



Waikerie Gliding Club Inc.  
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## PRESIDENTS REPORT 2015 - 2016

The past season has been a mixed lot of activities with not a great deal of flying included. It seems we have been side-tracked with a lot other projects and programs which has diverted our focus away from the core of our main reason for existence. Along the way, however, I have learnt a lot about how and why many things operate outside of flying operations.

### AIRFIELD, CLUBHOUSE & GROUNDS

A dry summer and autumn has led to constant watering of the pads to keep them in reasonable condition. The gazania weeds are continuing to encroach into them, but we had a reasonably caltrop free season. A trial spraying of the gazanias is planned. The Council have had an airfield mowing program keeping the off-pad areas tidy. Runway 18 is hopefully next on their agenda. The berry bushes keep sprouting after mowing so we may need to consider removing the stumps to prevent further growths. The new trees ("Art's grandchildren") are growing rapidly with only a few replacements needed. The clubhouse lawns are surviving well but will need some top dressing and fertilizing soon.

### MEMBER KITCHEN & HUT REPAIRS / WORKING BEES

Having successfully negotiated the payout from the insurers (via the Council) we embarked on the ambitious project of raising the sunken member's kitchen and repairs to the accommodation hut. The hut included a re-roof with insulation at our expense. Under Nigel's expertise the kitchen foundation and floor has been raised, the plumbing re-routed, the laundry and old toilet floors cemented, walls stabilised and paving is being replaced. The ongoing work includes the roof replacement, ceiling insulation, new lino floor, electrical work, reverse cycle air conditioner and new range hoods. Hopefully this can all be completed before the Nationals in November. **Huge thanks to all the members who have worked tirelessly on this project.** At the time of writing, a total of 550 hours have been spent. This does not include travel or off site planning and preparation. Other small but necessary jobs have been done, but some projects (such as the Discus trailer) have had to be shelved.

### EVENTS / COMPETITIONS

Waikerie Gliding Club was well represented at State and National level this season with pilots attending the SA State Comps/Orange Week in November, the Multi-Class Nationals (& pre Worlds) at Benalla in January, the National 2-seater Comps in Narromine and Horsham Week in February. Congratulations to all, especially Peter Paine, the new SA State Champion, Grant Hudson's day win at the Nationals, Brian Rau as winning co-pilot at the 2 seater Comps and Haidyn Dunn placing second in Open/18m class at Horsham. Thanks also to our tuggies, Peter Siddall and Richard Geytenbeek who flew our tug at Benalla.

We have successfully applied to run the 36<sup>th</sup> Club and Sports Class Nationals in November, followed immediately with our Orange Week regatta. The SA coaching week will be held here from December 27<sup>th</sup> to January 2<sup>nd</sup>, after which our tug will head to Benalla for 3 weeks for the World Championships.

## **OPERATIONS / SAFETY**

As mentioned above, we had not had a great deal of local flying this past season and have not had any ab-initio training. This is partly due to a lack of instructional help which makes training someone very un-attractive due to long breaks between lessons and partly because I am loathe taking someone on because of this. We still struggle to get indications of who wants to fly and when.

We had our bi-annual operations audit on the 27<sup>th</sup> February and passed inspection. Unfortunately this was the day that Ziggy Kusiak had his accident in the ASG29. We keep Ziggy and Marta in our thoughts and prayers as he continues to recover from his injuries. The accident highlighted the effectiveness of our SMS and emergency procedures.

## **ROCK AND ROLL FESTIVAL**

We were approached in January by the local Rock 'n Roll Committee with a request to use our hangar for their annual festival. A simple request turned out to be a major undertaking as the local caravan park was unavailable, so our accommodation facilities were stretched to the limit. A dance floor had to be constructed and painted inside the hangar which was a three week project so our gliders and tug had to be either de-rigged or hangared elsewhere for the duration. We were fortunate to have the use of a scissor lift, so the new "magnesium vapour" lights were installed along with repairs to hangar doors. The whole event came together successfully and our club has gained a huge amount of kudos and goodwill from it. The event is considered the biggest in SA and perhaps Australia attracting over 450 people. It is planned to continue this event in our hangar in future. Thanks to Ann for managing the accommodation and the other members who assisted on the weekend and those who de-rigged and re-rigged. A special mention also to Alan Hudson who made his hangar available for the ASK21.

## **COMMITTEE / MEMBERS**

We welcomed Richard Geytenbeek as an associate member this year. Richard will be assisting with tug duties and comes with a wealth of experience. He and his wife are former members of WGC.

Our committee has worked tirelessly again this year and I thank each and every one of them for their commitment. All our members have also contributed in many ways, especially with the kitchen/hut project – I hope your enthusiasm see's this project through!

## **THE FUTURE**

Our club is financially well off but member poor which places us in a precarious position for the future. We are in a "Catch-22" situation where we need to grow the club but are unable to do so due to a lack of instructors. We could perhaps no longer train students, but have them trained elsewhere and/or attract post solo pilots from other clubs with post solo/cross country training courses. Or we could have dedicated weeks several times a year to train 2 or 3 students. The committee have also entertained the idea of seeking a high performance 2-seater to encourage cross country and mutual flying enjoyment.

Let's look forward to another safe and increased flying year ahead.

**Bill Mudge**  
**President, Waikerie Gliding Club Inc.**

**21/05/2016**