eyes it may be a lower priority. Each low priority query be it telephone call or email distracts the Secretary from completing his core business. If the secretary continues to work in excess of contracted areas Council will need to look at employing a part time person to conduct the "mundane" functions of the position. The MAAA Secretary should only communicate with the secretaries of the Ordinary members. Any questions from affiliate members must be channeled through Ordinary member's secretary and addressed by them first.

## **LOOKING FORWARD**

2020 – 2021 marks the commencing of my final year as President. It is now time for the Council to decide who they want to lead the organisation into the future. Now is the time for the next President to start taking an interest in the administration processes, learning the intricacies of the position to be able to "hit the ground running".

What the next twelve months hold for aeromodelling in general is unknown however it may be the running of clubs and events will not be the same for quite some time. Clubs will slowly re-open and commence activities, but this will be in a regulated way, social distancing being with us for some time. Club Committee will have to pay more attention to club hygiene and the provision of services. The shared coffee cups may become the thing of the past.

In respect to member renewal I anticipate that this will be slower than usual and will not really accelerate until clubs are back to full operation. Council will have to decide how they will approach the next membership year in respect to the setting of fees, insurance renewal and other operational processes. We are in a position where many of our members are retired and their financial position may not have changed substantially however, we must consider those members who have lost jobs and may be suffering from financial strain. Council will have to determine how this will be handled. Is it now time for the MAAA to absorb some pain? However, in considering this the MAAA Council must also look to the future.

Major Events such as the Alice Springs Masters Games, West Wyalong Nationals, Casino Scale Fly-in, South Hummocks CUB Guinness book of record attempt to name a few are being planned however all is dependent upon the progress of Covid-19 restrictions.

In closing I thank the Executive and Secretary for their support over the past twelve months. The Vice President, Bruce Hoffman, has provided input into all issues and deputized for me when I have not been available. The Treasurer, Gary Pope, has provided outstanding financial support and I have full confidence in his ability and reports generated. I also thank all the Council members for their support through these difficult times.

J. Neil Tank

MAAA President