



Waikerie Gliding Club Inc.  
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## PRESIDENTS REPORT 2017 - 2018

These past twelve months have felt like us marking time a little with not much change to our operations and membership. We did, however, host Orange Week, the Multi-Class Nationals and a Coaching Course which were well accepted. The volunteers who put a lot of effort into these ensure we remain profitable.

### AIRFIELD, CLUBHOUSE & GROUNDS

This summer has been extremely dry and windy, and the state of the airfield is shocking. Unless we get significant rain soon, the grass aside from the pads may not recover. We failed to spray the gazanias last winter and they are rapidly taking over the pads. We only have six operational travelling sprinklers, with enough parts to build another. As such, the pads have shrunk in size as not all previous areas are watered. On the brighter side we seem to have got the caltrop under control with timely spraying and hand hoeing. Many thanks to Robert Bruce who has kept up the mowing of the pads and clubhouse lawns and to Martin Rule for watering the lawns.

On the committee's direction, I sought quotes on changing our pads watering system to pop-ups and the prices came in at around \$80 to \$85k – well beyond our means at this stage, even with grants, if available. I intend to seek quotes for two bitumen runways of 8m x 800m and see if we can source grants for these. The council had an airfield inspection during our Orange Week regatta and we and the council incurred the wrath of the inspector over several issues. The upshot was that the council have now put up a two-wire fence along Sir Donald Anderson Drive but have also applied to have the airfield de-registered and re-classified as an Authorised Landing Area (ALA). This means it will no longer be under CASA regulations. We continue to be frustrated with the renewal of the Council lease. The latest negotiations have convinced the Council to grant a 'ground lease', whereby Council will acknowledge the club as owners of the buildings. This means we will be responsible for all maintenance and insurance. The downside is that they will not budge on the 5-year term of the lease. They maintain that the renewal every 5 years will be 'just a formality'.

Mark Morgan has approached the committee with plans to extend his workshop into part of our western end of the igloo hangar. Several designs have been submitted to build a paint spray booth without impeding on our trailer space. Mark discovered and repaired major damage to the igloo foundations.

### MEMBERS KITCHEN / WORKING BEES

The members kitchen has had the outside painted but we still need to complete repairs and fitting out of the laundry and store room. The upgraded members kitchen has been well used and appreciated by all. Thanks to Alan Wilson and David Jones for the work on restoring the woodwork on the eastern windows of the clubhouse. Many thanks to all who have contributed to maintenance and attended working bees. Thanks again to Ron Brock who keeps the tractor going. The old Stevenson screen north of the clubhouse has been rejuvenated thanks to Haidyn and Lyn Dunn. An historic relic now.

### EVENTS / COMPETITIONS

As stated above, we held the Multi Class Nationals in January 2018 with around 45 entries in 4 classes. WGC was well represented with Grant Hudson in Open Class, Craig Vinall and Haidyn Dunn in 18m Class and Sid Nankivell and Bjoern Rechinger in 15m Class. The first week was dogged by poor weather, but the second week saw the famous Waikerie weather appear. The last day resulted in speeds of over 170kph

over 600km tasks with almost all pilots recording their fastest speeds ever. In all we flew 8 days of the 11 scheduled contest days. Many many thanks to the ground crews who endured ground temperatures of 47 degrees some days and to all who assisted in any way. Orange Week earlier in November 2017 was probably the best in living memory, with cu evident on every day and thermals anywhere between 7,500' and 13,000'. Craig Vinall took top honours. As usual the social scene was abuzz with lots of friendly rivalry from the 'Mexicans' from over the border. Thanks to the organisers and ground crew, who allowed me to compete! The Coaching Course was again held between Xmas and New Year and was well attended. We were again well represented at Horsham Week with Craig, Haidyn, Sid, Peter Paine, Greg Jackson and first timer Patrick Dunn in his Kestrel 17. It coincided with the Vic State Championships and Craig is now Victorian champion! Craig and Sid also flew the Waikerie flag at the SA state comps in March this year.

**STOP PRESS** – we have just been advised that we have been successful in securing the Junior Nationals (“Joey Glide”) to be held from 12<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> January 2019.

### **OPERATIONS / SAFETY**

A Flight Instructors Refresher Course (FIRC) was held in February this year and all our instructors have been assessed and ratings renewed. This is now a four-yearly requirement. Craig Vinall completed his L1 instructor rating and is active in instruction duties. As usual, the roster especially for instructors is not well patronised and I ask all to consider helping where possible.

We had a bi-annual Operations Safety Audit in April this year and no significant breaches in practices were noted. Grant Hudson assisted in both exercises as CFI.

No club safety concerns occurred this year, although the Nationals had some incidents involving airspace. We have still not replaced John Hudson as tug master and this position is being considered.

### **ROCK AND ROLL FESTIVAL / ULYSSES MCC**

After last year's success, the Rock N Roll festival was held again this year (although not in this financial year). It has become a major event for the town and we get a lot of kudos for allowing them the use of our hangar and accommodation. Since Ann has retired, a lot of the work in taking bookings and preparing the accommodation has fallen to me, so I will need help in future. Thanks to all those who helped de-rig and re-locate the gliders and to the private owners for the inconvenience. We expect to raise about \$2000 from hangar hire and accommodation.

After an approach from the Ulysses Motor Cycle Club, who are holding a national convention at Barmera with up to 2,500 members, we offered to provide glider flights last week. More reports on the success or otherwise at this AGM.

### **AIRWORTHINESS**

Another area that is important and thanks to those who look after our sailplanes, especially with annual inspections. This is an area that I have not been involved with but have had first hand insight in recent years into just what effort goes into this. Thanks to John & Grant Hudson, John Ridge as club airworthiness officers and to Mark Morgan for his invaluable advice.

### **MEMBERS / COMMITTEE**

During the year, we welcomed new member John Spronk. John began training at Renmark many years ago and has decided to continue with us.

A lot of members put in without seeking attention and many times I see things done without being asked. Thanks to those who do this.

Our committee has worked tirelessly again this year and I thank them again for their efforts. Our tireless secretary, John Ridge, has given intentions to resign from this position. His contribution of many years has been unbelievable and without his input, so many things just would not happen. Thanks John.

I have been supported well by the rest of the committee and appreciate that all except David intend to continue.

## **THE FUTURE**

The clubs future is in a fairly precarious position, not financially, but member wise. It is still difficult to offer new members a path to solo even with another instructor. We possibly need to attract post solo members who can move into instructor roles. The infrastructure that we have inherited from the commercial operation takes a heap of looking after, and without many local members, this task falls to working bees or myself and a few others. Should we lose only one or two vital members, the club would be put in a difficult position. The committee has discussed various options and we seek input from members.

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

**12/05/2018**